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CONTENTS

	Page
Agenda items 32, 33, 35 and 38:	
World Disarmament Conference: report of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference (continued)	
General and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (concluded)	
Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (continued)	
Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (concluded)	575

Chairman: Mr. Otto R. BORCH (Denmark).

AGENDA ITEMS 32, 33, 35 AND 38

World Disarmament Conference: report of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference (continued)*

General and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (concluded) (A/C.1/L.662, 665, 668)

Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (continued) (A/C.1/L.653/Rev.1)

Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (concluded) (A/C.1/L.655, 667)

1. The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will take up first today the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.665, under agenda item 33. Members have before them a statement [A/C.1/L.668] submitted by the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 155 of the rules of procedure, setting forth the administrative and financial implications of that draft resolution. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee is ready to proceed to the vote.

2. There being no objection, I declare that we are now in the voting stage, under rule 130 of the rules of procedure.

3. I shall not call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

4. Mr. LIN (China) (translation from Chinese): The Chinese representative, the Chinese Government and the Chinese people have repeatedly made known their position and attitude with regard to the "Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons" jointly concocted by the Soviet

Union and the United States in 1968. In our opinion, this Treaty, like the partial test-ban Treaty, is a big conspiracy designed by the two super-Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, to maintain their nuclear monopoly and nuclear hegemony and fetter and control the non-nuclear countries, as well as a big fraud to dupe the peoples of the world. According to this Treaty, the two hegemonic Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, are free to engage in arms expansion and war preparations and to develop nuclear weapons and expand their nuclear bases. They refuse to undertake the obligation not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries; instead they want to completely deprive the non-nuclear countries of their right to develop nuclear weapons for self-defence, and even to put restrictions on their peaceful use of atomic energy. This is the tyrant's way in its true sense. As a Chinese saying goes, "The magistrates were allowed to burn down houses, while the common people were forbidden even to light lamps". Its purpose is to place the peoples of the world at the mercy of the two hegemonic Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, so that the peoples of the world will submit docilely to their enslavement. We are firmly against this.

5. China has been compelled to develop a few nuclear weapons for the purpose of self-defence and for breaking the nuclear monopoly and nuclear blackmail of the super-Powers. Our slogan is "Dig tunnels deep, store grain everywhere, and never seek hegemony". Whether in the past, or at present or in the future, China resolutely opposes big-Power chauvinism and firmly holds that all countries big or small, nuclear or non-nuclear, should be equal. We are firmly against using the "Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons" to deprive non-nuclear countries or countries with few nuclear weapons of their sovereignty and to damage the interests of the peoples of various countries. We are determined, together with the peoples of the world, to fight against the nuclear monopoly, the nuclear blackmail and the nuclear threat of the super-Powers and for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons.

6. We will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/L.665.

7. Mr. YANGO (Philippines): My delegation will vote for draft resolution A/C.1/L.665, if only because of the fact that a review conference of the non-proliferation Treaty is envisaged under it. The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, both horizontally and vertically, and the peaceful uses of nuclear power are the well-known purposes of the Treaty. It is these purposes that have induced many non-nuclear-weapon States to adhere to the Treaty. Seventy-six members of the international community have pinned their hopes on the Treaty for the achievement of the goal of nuclear disarmament.

* Resumed from 1956th meeting.

8. The States parties to the Treaty fully realize the significance of the review conference to be held five years after its entry into force in order, as the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.655 provides in its second preambular paragraph, "to review the operation of this Treaty with a view to assuring that the purposes of the Preamble and the provisions of the Treaty are being realized". In other words, the credibility of the Treaty itself will be at stake in the review conference and the results of the conference certainly will either strengthen or erode that credibility.

9. The interest of the nuclear weapon Powers which are parties to the Treaty in the success of the review conference is obvious, but more so is the interest of the other parties to the Treaty. Negative results might even lead to a second conference of non-nuclear-weapon States. Hence it should be made clear that the review conference is for all parties to the Treaty, whether nuclear weapon Powers or not.

10. My delegation was therefore gratified to hear the assurances given at the 1968th meeting by the representative of Sweden in his introduction of the draft resolution—assurances which were echoed by two other sponsors, the United States and the United Kingdom—to the effect that in the preparatory work of the conference other parties to the Treaty not members of the preparatory committee will be afforded full opportunity to present or express their views on any matter that may be taken up during the preparatory work. That clarification made by the sponsors augurs well for the results of the preparatory work and for the conference itself; for it is only through the arrangements indicated that no party to the Treaty will feel left out or even discriminated against.

11. It is in this sense of goodwill and understanding that my delegation, which qualifies as a member of the preparatory committee under the provisions of operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, intends to participate in and contribute to such preparatory work.

12. Mr. SARAIVA GUERREIRO (Brazil): The delegation of Brazil cannot, of course, object to a decision by the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to implement the provision of that Treaty regarding the convening of a review conference of the parties. I should note, however, that from the standpoint of Brazil the non-proliferation Treaty is and remains *res inter alios acta*. If the revision conference is undertaken strictly within the terms of the Treaty, the preparation of a review conference will naturally be for us also *res inter alios acta*.

13. That circumstance, however, does not prevent my delegation from expressing our hope that the parties will in the proposed conference be able to negotiate a modified text in which present shortcomings will be corrected and an acceptable balance between the obligations of the nuclear weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States will be established.

14. We should be agreeably surprised if, for instance, during the preparation of the review conference those parties to the Treaty that are nuclear weapon States finally fulfilled the commitment they undertook under article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty.

15. Having said that, I should state that Brazil will abstain in the vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.665, since we do not see why the General Assembly should adopt a resolution endorsing the preparation of a conference that is to be carried out not under the auspices of the United Nations but under the responsibility of the States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty. The General Assembly endorsement would serve no apparent practical purpose.

16. However, I have a very special reservation to make. I hasten to add that my delegation does not object to the United Nations Secretariat assisting as appropriate in the preparation of the review conference provided the costs involved are covered by States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty themselves.

17. I shall now make a quite formal reservation regarding the financial implications as presented in document A/C.1/L.668, the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 155 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. It is my understanding that the document will be studied by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and will be the object of consideration by the Fifth Committee, which will have to report on the financial implications when the draft resolution goes to the General Assembly. We wish to make a reservation concerning the attitude we shall take when the question of financial implications is considered.

18. Whatever decision the General Assembly may take with regard to the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.665, my delegation believes that that decision should not in itself be interpreted as entirely precluding the possibility of States not parties to the non-proliferation Treaty participating in the process of review of that Treaty in the appropriate manner.

19. Mr. MEERBURG (Netherlands): My delegation considers the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.665, on the review conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be quite satisfactory. We are glad that the process of preparing the review conference can now start soon. Good preparations for such a conference are, of course, necessary to get any meaningful results.

20. In our view, the review conference of the non-proliferation Treaty can be of vital importance for the future of the Treaty and for the policy of nuclear non-proliferation in general. As our State Secretary, Mr. Kooijmans, said in this Committee a few weeks ago,

"The danger of nuclear proliferation is evidently not warded off by the non-proliferation Treaty once and for all. So there are good reasons not to approach the review conference as a mere holding operation, but as a unique opportunity to demonstrate that the question of non-proliferation and the non-proliferation Treaty itself are of world-wide interest." [1948th meeting, para. 69.]

21. Our delegation made the suggestion concerning consulting the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament on the review conference, because those

bodies are closely associated with the non-proliferation Treaty. To enhance the possibility of strengthening the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons it is also important to know the views of non-parties to the Treaty, especially those countries which are in principle sympathetic to it.

22. The solution in the draft before us to the question of the membership of the preparatory committee gives members of the Board of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament an opportunity to express their views. However, we still suggest that the preparatory committee in some way or other consult the Board of the Agency and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament as a whole.

23. Having heard the statements by some depositary States of the non-proliferation Treaty, we think they have shown the right spirit to tackle the review conference.

24. We shall vote in favour of the draft resolution.

25. Mr. SCALABRE (France) (*interpretation from French*): I do not believe it is necessary to explain at length why my delegation will abstain in the vote to be taken on draft resolution A/C.1/L.665, concerning the holding of the conference for a five-year review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Our representative on the Fifth Committee will deal with the financial aspects of that draft, and our views on the matter are very close to those voiced by the representative of Brazil. I should merely like to confirm that the position of my Government on that Treaty is unchanged, as is its intention—though it has not adhered to the Treaty—in no way to encourage any undertaking that might lead to the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

26. The CHAIRMAN: Since no other representatives wish to explain their vote before the voting, I shall now put to the vote draft resolution A/C.1/L.665.

The draft resolution was adopted by 66 votes to 2, with 10 abstentions.

27. The CHAIRMAN: Nobody has asked for the floor to explain their vote after the vote.

28. I have been asked to inform the Committee that had they been present the delegations of Guyana, Morocco and Zaire would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

29. I call on the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, who wishes to exercise his right of reply.

30. Mr. ROSCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translation from Russian*): In his explanation of vote the representative of China referred to the Soviet Union in an unfavourable sense. I do not want to hold up the proceedings of the Committee by giving a lengthy answer but I should just like to read out brief excerpts from the speech Comrade Brezhnev delivered on 26 October 1973 to the World Peace Congress in Moscow. He said:

“Of course, we would not like to pretend that the present actions of China in the international arena are in

keeping with the task of strengthening peace and peaceful co-operation among States. For some reasons known to them, the leaders of China do not want to renounce their attempts to poison the international atmosphere and to increase international tension.”

He went on:

“One noteworthy thing is the extreme lack of principle in the foreign policy of the Chinese leadership.”

Here is another excerpt:

“They assert that they are supporters of disarmament but in fact they are attempting to block all real measures to limit and reduce the arms race and are thus defying world public opinion and are continuing to poison the earth’s atmosphere by nuclear tests.”

I will quote another excerpt:

“Such a policy, of course, will do nothing to facilitate the strengthening of peace and security. It will just introduce an element of dangerous instability into international life.”

31. The CHAIRMAN: The First Committee has now concluded its consideration of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.665.

32. The Committee will turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/L.662, under agenda item 33. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee is ready to proceed to the vote on that draft resolution. There being no objection I declare that we are now in the voting stage under rule 130 of the rules of procedure.

33. I call on the representative of Sudan, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

34. Mr. MAMOUN (Sudan): During the debate my delegation had this to say in relation to the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament contained in document A/9141:

“Reading through document A/9141 which contains the report of the last session of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, my delegation has been overwhelmed by a sense of disappointment in the lack of progress on questions relating to disarmament. We are sure that many delegations must have felt the same, and perhaps they might be excused since their governments and peoples have a real stake in the process of disarmament.” [*1941st meeting, para. 124.*]

Another veteran of disarmament, Mrs. Myrdal, had this to say in the course of the debate:

“We are, however, open to any other suggestions which would make the international machinery for accomplishing disarmament more effective.” [*Ibid., para. 96.*]

and this, which I stress:

“... the future role of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which in its present form has

proven regrettably unproductive, or its substitution by some new central negotiating body, should be decided in the light of a thoroughgoing general examination . . .”.

[*Ibid.*]

35. Many delegations have voiced their concern that because of the lack of progress indicated in the report of the Conference, the advance of the Conference in the past year has been negligible. Although we do not doubt the sincerity of the sponsors of the draft resolution, and we thank them for presenting it, my delegation will abstain in the vote because the draft resolution does not reflect the wide concern shared by many delegations concerning the unproductive work of the Conference during the past year.

36. The CHAIRMAN: There being no other members who wish to explain their vote before the voting, we shall now proceed to vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.662.

The draft resolution was adopted by 66 votes to none, with 23 abstentions.

37. The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote after the vote.

38. Mr. SCALABRE (France) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation is in agreement with the spirit that led the sponsors to submit the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.662. We have quite often stated that we are ready to participate in all efforts to arrive at effective disarmament, but not to adopt partial measures that very often may disturb the balance of certain situations rather than strengthen them. However, we believe that the day on which genuine negotiations on effective disarmament are undertaken, it will be natural to inform the General Assembly and even to place those negotiations within the framework of the United Nations, whose competence in this matter is set forth in Article 11 of the Charter. But if it is a matter of bilateral or multilateral contacts calling for certain discretion and having effect only on the parties, then a mere report to the General Assembly is not the appropriate step, and negotiations of this nature—some of which may encourage international détente—may be jeopardized. For those reasons my delegation abstained in the vote on this matter, much to our regret, when the draft resolution was put to the vote, although we are in agreement with certain parts of it.

39. Mr. BARTON (Canada): The Canadian delegation has been in sympathy with the intent of the sponsors of the draft resolution on which we have just voted that the security interests of States not participating in various disarmament negotiations should not be jeopardized by such negotiations and that non-participating States be kept informed of such negotiations. The Canadian delegation is fully in accord with the view that participants in disarmament negotiations applying to certain countries or areas should take into account the security interests of other States that might be affected. It is evident that such negotiations should not adversely affect the security interests of participating States or of any others. My delegation has read paragraph 2 of the draft resolution to mean that participants in negotiations should seek to ensure

that the security interests of other States are not adversely affected.

40. While in agreement with that portion of the draft resolution, I regret that my delegation has had reservations with respect to paragraph 3. While Member States have a legitimate need to keep themselves informed of negotiations that may affect their security interests, we have doubts as to how participants in negotiations could keep the General Assembly meaningfully and usefully informed of negotiations until they result in some conclusions of which the Assembly could be suitably informed. In our view, the most practical and effective way of States keeping themselves informed of negotiations, limited by their very nature to certain States, is through normal bilateral diplomatic means, and for this reason my delegation abstained in the vote on this draft resolution.

41. Mr. HAINWORTH (United Kingdom): My delegation has just abstained in the vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.662. My delegation understands the motives of States that wish to follow the course of disarmament negotiations anywhere in the world, but we cannot accept that there is an obligation on States—as implied in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution—to inform the General Assembly about the course of their negotiations, still less that it would be proper for the Assembly to try to lay down the direction in which negotiations between sovereign States should proceed.

42. In practice, this draft resolution would seem to have most bearing on the continuing strategic arms elimination talks and the negotiations recently started on mutual and balanced force reductions; neither of these discussions is taking place in total secrecy. The outcome of their previous deliberations has been clearly and promptly published, and, particularly in Western parliaments and the press, has been the subject of intensive question and debate. It is hard to see therefore that any member of the Assembly can reasonably claim—still less complain—that he does not know what has been going on and what is intended for the future.

43. Equally, my delegation considers that it is hard to accept that negotiators on a particular aspect of disarmament, or those who are concerned with a particular region of the world, should be asked to report their actions at each and every stage. The purpose of negotiations is to secure results. A great concourse of experienced diplomats, such as are now present in this Committee, must, I am sure, be conscious of the delicacy at any time of continuing diplomatic negotiations and the imperative need, however well intentioned the motive may be, not to do anything that might make their task harder.

44. Mr. HANSEN (Denmark): My delegation has voted in favour of the draft resolution in recognition of the special role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. I want, however, to make it clear that we have, at the same time, taken into special consideration that its paragraph 3 modifies the invitation to the Governments of all States to keep the General Assembly informed of the disarmament negotiations by the word “suitably”, thus leaving it to the good judgement of Governments engaged in disarmament negotiations outside the framework of the United Nations

to decide when and how information about such negotiations may appropriately be transmitted to the Organization.

45. Mr. DI BERNARDO (Italy): The Italian Government has constantly based its position on the principle that the essential goal of general and complete disarmament should be the final result of a common endeavour and of an active and direct participation of all the members of the international community in the framework of the United Nations. For these reasons, at the last session of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, we firmly insisted that the programmes for general and complete disarmament, formulated within the United Nations at the beginning of the 1960s, be resumed and activated. I wish to reiterate here and now that Italy will continue to contribute positively and actively to any initiative susceptible of achieving concrete progress towards that fundamental objective.

46. In the light of what I have said, it will be easy to realize how difficult it was for the Italian delegation to abstain on a draft resolution which deals with general and complete disarmament. It abstained basically because the actual formulation of the draft resolution before us appears to us to be unacceptable. In fact, in its present formulation it could represent serious negative interference in the competence of the United Nations as a general forum on disarmament on the one side and regional competence on the other, especially when it is still too soon to foresee how and when concrete agreements could be reached at the regional level.

47. Mr. MARTIN (United States of America): I should like to explain briefly why my delegation abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. While the United States delegation believes that the General Assembly should be kept suitably informed of the results of disarmament negotiations, paragraph 3 of the present draft resolution implies to us a practice that would run counter to the accepted principle of the confidentiality of negotiations in progress.

48. Mr. ADJIBADE (Dahomey) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of Dahomey abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/L.662 because, while we perfectly well understand the reasons why the sponsors of the draft resolution submitted it, my delegation does not consider that it sufficiently reflects the opinions expressed during the examination of the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. That is why we share the views expressed by the representative of Sudan, and why we found ourselves unable to cast our vote in favour of the draft resolution.

49. Mr. GÜVEN (Turkey) (*interpretation from French*): Had there been a separate vote on paragraph 3 of the draft resolution my delegation would have abstained.

50. Mr. GHORRA (Lebanon): Had the Lebanese delegation been present when the vote was taken, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

51. Mr. SEIGNORET (Trinidad and Tobago): Had the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago been present when the vote was taken on the draft resolution, it would have voted in favour.

52. The CHAIRMAN: I have been asked to announce that had the delegation of Guyana been present during the vote on the draft resolution, it would have voted in favour.

53. The Committee has now concluded its discussion of the draft resolution.

54. Mr. CISSE (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation was not in the room when the vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.1/L.665. We should like it to be recorded that we would have voted in favour of the draft resolution had we been present.

55. Mr. GHORRA (Lebanon): Had the delegation of Lebanon been in its place when the vote was taken, it also would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/L.655.

56. Mr. SIKALU (Zambia): Because of unavoidable circumstances, my delegation was absent during the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/L.665. We should like to state for the record that had we been present we would have abstained. Our abstention is consistent with the position of principle of the Zambian Government with respect to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

57. Mr. BOOTHE (Jamaica): Had my delegation been present, it would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/L.665.

58. Mr. SEIGNORET (Trinidad and Tobago): I should like the record to show that had my delegation been present during the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/L.665 it would have voted in favour.

59. The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the Committee's discussion of draft resolution A/C.1/L.665.

60. We turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/L.655, which deals with the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. The draft resolution was submitted on 9 November and introduced at the 1955th meeting. A statement of its financial implications is before the Committee in document A/C.1/L.667. We shall now resume the debate on the draft resolution.

61. Mr. TALALLA (Malaysia): My delegation was among the original sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.655 on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, which was introduced in the First Committee, on behalf of the sponsors, by the representative of Sri Lanka, Mr. Amerasinghe. In the two years that have passed since the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, the wisdom and foresight of Sri Lanka, to whom we owe this initiative, have been more than amply demonstrated. The major Powers are moving with increased momentum towards détente. In the mood that is beginning to prevail, the smaller nations of the world are afforded enhanced opportunities for establishing régimes wherein their fundamental interests are better secured. As we move towards the half-way mark in the Disarmament Decade, it is becoming evident that initiatives for the establishment of zones of peace in different parts of the world are among the more positive measures towards disarmament. Further, these initiatives have the added distinction of involving the

smaller and less powerful States in making a real contribution towards the strengthening of international security.

62. It is therefore a matter of deep satisfaction to my delegation that the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace was adopted at the twenty-sixth session, that an *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean was established at the twenty-seventh session to study the implications and implementation of the proposal, and that today the First Committee has before it the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee in document A/9029. The urgent relevance of the *Ad Hoc* Committee's continued work has in recent weeks been poignantly demonstrated. I refer to the recent tragic events in the Middle East when the two super-Powers, in manifesting their positions in the crisis, saw fit to have a show of naval strength in the Indian Ocean. My delegation sees no purpose in shrill condemnations of this demonstration, but would wish rather that it would stimulate the *Ad Hoc* Committee to even greater efforts, with a view to completing its work as expeditiously as possible.

63. My delegation is perhaps more conscious than most of the complexity of the task before the *Ad Hoc* Committee. My country, together with the other member nations of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, namely, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, are signatories of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration which seeks to establish South-East Asia as a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality. At the time of the signing of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on 27 November 1971, a committee of senior officials from the signatory countries was established to look into ways and means of bringing about the objectives of the Declaration. Two of the signatories of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration, namely, Indonesia and my own country, consented to serve on the *Ad Hoc* Committee. My country therefore shares with Indonesia the privilege of serving on the two committees that seek to bring to fruition the proposals to establish the South-East Asian and Indian Ocean zones of peace, and are in the fortuitous position of being able to follow the working and progress of both concepts.

64. The committee of senior officials seeking to bring about the objectives of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration saw, *ab initio*, the need for definitions. But it also appreciated that definition of terms such as "peace", "freedom" and "neutrality" was no mean task. So, rather than spending an inordinate amount of time on this account, the committee of senior officials evolved a common understanding of a "zone of peace, freedom and neutrality" in the context of South-East Asia. The establishment of what were, to all intents and purposes, agreed working definitions proved indeed to be a very useful step. It enhanced understanding and co-operation and, in our view, contributed significantly to the committee of senior officials being able to formulate a set of guidelines for inter-State relations and draw up a recommendation for the establishment of permanent machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes in the proposed zone. At its last meeting the committee of senior officials began consideration of the question of what part major and other Powers may play in the proposed zone.

65. My Government has, over the past two years, been giving serious thought to how the realization of the

South-East Asian zone of peace, freedom and neutrality can best be achieved. We are deeply convinced of the merit of an orderly progression and the need to forswear the temptation to proceed in undue haste lest in so doing we jeopardize the success of the proposal itself. The study being undertaken by the committee of senior officials is of course most important. The commitment of the other States in the region to the proposal also has high priority in our thinking, and while the objectives of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration have already been brought to their notice, perhaps after the committee of senior officials has completed its study it would be an appropriate time to encourage them to join us. We incline to the belief that approaches to the major Powers regarding their role in the zone, or their attitude to it, could more fruitfully be made after the commitment of the regional States has been secured.

66. My delegation's purpose in outlining some of the thinking on ways and means of bringing into being the South-East Asian zone of peace, freedom and neutrality is, in the spirit of brotherhood, to share our experiences and thoughts in the pursuit of the realization of a neighbouring zone of peace. Above all, it is my delegation's intention to focus attention upon the need for understanding, patience and perseverance in the pursuit of such goals.

67. Draft resolution A/C.1/L.655 requests the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean to continue its work and seeks to provide it with assistance that will facilitate the early completion of its task. The need for all States to subscribe to the objectives of the Declaration and to extend all co-operation to the *Ad Hoc* Committee is self-evident. My delegation believes also that the factual statement of the great Powers' military presence in the Indian Ocean, which paragraph 6 of the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to prepare, is pertinent to the *Ad Hoc* Committee's study. It will be noted, however, that the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session left the limits of the Indian Ocean to be determined at a future date. Further, it will be noted from the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee in document A/9029 that it was not able to arrive at definitions of important terms contained in the Declaration. While it is accepted that formal definition of many of the terms would of necessity take a considerable amount of time, my delegation nevertheless could have wished that greater patience and perseverance had been exercised to obtain at least a common understanding of important terms by way of tentative working definitions.

68. Be that as it may, my delegation is confident that the Secretary-General, despite the absence of agreed definitions, will proceed with his customary circumspection in preparing the statement. Further, as the statement is to be based on available material and prepared with the assistance of experts and competent bodies, my delegation believes that the *Ad Hoc* Committee will be better able to come to grips with the problem of definitions and otherwise to move more rapidly towards the conclusion of its work.

69. It is in this conviction that my delegation has joined several members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee in sponsoring this draft resolution. The draft resolution is procedural in nature and in no way contentious, and as such my delegation hopes it will receive wide support.

70. Mr. MOTT (Australia): My delegation would like to comment briefly on the draft resolution on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace in document A/C.1/L.655, of which Australia is a sponsor.

71. In an earlier statement, at the 1949th meeting, my delegation reaffirmed its support for the concept of the zone of peace and its determination to play an active and helpful part in giving that concept more concrete form. We commented that the main requirement in the General Assembly this year would be a resolution cast in non-controversial terms that would achieve the objective of sending the Committee back to work next year.

72. The draft resolution now before us meets this requirement. We therefore endorse the hope expressed at the 1955th meeting by the Chairman of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean, Mr. Amerasinghe, that the draft resolution would be accepted for what it was intended to be, namely, a purely procedural one. At a stage when the Committee has just begun its substantive work, such a resolution is both appropriate and necessary.

73. Paragraphs 1 and 2 would achieve the goal of having the Committee continue work next year on the subject-matter of its mandate, which, as set out in paragraph 2 of resolution 2992 (XXVII) is "to study the implications of the proposal [concerning the Indian Ocean] with special reference to the practical measures that may be taken in furtherance of the objectives of . . . [the Assembly's resolution] having due regard to the security interests of the littoral and hinterland States . . . and the interests of any other State". We believe that that resolution should continue to influence the future work of the Committee in a decisive manner.

74. Mr. Amerasinghe quite rightly devoted some time in his introductory statement to paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, the objective of which is to provide the Committee with additional information on which to base its further work. My delegation concurs in his comment that the factual statement, when completed, will not commit any nation to any part of its contents and that it is intended as a guide. It will be for the members of the Committee, both individually and collectively, to consider what use to make of the statement as a whole or in part. This will be a priority task for the Committee in 1974. When ready, the statement will provide information about the military presence of the great Powers, "with special reference to their naval deployments", in the Indian Ocean. My delegation considers that the latter phrase means, and should be taken to mean, exactly what it says.

75. We believe also that two more stipulations deserve reference: first, that the material will be supplied in the form of a "factual statement", and, second, that it will be based on "available"—that is, accessible—"material and prepared with the assistance of qualified experts and competent bodies". These factors will enhance the value of the statement to the Committee, and my delegation looks forward to receiving it and studying it.

76. During the formulation of the draft resolution, my delegation attached importance to the terminology to be employed in defining the terms of reference of the factual statement. We did so because of our concern with the

important fundamental work of definitions, which is as yet far from completion, because we thought it would be desirable to give the Secretary-General some guidance in this regard and because we considered it necessary that the statement should not purport to prejudice the future work of the Committee, the nature of which would be for the Committee itself to decide.

77. We recognized, nevertheless, that the Secretary-General and those whose help he enlists will have to some extent to use their own initiative in carrying out the task that the Assembly will request of them through the adoption of this draft resolution.

78. Like the representative of Malaysia, however, we are confident on this occasion, as we have been on numerous occasions in the past, that we may rely on the Secretary-General to apply his usual high and impartial standards in preparing the statement we shall be requesting of him.

79. It is on this basis that my delegation commends draft resolution A/C.1/L.655 for support in this Committee.

80. Mr. MISHRA (India): In sponsoring with others draft resolution A/C.1/L.655 on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, my delegation reaffirms its commitment to the concept of a peace zone in the Indian Ocean.

81. Before going any further, I should like to mention with appreciation the initiative taken by the delegation of Sri Lanka not only in the drafting of the draft resolution before us but also in steering the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean ably during the past year in its important task.

82. The question of peace and stability in the Indian Ocean has caused growing concern to the international community since the mid-1960s. Despite general decolonization of the area the major Powers have maintained, and in fact expanded, their naval presence in that area. In 1970 the Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries held at Lusaka called upon "all States to consider and respect the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace from which great-Power rivalries and competition as well as bases conceived in the context of such rivalries and competition, either army, navy or air force bases, are excluded".

83. Since then the Government of India has consistently supported the concept of a peace zone in the Indian Ocean. It will be recalled that not only were we among the sponsors of resolution 2832 (XXVI), which ultimately became the Declaration, but we also worked actively within and outside the United Nations for achieving the objectives of the Declaration. In various forums we have repeatedly stressed the necessity of ensuring a peace zone in the area.

84. Mr. Sardar Swaran Singh, the Foreign Minister of India, has recently reiterated India's policy in this regard. The objective of that policy, he said, was to ensure that the Indian Ocean remained an area of peace, free from big-Power rivalry. I quote him:

"Our fear is that any large-scale and loud presence of the navy of one big Power is bound to result in the presence of navies of other big naval Powers. This type of

rivalry may create problems for littoral countries, the overwhelming majority of which are desirous of keeping the Indian Ocean area as a region of tranquillity."

85. The representative of Sri Lanka, while introducing the draft resolution, asked a very pertinent question: "are all the essential elements of the Declaration acceptable to the littoral and hinterland States?" [1995th meeting, para.4]. We share the thought behind the question. There must be agreement on the basic concept amongst the littoral and hinterland States.

86. In the view of my delegation, the core of the Declaration is contained in paragraph 2. Let me recall the content of that paragraph in which the objectives are clearly defined. The resolution:

"Calls upon the great Powers, in conformity with this Declaration, to enter into immediate consultations with the littoral States and the Indian Ocean with a view to:

"(a) Halting the further escalation and expansion of their military presence in the Indian Ocean;

"(b) Eliminating from the Indian Ocean all bases, military installations and logistical supply facilities, the disposition of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and any manifestation of great Power military presence in the Indian Ocean conceived in the context of great power rivalry".

87. Paragraph 3 of the Declaration further qualifies the requirement of paragraph 2 and ensures that the territorial integrity and independence of the littoral and hinterland States is not threatened, and that the traditional role of the Indian Ocean as a major seaway is not curtailed.

88. Clearly, the path towards the achievement of the objective of the Declaration will be a difficult and arduous one involving detailed deliberations and intensive consultations not only among the littoral and hinterland countries, but also among the great Powers themselves, and among them and the countries of the region. The dangers of precipitate action are all too evident. We should not permit ourselves to be distracted by matters which, however valid in themselves, are irrelevant in the context of the Declaration. It would, therefore, be necessary to reach an agreement on certain basic definitions before any concrete action is taken. For example, it is imperative that an agreement be reached on the definition of the limits of the peace zone. For the purposes of the study authorized in the draft resolution before us, the formulation, "beyond the limits of national jurisdiction", may be used pending decisions of the forthcoming Conference on the Law of the Sea. This formulation has been adopted in many other United Nations resolutions and will have to do for the present.

89. We agree that reaching an agreement on these definitions may be a difficult task; nevertheless there is a vital necessity that all concerned States should reach agreement on at least some basic definitions if there are to be any concrete results. We feel, therefore, that due attention should be given to this aspect, instead of seeking to postpone it to the final stages.

90. Consultations in the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean, the mandate of which we are seeking to extend, should cover the question of definitions. However, the progress of the work of the Committee on other matters need not be held up for want of agreement on definitions.

91. I should like to assure the Secretary-General of the fullest co-operation of my Government in the preparation of the study referred to in the draft resolution and to urge all other Governments to do the same. It is our view that, without such co-operation, not only would the value of the study be reduced, but the Secretary-General might find himself faced with questions which would require political answers. Obviously, if the Secretariat is in need of any clarification, the *Ad Hoc* Committee would extend all possible help to it.

92. In conclusion, there is one point that I should like to stress. The task before us is to keep the Indian Ocean free of great-Power rivalries and their corollary effects. In order to do this, it is imperative that the great Powers be involved in the task. Without this involvement and without their assistance, the Declaration is likely to remain largely ineffective. My delegation would, therefore, earnestly urge all States to co-operate with the *Ad Hoc* Committee and the Secretary-General in the important task before us.

93. Mr. CHUANG Yen (China) (*translation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation has always held that the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace is a just proposal. Taking into account the actual situation in the region of the Indian Ocean, it has reflected the ardent desire of countries of the Indian Ocean region, and many other Asian and African countries, to safeguard national independence and state sovereignty and oppose super-Power aggression and hegemony. We resolutely support resolution 2832 (XXVI) of the General Assembly declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and hold that this resolution should be honoured and implemented. In discussing the draft resolution on the Indian Ocean peace zone, we would like to make the following comments.

94. The root cause of the prolonged turbulence and instability in the Indian Ocean region lies in the two super-Powers' aggression, expansion and contention. One super-Power has all along regarded the Indian Ocean as a place of strategic importance, where its fleets have been plying here and there. Recently, in order to meet the need of its rivalry with the other super-Power in the Middle East, it has dispatched more warships to the Indian Ocean to reinforce its flank. The other super-Power, anxious to catch up with the former, has in recent years entered the Indian Ocean on a massive scale to contend for hegemony, where it has openly sent permanent fleets, seeking military bases wherever possible and feverishly forming new military alliances. It has stepped up its intervention and subversive activities against countries in the Indian Ocean region. It is also doing its utmost to sow discord and create rifts so as to fish in troubled waters and attain its sinister ulterior aims.

95. Two years have elapsed since the General Assembly adopted the resolution declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. However, the military presence of the two super-Powers in this region has been aggravated instead of being eliminated. Their rivalries for hegemony have become

more unbridled, posing a serious menace to the peace and security of the region. This cannot but arouse the serious concern of the world people.

96. The Indian Ocean belongs to the countries and people of that region. The affairs of that region should be handled by the countries of that region themselves. There can be no peace and security in the region, and the sovereignty and independence of the countries there will remain in jeopardy as long as the two super-Powers persist in their expansion and their hegemonic manoeuvres in the Indian Ocean region, and as long as outside aggression and intervention are not eliminated there. For this reason, the Chinese delegation has pointed out on many occasions that in order to realize truly the just proposal for the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, it is imperative, first of all to stop the super-Powers' military expansion and hegemonic rivalry in the Indian Ocean zone, to call on all the nuclear countries, particularly the two nuclear super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to undertake not to deploy and use nuclear weapons in the Indian Ocean zone, to withdraw all the foreign armed forces stationed in the Indian Ocean and its littoral regions; to dismantle all the foreign military bases and military installations in the region; to prohibit foreign nuclear submarines, aircraft carrying nuclear weapons and all other nuclear-weapon-carrying vehicles from entering or passing through or over the Indian Ocean region; and to prohibit all foreign warships and military planes from using the Indian Ocean to encroach upon the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean. Is not one of the super-Powers crying day in and day out for general and complete disarmament and the "strengthening of international security", and talking so much about a "détente" in the international situation? Such being the case, why not withdraw its military presence from the Indian Ocean region and why not show a little sincerity for "détente"?

97. The establishment of the Indian Ocean peace zone also depends on the countries of this region basing their relations on the principles of mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. We believe that so long as the countries of the Indian Ocean region adhere to these principles, augment their own strength, maintain the necessary vigilance and exert joint efforts to oppose big-Power hegemonism and super-Power aggression and expansion, the Indian Ocean peace zone can be realized with the sympathy and support of the peoples of the world.

98. The Chinese Government and people have always deeply sympathized with and firmly supported the peoples of the world in their just struggles against the big-Power hegemonic policies of aggression, expansion and war, and for the defence of State sovereignty and national independence. The Chinese Government attaches great importance to, and supports, the positive efforts for the establishment of the Indian Ocean peace zone.

99. Basing itself on the above position, the Chinese delegation supports the draft resolution before us and is in favour of the preparation by the Secretary-General of a

factual statement of the great Powers' military presence in the Indian Ocean as a preliminary measure. In our opinion, such a factual statement should be as adequate and comprehensive as possible and should include the great Powers' military presence in all its aspects in that region, particularly that of the two super-Powers, such as military bases, military installations, logistic facilities, naval deployments, etc. Only thus can it be helpful to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean, in studying the actual situation, to take effective and concrete measures for the implementation of resolution 2832 (XXVI).

100. Mr. KUSUMASMORO (Indonesia): I would like to start by paying tribute to the work of the Chairman of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean, the representative of Sri Lanka, Ambassador Amerasinghe. His efforts, together with those of the representatives of the Member States who have participated in the meetings of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, have now brought us to the point at which concrete steps to further the objectives of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI) may realistically be contemplated.

101. In urging all States to accept the principles and objectives contained in the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, as embodied in draft resolution A/C.1/L.655, and as we are to request the *Ad Hoc* Committee to continue its work, it is the view of my delegation, which is one of the original sponsors of the draft resolution under consideration, that we should attempt to define and to resolve the conflicting interests which must be harmonized if we are to attain our chief objective, the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. Clearly, this will not be an easy goal to realize, but it is in the interest of all nations concerned with the maintenance of peace and security throughout the world that the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee be brought to a successful conclusion. There are a number of steps that may be taken in the near future that will bring that goal nearer to fulfilment. Perhaps the most important of them would be to convene a conference of littoral and hinterland States of the region, with the objective of defining and formulating a common view, shared by all the States involved, on the implementation of the conference. The questions discussed in such a conference would of necessity be complex, and difficult to solve. But the need for a common viewpoint among the nations of the Indian Ocean region to provide a basis for common action is clear. It is our hope that such a conference could agree upon certain initial measures that could be taken to establish the prerequisite conditions on which the zone of peace could be founded and on which it would meet with the strong support of the regional Powers.

102. An early step that could be taken that would go far towards establishing those conditions would be for the countries of the region to commit themselves to a policy of denuclearization. That would entail their permanent renunciation of the opportunity to acquire nuclear weapons and would in addition make it incumbent upon them to deny the use of their territory, whether on land or sea, for those weapons controlled by other States.

103. Such a policy of denuclearization would do much to demonstrate in a concrete way the commitment of the

States of the region to the principle of a zone of peace as well as the practical possibility of agreement among many peoples with such diverse interests. In that context my delegation would like to associate itself with the remarks made by the representative of Malaysia on the Kuala Lumpur Declaration of 27 November 1971, which seeks to establish South-East Asia as a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality. The value of a Declaration on the part of the regional Powers would be greatly enhanced if it was the fruit of the careful consideration that would result from its adoption by a conference of Indian Ocean States.

104. The nuclear Powers would be more likely to accept the decisions of such a conference of all the Powers of the region, whatever those decisions might be, than the declarations of a single State or group of States. In addition, the process of harmonization of interests which any specific agreement would entail would itself do much to produce a spirit of common interests and methods which in the future would render easier agreement on those larger and more difficult issues that would surely face the regional nations. That in turn would, as mentioned in the draft resolution, induce all States, and especially the major Powers, to extend their co-operation to the *Ad Hoc* Committee in the discharge of its functions, thus hastening the day when the concept of a zone of peace will be fully implemented.

105. The CHAIRMAN: I wish to announce that Iran has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/L.655.

106. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): First of all I should like to state that I understand that for reasons of economy it has not been possible for the Secretariat to put out a revised version of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.655 showing all the new sponsors of that draft resolution. If I may, I should like to refer to them to thank them for having joined us. In addition to those shown in document A/C.1/L.655, they are: Iran, Kuwait, Yugoslavia, the Philippines, the United Arab Emirates, Nepal, Sudan and Guyana.

107. I should like to express my sincere thanks to those representatives who have referred in generous terms to the initiative taken by my delegation to bring this proposal before the General Assembly and to have the Indian Ocean declared a zone of peace and respected as such. That initiative was taken by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, in the firm conviction that the traditional approach to the establishment of international peace and security through disarmament had proved fruitless and needed to be abandoned, or at least modified, and that instead it was necessary to adopt a more constructive and positive approach to the most serious problem confronting us. That proposal seeks to prevent the pestilence of the arms race from spreading all over the world.

108. The two most powerful nuclear nations, whose intensified competition in the Indian Ocean has caused us such anxiety and led us to introduce the proposal, should not regard it as merely an attempt at restraining them from preaching détente and disarmament while preparing with even more frenzied determination and unexampled ingenuity the means of multiple extermination of this planet. We know how futile such an attempt on our part would be.

But we believe that the peoples living on the shores of the Indian Ocean and the hinterland peoples are entitled to ask that they not be dragged against their will into the fiery orbit of a nuclear war through the intrusion of the nuclear forces of the two most powerful nuclear nations into our region. All we expect of them is a decent respect for our feelings and our wish to live in peace and security.

109. The good faith of those nuclear nations, and especially those with the most formidable and terrifying nuclear naval strength, will be put to the test when they are asked to state whether or not they want the implications of this question even to be made the subject of a study based on the type of factual statement for which paragraph 6 of the draft resolution asks.

110. Some representatives have stated that it might have been better first to have agreed upon even tentative definitions of certain important terms and ideas inherent in this proposal and in the concept. That would have been the ideal approach, but we felt that it would be better to be guided by the advice of experts on the subject rather than plunging ourselves into something unknown, as it were. It is precisely for that purpose that we have included in the draft resolution the request for a factual statement to be prepared by the Secretary-General with the help of experts and competent bodies. The Secretary-General and his advisers will have no easy task to perform, but we can rely absolutely on their discretion and initiative in discharging the difficult task entrusted to them. For its part the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean, as the representative of India has stated, will at all times be ready to help in every way possible.

111. In conclusion, I wish to state that we do not wish to be left in any doubt about who wants peace, and I wonder whether we should not now amend the old Latin tag which centuries of warfare and conflict have proved so dangerously fallacious. I think our motto for the future should be, *Si vis pacem para pacem*.

112. The CHAIRMAN: Since no other representative wishes to speak, the Committee has concluded its debate on draft resolution A/C.1/L.655. I declare that the voting stage has now begun, in accordance with rule 130 of the rules of procedure.

113. I shall now call upon those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the vote.

114. Mr. ROSCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translation from Russian*): The Soviet delegation would like to explain its position on the forthcoming vote on the draft resolution on the question of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, as contained in document A/C.1/L.655.

115. In the question of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, the USSR proceeds from the fundamental principle which is designed to support the proposals that genuinely promote the strengthening of the peace and security of the world and a reduction of international tension. The Soviet Union considers in this regard, that in preparing recommendations affecting peace and security, equal account should be taken of the interests

of the security of all parties and none of them should obtain any one-sided advantages. The Soviet Union is ready to consider, on an equal footing without detriment to the security of any of the parties, the question of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. However, in resolving this question there should be no artificial separation of a group of countries or groups of countries which would enjoy particular rights with regard to the preparation and establishment of a special régime for the Indian Ocean.

116. The Soviet delegation believes also that in preparing such proposals nothing should be done to the detriment of the universally acknowledged norms of international law, particularly the principle of freedom of navigation. For the Soviet Union the proposals to limit freedom of navigation and the carrying out of scientific research, including scientific research carried out with the aid of naval vessels, are unacceptable since the Indian Ocean is an important means of sea-going communication for the Soviet Union. The Geneva Convention of 1958 has confirmed, as a universally acknowledged norm of international law, the freedom of navigation for all vessels, including naval vessels, and the carrying out of scientific research with the use of such vessels. We should like to stress further that the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace with the preservation there of the military bases of imperialist Powers would put the USSR on an unequal footing *vis-à-vis* those countries and would be prejudicial to the interests not only of the Soviet Union but also the countries of the Socialist Commonwealth. Therefore, the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace is something which primarily requires the elimination of all foreign bases in that area.

117. Just a few words now on the statement made by the representative of the People's Republic of China.

118. The attempts of the People's Republic of China to distort the position of the Soviet Union in this matter and put the Soviet Union on the same footing as the imperialist Powers, is clearly detrimental to the cause of the strengthening of international peace and security in the region of the Indian Ocean. Such attempts on the part of the People's Republic of China do nothing to facilitate the strengthening of peace and security and introduce an element of dangerous instability into international life. On the whole, the actions of the People's Republic of China in the international arena, we would like to stress once again today, are not in keeping with the task of strengthening peace and of peaceful co-operation among States. The leaders of China, as we emphasized in our statement earlier today, are doing everything they can to poison the international atmosphere and increase international tension. In this regard their actions are entirely in contradiction of the fundamental provisions of the United Nations Charter. Article 1 of the Charter provides that the United Nations is to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends, that is to say in connexion with peace and security.

119. As to the draft resolution submitted today before the First Committee, the Soviet delegation would like to point out that, apart from the unacceptability to the USSR of the principles on the basis of which an attempt is being made to

resolve the question of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, the draft resolution contains a number of other provisions with which the Soviet Union is unable to agree. These relate to that part of the draft resolution which includes instructions for the Secretary-General to prepare a factual statement on the military presence of great Powers in the Indian Ocean conceived in the context of great Power rivalry. Such a form of language would create not only a difficult position for the General Assembly but is also designed to do everything possible to complicate the consideration of the question of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

120. In this regard we cannot fail to raise the question, "what is the purpose of these instructions to the Secretary-General?" Is it really a question of performing the task of declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, or perhaps these instructions have a completely different purpose?

121. Bearing all this in mind, and bearing in mind the fact that this draft resolution is not in keeping with the task of declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, the Soviet delegation will not support this draft resolution and will abstain in the voting on it.

122. Mr. BARTON (Canada): My delegation remains sympathetic in principle to the promotion of the denuclearized or demilitarized zone and thus welcomes efforts to apply these concepts to the Indian Ocean. However, the draft resolution before us in operative paragraph 1 would require Canada, in company with other member States, to urge those States with a direct interest in the Indian Ocean to support the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace defined only by resolution 2832 (XXVI). Canada abstained on that resolution and continues to have reservations as to the definition of the obligations implied in that Declaration.

123. We believe that responsibility for the elaboration of specific proposals rests primarily with the States of the area which are most directly concerned, and we believe that this goal should be substantially achieved before States with no direct interest in the region can be called upon to endorse such arrangements. The history of the development of the Treaty of Tlatelolco stands as a case in point.

124. The present draft resolution calls also on the Secretary-General to prepare a statement on the military presence of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean, particularly in the context of great Power rivalry, and requests that this statement be based on available material. We appreciate the interest of the sponsors in obtaining this information but we very much doubt the appropriateness of seeking it from the Secretary-General.

125. In the light of these reservations it will be necessary for my delegation to abstain. I wish to emphasize that this abstention is based only on reservations about the approach being taken in this matter. It does not in any way indicate a lack of appreciation or sympathy towards the efforts and intentions of the sponsors, which Canada respects and hopes eventually will be realized.

126. Mr. JAMAL (Qatar): The maintenance of international peace and security is one of the primary objectives set forth in the United Nations Charter. If the United Nations fails to fulfil this objective, mankind in the part of the world under discussion will face more trouble and catastrophe.

127. My delegation welcomed General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, which contains the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. My delegation believes that that Declaration is one of the positive and constructive steps in the right direction towards the maintenance of regional and international peace and security.

128. For those reasons my delegation will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/L.655.

129. Mr. ADJIBADE (Dahomey): (*interpretation from French*): Cleaving very firmly to the principles contained in the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, my delegation is grateful for the work already done by the *Ad Hoc* Committee, work that we support and would like to see continued until completed. The delegation of Dahomey shares the ideas contained in paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/C.1/L.655. We trust that the Secretary-General's factual statement of the great Powers' military presence in the Indian Ocean will be prepared within a reasonable length of time and that a similar study will also be made covering other regions, in order speedily and completely to liquidate foreign military bases and to strengthen international peace. From this standpoint, the delegation of Dahomey considers that the adoption of the draft resolution will be a basic contribution to peace, and for that reason we shall vote in favour of it.

130. Mr. PANYARACHUN (Thailand): Ever since the item under consideration, "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace", was inscribed on the agenda of the General Assembly on Sri Lanka's initiative, the delegation of Thailand has followed the question with great interest and has also participated in both formal and informal discussions of the item. Last year, my delegation voted for resolution 2992 (XXVII), which established the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean. Our support for that resolution was based on procedural grounds and could not be interpreted as prejudicing the previously stated position of Thailand on the Declaration itself. Our position with regard to the Declaration is not a negative one. We amply explained it in our statement in the First Committee at the 1848th meeting during the twenty-sixth session, and whatever reservations we might have had on the Declaration itself were not related to its principles and objectives, with which we fully agreed, but rather to the manner and approach to such an undertaking. We felt that many questions in connexion with the implementation of the Declaration and the eventual realization of the objectives remained unanswered and needed further elaboration. We therefore had hoped that some of these basic questions—such as the definition of the term "Indian Ocean"—could be resolved during the discussions of the *Ad Hoc* Committee. Unfortunately, but perhaps understandably, those questions still remained unanswered.

131. In his introduction of draft resolution A/C.1/L.655, the representative of Sri Lanka and Chairman of the *Ad*

Hoc Committee enlightened us on some of the difficulties faced by that Committee. We are fully sympathetic to his predicament and should like to extend to him and to the Committee our very best wishes for a more productive year.

132. In his statement, the representative of Sri Lanka gave an interpretation of some of the points that appear in the draft resolution. My delegation welcomes in particular the statement to the effect that, in the discussions he had in the Committee, "there is no question of any attempt at limiting the sovereignty of any country in the maintenance of such establishments as it considers necessary for its own security . . .". [*1955th meeting, para. 27.*] In addition, we also welcomed his remarks with regard to the fact that he would expect the Secretary-General to consult the Governments concerned, as necessary.

133. With reference to paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, we agree that it is possibly the most important paragraph in the text. It

"Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a factual statement of the great Powers' military presence in all its aspects, in the Indian Ocean, and with special reference to their naval deployments, conceived in the context of great-Power rivalry".

134. My delegation intends to support that paragraph and, in fact, the draft resolution as a whole—but on the clear understanding that some of the terms used in that paragraph, as well as in other parts of the draft resolution, have no clear and specific meaning as far as my delegation is concerned; and, in voting for the draft resolution, my delegation would like to state that it is doing so on procedural grounds and we presume that in recommending that the Secretary-General prepare a statement based on "available material" such available material should also be authoritative.

135. Mr. MARTIN (United States of America): The members of this Committee will recall that the United States abstained in the vote on the two previous resolutions on this subject; we are abstaining again.

136. The current draft resolution seems to us to embody a number of concepts and premises underlying the Indian Ocean peace zone initiative which we originally found, and continue to find, unacceptable. However, I want to reiterate that the United States does share, as I am certain all members of this Committee share, the earnest desire to maintain and strengthen conditions of peace and tranquillity in the Indian Ocean area.

137. The CHAIRMAN: I shall now put to the vote draft resolution A/C.1/L.655.

The draft resolution was adopted by 77 votes to none, with 29 abstentions.

138. The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their votes after the vote.

139. Mr. ECKERBERG (Sweden): The affirmative vote of my delegation on the draft resolution is based on the

general policy of the Swedish Government to support regional initiatives for disarmament, including demilitarized or denuclearized zones. As I said in the debate on this item last year, active co-operation and agreement among the countries of the region is an absolute necessity for the acceptability, and for that matter the viability, of such regional measures. We have therefore taken note of the fact that the draft resolution enjoys the wide support of such countries.

140. In introducing the draft resolution the representative of Sri Lanka said that its purpose was essentially procedural. It is our hope that the procedure set out in the text for the continued efforts towards having the principles and objectives of the draft declaration accepted will be successful and that those efforts will obtain the support of other major States involved in the region.

141. Finally, as is evident from this explanation of vote, the Swedish delegation's stand on this question does not set any precedent whatsoever for any other regional disarmament initiative.

142. Mr. DI BERNARDO (Italy): I should like to explain briefly the reasons which led my delegation to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution. My Government is keenly interested in any initiative aimed at ensuring international security and strengthening peace in the world. All efforts in all geographical areas and in all fields, provided they are essentially aimed at such a goal, are therefore welcome to us, as it is in the interests of mankind that détente shall prevail in relations among all countries. We understand that the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace was inspired by a genuine interest in peace and security, as was repeated this morning by the representative of Malaysia, and it is in line with the important Declaration of Kuala Lumpur.

143. We consider such declarations a valuable contribution towards the promotion of co-operation among the countries of the area and, therefore, towards the maintenance of a balance of interests in peace. However, as my delegation has pointed out on other occasions, there are certain aspects of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace which, in our view, might lead to misinterpretation, particularly in connexion with the principle of freedom of navigation on the high seas. Thus we could not subscribe to the Declaration also because any limitation of traditional freedoms, once accepted in one instance, could be invoked as a precedent in other maritime areas.

144. The purpose of the draft resolution just adopted is the continuation of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee towards the implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and therefore it gives rise to the same kind of reservations as my delegation has expressed previously. However, as we recognize the right of all countries to try to find the best possible arrangements among themselves in order to preserve security and solidarity in their region and their area, we wish to congratulate the members of the Committee on their commitment and their goodwill.

145. Mr. SCALABRE (France) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation has already explained, at the last two sessions, its attitude towards the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace contained in General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971. We should like to repeat that the French Government fully understands the concern of the coastal States of the Indian Ocean, so eloquently expressed by Mr. Amerasinghe, to try to keep themselves resolutely outside military competition and confrontation and to preserve the Indian Ocean which bathes their shores. However, they do know that never will any threats come to them from France. It was essentially for reasons of principle that my delegation abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. They stem principally from our attachment to the principle of the freedom of the high seas. We think that the resolution of the General Assembly cannot put any limits on the scope of that principle, which was one of the first established by international positive law. However, we do feel that the legitimate fears of the coastal States of the Indian Ocean cannot be calmed by a declaration, no matter how elevated its tone and spirit. It is only the achievement of true disarmament, which we aspire to, which will effectively make the Indian Ocean, as indeed all the oceans of the world, a zone of peace.

146. Mr. STEWARD (South Africa): My delegation abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. When the equivalent item was under discussion at the two preceding sessions of the General Assembly my delegation made known its sympathy in principle for any measure which would establish the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, free from manifestations of rivalry between the major Powers, particularly the major maritime Powers. That would accord with South Africa's general support for measures which reduce tension, improve security and, in so far as may be applicable in this case, promote disarmament on a rational basis. At the same time my delegation pointed out that the relevant Declaration lacked the support of the very Powers whose support was necessary to make it meaningful and that much careful study and preparation would be required before uncertainties surrounding the Declaration could be clarified, thus enabling it to become an effective instrument in practice.

147. In the opinion of my delegation, those considerations remain essentially valid today and suffice to explain our abstention. There are, however, other contributory considerations. It was with no little surprise that South Africa learned during 1973 that notwithstanding the fact that most of its approximately 2,000 mile sea frontage is on the Indian Ocean, in some quarters it has been deemed, for all intents and purposes, not to be a littoral State. This interesting and ingenious assertion is to be found, for example, in an annex to the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean. In the light thereof, it will be readily understood that despite its generally favourable attitude to the principle at issue, if South Africa is not involved in consultations related to this subject it cannot be expected necessarily to associate itself with the results of those consultations.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.