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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 51st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire)

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GENERAL DEBATE, CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 71, 72 AND 73 (continued)

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

Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) (interpretation from French): The economic crisis, underdevelopment, regional conflicts, the continued worsening of the environment, terrorism, the persistent use of force in international relations in violation of the United Nations Charter, and overarmament are some of the many threats to peace and security.

The international community, which is aware of the seriousness of those threats, should undertake multidimensional concerted action to promote economic development, bring about the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict situations, protect the environment, combat terrorism and achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Indeed, that would strengthen international peace and security. To this end the United Nations should be the main catalyst of multilateral action and should therefore be strengthened.

The threat posed by overarmament to international peace and security is quite correctly considered by the international community as being the most urgent and serious threat. Indeed, in the nuclear era, what is involved is not only the security of States but also the very survival of mankind; hence the high priority given by the international community to disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war. The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament considers the elimination of the threat of a nuclear war as the most urgent task at the present time.

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The progress made in bilateral negotiations with regard to the limitation of nuclear weapons and the forthcoming summit meeting between the Heads of State of the two super-Powers open up new prospects for the elimination of the threat of mankind's destruction posed by nuclear weapons.

While encouraging the continuation of those bilateral efforts, owing to the special responsibility of the two super-Powers in the field of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, we hope that multilateral negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament can also help us break the deadlock that we have been in for some time now.

The maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security call for the intensification of efforts with regard in particular to, first, respect for the principle of refraining from resort to the threat or use of force in international relations and its corollary, the obligation of States to settle their international disputes by peaceful means; secondly, the strengthening and implementing of the collective security system envisaged in the United Nations Charter; and, thirdly, promotion of socio-economic development.

With regard first to the promotion of socio-economic development, it should be recalled that this is included among the purposes of the United Nations. Article 55 of the Charter provides:

"With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote:

"higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development;

"solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems; and international cultural and educational co-operation; and

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"universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."

The international community gives ever more recognition to the fact that, in a world characterized by interdependence in all spheres of international relations, the threats to international peace and security are not solely of a military or political nature but may also be economic in nature. The Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development is very explicit in this connection when it states:

"There is also a growing recognition that both overarmament and underdevelopment constitute threats to international peace and security."

(A/CONF.130/39, para. 6)

Therefore, faced with the difficulties and economic crises that increasingly threaten the existing international economic order and international peace and security, the international community must increase development assistance and find appropriate means to settle the problems of external debt. All that would considerably aid in promoting a new international economic order that would be more stable and more equitable.

The implementation and consolidation of the provisions of the United Nations Charter on the collective security system is an essential factor in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security. This system is still valid and could be of great interest if it were indeed implemented. In this context, the role of the Security Council, as the central body with principal responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, should be strengthened. All States should assist it in discharging the mandate given it under the Charter to prevent disputes and conflict situations, the prolongation and extension of which

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could threaten international peace and security. Any initiative that could lead to the implementation or strengthening of the collective security system should be encouraged.

For his part, the Secretary-General could contribute to the prevention of disputes and conflicts pursuant to the mandate given him in Articles 98 and 99 of the Charter through his good offices and in the context of his quiet diplomacy, which has already proved its usefulness and effectiveness in practice. States should therefore assist and encourage him in the efforts that he undertakes to that end.

Respect for the principle of refraining from resort to the threat or use of force and its corollary the peaceful settlement of disputes is another important factor in strengthening international peace and security. Unfortunately, the international situation still points to the persistence of numerous conflicts and focal points of tension, and resort to force in violation of the provisions of the United Nations Charter on refraining from the threat or use of force and the obligation to settle disputes peacefully.

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Many efforts still remain to be made with regard to the implementation of the principles of non-recourse to force and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

States should show proof of good will in order to achieve progress in this field and thereby contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security.

The Kingdom of Morocco has always shown great interest in the strengthening of peace, security and co-operation in the Mediterranean area. This interest is justified by the fact that Morocco is one of the States bordering on the Straits of Gibraltar, the strategic importance of which need not be demonstrated. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of our country stated in this connection before the General Assembly at this session that

"As a State bordering the Straits of Gibraltar, Morocco understandably closely follows the situation in the Mediterranean. The strategic situation of that maritime waterway and the extremely sensitive character of that area with respect to the peace and security of the entire Mediterranean basin call for special attention to the remaining sources of tension." (A/42/PV.21, p. 27)

In this context the continuation of the conflict in the Middle East is the most serious and most urgent threat to peace, and the international community should spare no effort to find a lasting solution to it. The implementation of the Fez plan of 1982 and the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East could contribute greatly to the attainment of the objective in view. In this connection we support the Secretary-General's efforts to hasten the convening of this Conference.

The growing interdependence that increasingly characterizes all areas of international relations should not exclude that pertaining to security and co-operation among Mediterranean and European countries, and, as was indicated by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Mediterranean countries members of the

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Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in their statement adopted in June 1987 at Brioni,

"more extensive consultations and co-operation between the participating States at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and all the Mediterranean non-aligned countries" (A/42/409, p. 18)

are very much needed for the promotion of peace and co-operation in the Mediterranean region in order to make it a zone of peace and prosperity. The Mediterranean countries members of the non-aligned movement, particularly since the Valletta meeting of 1984, have been trying to promote the attainment of this objective, which can lead only to closer relations between the peoples on the two shores of the Mediterranean and improve understanding and co-operation among them.

We hope that the other Mediterranean countries will not spare any effort to achieve the common aim, namely, the strengthening of peace and security in the Mediterranean, which would obviously help improve conditions for international peace and security.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): Before proceeding, I should like to remind members of the Committee that the deadline for submitting draft resolutions on agenda items 71, 72 and 73 relating to international security has been set for this evening at 6 p.m. sharp.

Mr. BIRCH (United Kingdom): The representative of Denmark and of the Twelve has spoken on the general subject of international security in terms which my delegation fully endorses. Today I wish to speak specifically about the proposal by the Soviet Union and its allies for a comprehensive system of international peace and security.

As the originators of this proposal will recall, the United Kingdom had a hand in changing the title, since it was at the suggestion of my delegation that the word "peace" was included. It is taken from the opening words of the United

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Nations Charter, which describe the first purpose of this Organization as the maintenance of international peace and security. Our proposal underlined our attachment to the Charter.

We believe the Charter is as relevant now to an ordered and civilized world as it was over 40 years ago. The threat to international peace and security results from the behaviour of States, not from the inadequacy of the Charter. So we need to think very carefully and fully about any proposals for systems or concepts that might supplant or undermine it.

As we all know, the Soviet proposal for a comprehensive system of international peace and security is their flagship for this session of the General Assembly. They have been talking about it for over a year. But I must admit that I, and many delegations to which I have spoken, are unclear about what they really have in mind. There are lots of words, but nothing very concrete. What are we to make of it, for example, when the Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister, describing the proposal, tells us that

"discussion of the idea of comprehensive international security must, as we see it, help the international community find fulcrums amidst the weightlessness of contradictions and establish reference points for advancing in all areas of international development." (A/C.1/42/PV.49, p. 33)

Perhaps it sounds better in the original Russian, but I fear that I cannot understand it.

We are also struck by the contradictions in what we have heard from the statements of advocates of this initiative. On the one hand the representative of Poland told us that in no way did the sponsors propose a new system of international peace and security. On the other hand, we heard from the



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representative of the German Democratic Republic that it was imperative to find new forms and procedures for relations between systems and States. He said,

"Bearing that objective in mind, the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, at the latest session of the Committee of Foreign Ministers, meeting in Prague, reaffirmed their determination to strive to establish a comprehensive system of international peace and security including the military, political, economic, humanitarian and ecological spheres." (ibid., p. 8)

Are we then to believe the representative of Poland or the representative of the German Democratic Republic?

And if we pursue Mr. Petrovsky's speech of yesterday, our confusion is hardly resolved. We read of

"the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security" (ibid., p. 41) and the need

"to work out a comprehensive approach". (ibid., p. 43)

Then again the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister also told us yesterday that

"The Soviet Union proceeds from the premise that the United Nations Charter is a model" - we would have preferred him to say the model, but he went on - "for ensuring the security of the international community in keeping with the national interests of all States". (ibid., p. 28)

Which of the sponsors are we to believe? What is it we are being asked to agree to? It seems to me that we are being asked to buy a pig in a poke. Perhaps I should explain what a poke is. In the old days, farmers brought their pigs to market in sacks that were called pokes, and the unwary were enticed to buy pigs that were still in the sack without having a proper look at them. That is what we mean by "buying a pig in a poke".

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I am sure delegations will have noted that during this session of the General Assembly the sponsors made frequent reference in their speeches on a wide range of subjects to the proposed comprehensive system and have suggested that such a system would help to solve all the problems that face us at the United Nations, including regional conflicts.

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I listened with particular attention to the speech by the representative of the Soviet Union last week during the debate on Afghanistan. He made no mention of the comprehensive system. Was it forgetfulness? Or is the new system to be applicable to some situations and not to others? And did the other speakers from the Eastern group of countries have similar lapses of memory? None of the representatives of the Group of Eastern European States, the sponsors of the draft resolution we hope to see shortly, saw fit to tell us how their principles might apply to one of the most pressing problems on the international agenda. Is it unreasonable to ask that the Soviet Union should practise what it preaches before trying to persuade the United Nations that a new and ill-defined system of security is necessary? We know that this Organization functions less than perfectly, but it is not through any inadequacy of the system itself. It is through the all too frequent failure of States to live up to the Charter.

I had hoped to make some detailed comments this afternoon on the promised draft resolution on the comprehensive system that the sponsors are asking us to adopt in a few days' time. Unfortunately it has not yet been submitted. Indeed, I heard that the draft that we may see by the end of the day is simply a proxy to meet the time-limit and that another draft will be submitted on Monday with amendments. The delay in submitting the resolution underlines, in the view of my delegation, the ambiguities and the lack of precision in the Soviet proposal, as well as the confusion and disagreement among the sponsors themselves. We know, however, from the speeches we have already heard, that the sponsors want their proposal to be considered by a group of experts, who would prepare a detailed report for the General Assembly. Our view is that we should not burden a group of experts with a confused proposal of this sort, however important the subject. Why should an unknown group of experts be better equipped than Member States to tell us

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what we should do in this field? Who will choose them? What will their mandate be? Who will they represent? If the question of devising a new system of international peace and security is so crucial, would it not be better for all of us, not just a few experts, to have a chance to state our views, perhaps to the Secretary-General? He could then report to us whether, and in what way, the membership considers we should try to strengthen the operation of the United Nations.

I want to make it clear that we are always ready to work on any constructive proposals for improving the functioning of the existing system. And we are alive to the wide-ranging varieties of proposals that have been made by Soviet leaders recently for the management of international affairs and for strengthening the role of the United Nations. We recognize that in many ways Mr. Gorbachev has conceived a vision of a better world. We welcome this, though much of it is not new. We share many of the same aspirations. But, while it is tempting to believe that these can be imposed from outside by a new organization of life on our planet, we believe that enduring results can only be achieved by practical work within the present system. In our view, the only practical way to take forward these wider proposals is for the authors to tell us clearly what they have in mind, in the various appropriate forums of the United Nations system, so that they can be considered properly by the representatives of Member States.

In conclusion, we are convinced that the collective security system, embodied in the United Nations Charter, is the most effective system to preserve international peace and security. We do not accept the arguments that we heard yesterday to the effect that the Charter is out of date or that it is incapable of dealing with the problems of the modern world. International peace and security is the responsibility of us all and we should not pass that responsibility to some

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other body or group. What is needed is not a new system, but a re-dedication to the ideals of the Charter. We believe the First Committee has an especially important role in this respect.

Nr. STREZOV (Bulgaria): The People's Republic of Bulgaria has always attached primary importance to the role and efforts of the United Nations in the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security. The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, adopted by the General Assembly, is one of the most important documents elaborated by the world Organization. As is emphasized in the reply of the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria to the Secretary-General of the United Nations,

"In the present-day international situation, the question of the implementation of [the Declaration] has assumed new dimensions".

(A/42/592, p. 2)

At the forty-first session of the General Assembly, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, along with other socialist countries, proceeding from this understanding, proposed the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security. Thereby they drew the attention of the world Organization to the need for a multifaceted and all-embracing approach to the issues of security based on an objective and realistic assessment of the integrated and interdependent nature of the contemporary world and its interrelated problems. It is our considered opinion that given the objective imperatives of the present day, this is an issue of primary importance for the future of mankind.

In our view, there can be no universal security without equal security for all States in the military-political, economic, ecological and humanitarian spheres of international relations. In our nuclear and space age, there cannot be security for some countries at the expense of others.

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Today, the security of States can no longer be safeguarded by military and technical means alone; it has become more of a political problem. The development of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, of ever greater sophistication, precision and destructiveness, and plans to extend the arms race into outer space, strengthen the security of no one. Nuclear weapons endanger equally the survival of States, which may become their targets, the survival of those States which possess them and could resort to their use, and even the survival of non-belligerent States far removed from the theatre of any potential conflict. Doctrines such as nuclear deterrence cannot ensure the survival of mankind. In our view, arms reduction and disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, universal and equal security constitute in a nutshell the philosophy of survival in our nuclear and space age.

It is encouraging that awareness of the need for a new political thinking and a new approach to the questions of peace and security has been steadily gaining ground among statesmen, politicians, public figures, scientists, clergymen and ordinary people from East and West, North and South. The People's Republic of Bulgaria greatly appreciates the efforts to preserve international peace and security made by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the New Delhi Six, the Palme Commission and other governmental and non-governmental organizations and movements. Their activities guarantee that there will be a decided improvement in international affairs, a transition from distrust and confrontation to mutual understanding and co-operation, that détente will be turned into a lasting and irreversible process, and that peaceful coexistence will become a fundamental principle of international relations.

The article entitled "Reality and safeguards for a secure world", by Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, published on the eve of the forty-second session of the

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General Assembly, contains a wealth of very important ideas and proposals for strengthening international peace and security before the advent of the twenty-first century.

The communiqué issued on 29 October 1987 by the Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of States parties to the Warsaw Treaty pointed out that it was necessary and possible to achieve a radical improvement in international relations and that positive trends in world affairs should be strengthened and reinforced. The Ministers also reaffirmed their readiness to continue to that end the policy of wide-ranging and constructive dialogue with other States.

Of particular importance in this context is the forthcoming summit meeting between General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and President Ronald Reagan, at which they are expected to sign an agreement on the elimination of medium-range and shorter-range missiles and to give momentum to the talks on strategic-arms reduction, while at the same time preserving the anti-ballistic missile Treaty, as well as to the negotiations on the gradual reduction, cessation and total prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

As has already been stated on many occasions, the initiative on the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security is aimed at bringing about a future world free of nuclear weapons, violence and war, a world of all-round co-operation and the harmonious development of all countries and nations.

In our view, military and political security means, first and foremost, the elimination of nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction, deep reductions in armed forces and conventional armaments to reasonable levels sufficient for defence, adequate reductions in military budgets, confidence-building measures, greater openness in military affairs, and strict and effective international control. It also requires the dismantling of military

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blobs, the elimination of foreign military bases, the withdrawal of armed forces stationed abroad and the adoption of military doctrines of a strictly defensive character. We welcome the recent adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration on the Enhancement of the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations.

Irreplaceable prerequisites for the strengthening of international security include the elimination of regional conflicts and the prevention of the outbreak of new ones, strict respect for the sovereign right of every people to make its own choice of the lines of its future development and the forms thereof, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The position of the People's Republic of Bulgaria with respect to existing hotbeds of international tension and conflict in various parts of the world was set forth in the statement of my Minister for Foreign Affairs during the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly and in statements delivered by our representatives under the relevant agenda items.

As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, my country has contributed to the efforts to seek peaceful and just solutions to the various crises facing the world. We consider that the potential of the United Nations machinery in this area is far from exhausted. What we need is strict adherence by all States to their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, concerted action, respect for the interests of other States and peoples, and the political will to achieve concrete results.

The contribution Bulgaria has made to efforts to implement the purposes and principles of the United Nations has also been reflected in its policy in the Balkan peninsula. We consider that, along with the implementation of the proposal that the Balkans be declared a zone free of nuclear and chemical weapons, the



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conclusion of bilateral agreements between all Balkan States, including a code of good-neighbourly conduct, would have a beneficial effect on regional and international security.

We deem it important that concerted action be undertaken to combat international terrorism, which has escalated into a threat of global proportions. We are ready for a wide-ranging constructive dialogue to formulate effective measures in that field.

In our view, universal security also includes international economic security, which calls for the establishment of a new international economic order. This would require the restructuring of international economic relations, including monetary and financial relations, on an equitable and democratic basis, the elimination of all forms of discrimination in international trade and economic ties, overcoming underdevelopment and finding a just global solution to the problem of indebtedness.

Substantial resources for the economic and social development of all countries, including developing countries, could be released by the implementation of measures for real disarmament. The recent International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development was of particular importance in affirming the principle of disarmament for development in international affairs. We should like to see that principle implemented in practice.

Concerted action is also necessary to eliminate hunger and malnutrition, to find new sources of energy, to facilitate the rational exploitation of natural resources, to promote international co-operation in the utilization of marine resources and in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.

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The problems of the environment have become ever more urgent, which necessitates broader international co-operation in that area. To that end, Bulgaria has proposed the conclusion of a treaty on the environmental protection of the Balkan peninsula and the convening of an ecological forum of States participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, to which my country is ready to serve as host.

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The establishment of a comprehensive system of international security is also intended to ensure decent living conditions for all, as well as the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The establishment of a secure and humane world would be unthinkable without the enjoyment of the most basic human rights, namely, the right to life in peace and freedom.

Universal security also calls for the dissemination of the ideas of peace and disarmament, for the preparation of societies for life in peace, and for tolerance and respect for the ways, values and traditions of others. War propaganda, violence and hatred of other peoples are inadmissible. We should view one another, not as enemies, but as equal partners in the common task of safeguarding peace and the future of mankind. This is the spiritual and moral foundation upon which confidence and security should be built. We therefore look upon co-operation in the humanitarian field as a means of promoting the humanization and democratization of international relations and as a moral guarantee, along with the military-political and international legal guarantees, of the preservation of peace.

A serious threat to international security has been generated by mass and flagrant violations of human rights in such forms as racism, racial discrimination, genocide and apartheid, which must be eradicated once and for all.

There can be no security in a world where conditions do not exist for the free and harmonious development of the individual. The promotion of the entire spectrum of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in their interrelated and indivisible unity, is indispensable in this respect. Strict compliance with the instruments on international human rights and accession to them by all States are essential. The promotion and strengthening of co-operation within the United Nations system and

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within the framework of these international instruments, as well as the identification of new areas of interaction, are now high on our agenda.

Harmonizing the legislation and administrative regulations of all countries with the respective international obligations and norms is an important condition for the promotion of co-operation on the basis of equality in the humanitarian field.

The common efforts to strengthen international security would have much to gain from promoting objective public understanding and the exchange of knowledge about the life, history, national character and traditions of different peoples. We should move beyond ideological differences and focus our efforts on the overriding goal of the survival of mankind. The idea of setting up a world-wide programme of information under the auspices of the United Nations is designed to serve that aim.

There are ample opportunities to strengthen co-operation in the cultural, scientific and educational fields, through such means as the promotion of human contacts and co-operation among organizations and the preparation of generally recognized criteria for solving the problem of divided families in a humane way.

Global problems require global efforts to combat disease, including AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome), and the illicit production, trafficking and abuse of narcotic drugs, and to deal with a number of problems in the social and humanitarian field, such as hunger, malnutrition and illiteracy.

These are some of the considerations for our joint - I stress, joint - proposal concerning the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security. We are well aware that this proposal is far from being exhaustive. Nor is it intended to infringe the interests of any State. Quite the contrary, we view international security as a common responsibility. It is our

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wish to continue the dialogue and to diversify and enrich its content with a view to reaching generally acceptable solutions through the collective efforts of all countries. We find it appropriate that a group of experts should be established to assist the Secretary-General in preparing a study on the various views and ideas on this matter.

The international community has provided the foundation for co-operation, which should be strengthened and reinforced. This foundation is above all - and I should say only - the Charter of the United Nations and other international legal instruments. The principles and norms set forth in them should be fully implemented in accordance with the imperatives of the present day, thereby ensuring the primacy of international law in inter-State relations.

The establishment of a comprehensive system of international security requires the optimal utilization of all international machinery, especially the United Nations. In his message to the Secretary-General on the occasion of the International Year of Peace, Todor Zhivkov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, emphasized:

"It is the United Nations that is the natural forum for the discussion of, and search for solutions to, the multitude of problems of a political, economic, social and other nature. For this reason, the People's Republic of Bulgaria has always supported and will continue to support the activities of the world Organization, as well as efforts to strengthen its effectiveness."

(A/42/126, annex, p. 4)

Guided by our understanding that the role of the United Nations in safeguarding peace and security should be increased, we envision the comprehensive system of international security as functioning on the basis of the Charter and

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within its framework. To this end, it is necessary to strengthen the authority of the United Nations and the role of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General, and to intensify the activities of the organs and organizations of the United Nations system in addressing the international issues within their competence.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope that through collective efforts, political will and a sense of responsibility we shall clear the way to a future world with security for all.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): We had one more speaker on the list but because of the meeting of the Security Council which is taking place right now, that speaker will not be able to address us today. We have therefore concluded our work for this afternoon. I wish to inform delegations that we have so far received no request concerning the possible extension of the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions on items 71, 72 and 73 and therefore the deadline is still 6 p.m. today.

We would request delegations that have draft resolutions to submit to be kind enough to hand them to the Secretary or deliver them to him in his office.

Before adjourning, I should like to inform you that the following delegations have asked to speak at the next meeting, which is to be held on Monday at 10 a.m.: Pakistan, Romania, Hungary, Singapore, Malta and Panama.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.