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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 15 November 1974, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina)  
Rapporteur: Mr. COSTA LOBO (Portugal)

- Reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries /24/ (continued)
  - (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Distribution of the Funds Released as a Result of the Reduction of Military Budgets;
  - (b) Report of the Secretary-General
- Napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use: report of the Secretary-General /27/ (continued)
- Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /28/ (continued)

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AS THIS RECORD WAS DISTRIBUTED ON 18 NOVEMBER 1974, THE TIME-LIMIT FOR CORRECTIONS WILL BE 21 NOVEMBER 1974.

The co-operation of delegations in strictly observing this time-limit would be greatly appreciated.

- Urgent need for cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and conclusion of a treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /29/ (continued)
- Implementation of General Assembly resolution 3079 (XXVIII) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco): report of the Secretary-General /30/ (continued)
- Implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean /31/ (continued)
- World Disarmament Conference: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference /34/ (continued)
- General and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /35/ (continued)
- Implementation of General Assembly resolution 2286 (XXII) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco) /100/ (continued)
- Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East /101/ (continued)
- Prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health /103/ (continued)
- Declaration and establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia /107/ (continued)

AGENDA ITEMS 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 100, 101, 103, 107 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): We shall now proceed with our consideration of the various proposals before us.

Mr. SINGH (India): India's general approach to disarmament, in particular to nuclear disarmament, is well known and had been reiterated in this Committee this year. Our attitude towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is governed by that approach. We see the creation of such zones in appropriate regions of the world on the initiative of the States concerned and by agreement among them as a useful collateral measure but not as a substitute for nuclear disarmament.

It is in that spirit that India has supported the General Assembly resolutions on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa and in Latin America. They were proposed on the initiative of the countries of those regions and by agreement among them after determining the appropriateness of the region and the suitability of conditions. In both cases there were prior consultations leading to agreement among the countries concerned before endorsement by the General Assembly.

At the same time, India has also maintained that any proposal for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in a particular region has to be considered on its specific merits.

The Pakistani proposal seeks to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. It also envisages a régime for the peaceful nuclear programmes of the States of the region. It would have been better if prior consultations had taken place among the concerned countries of our part of the world, particularly since conditions vary from zone to zone and our different problems and perceptions should all have been taken into account. It would be essential to take into consideration certain special features of the zone proposed by Pakistan. Africa and Latin America are separate and distinct continental zones, geographically and politically. In that sense, South Asia cannot be considered a zone. The presence in Asia of countries belonging to military alliances and the existence of nuclear-weapon Powers would have a vital bearing on the viability of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

(Mr. Singh, India)

Pakistan has brought the question before the United Nations without consulting us. Nonetheless the way is still open for us to adopt the right procedure and to search for an understanding through mutual consultations. It is in that spirit that we have decided to make a positive gesture. The draft resolution (A/C.1/L.681) we propose is put forward in that constructive spirit. We have taken this decision after careful consideration and in view of our continuing dialogue for improvement in our bilateral relations.

Our draft supports the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in appropriate regions of the world by a process of consultation and agreement among the States concerned. However, it avoids any prejudgement concerning the concept, features and delineation of the zones. Those are matters best left for discussion and eventual agreement among the interested countries. We feel that in view of the special conditions prevailing in our part of the world the draft resolution proposed by us is more suitable.

We have carefully examined the statements made by the various delegations regarding the prerequisite of prior consultations and agreement before a nuclear-weapon-free zone could be endorsed by the General Assembly. In particular, that feature has been emphasized by our neighbours. There is nothing in our draft to which exception can be taken by any delegation, not excepting the Pakistani delegation. We therefore hope that this proposal will enjoy unanimous support.

In spite of the doubt created by the manner in which Pakistan has put forward its proposal, I should like to strike a note of optimism and hope for the future. India has consistently striven for peace and co-operation among all States. In our region, I am glad to say, our relations with our immediate neighbours are growing stronger and closer. They are based on friendship, equality and mutual respect.

With Pakistan also the process of normalization begun at Simla in July 1972 has steadily progressed. I myself had the privilege of visiting Islamabad two months ago for talks on the restoration of communication and travel between the two countries. I recall with particular gratification my fruitful discussions with the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, my friend Mr. Agha Shahi. In this connexion, I may mention that further talks between our two delegations

(Mr. Singh, India)

on the restoration of civil aviation links and trade are scheduled for the coming week. It is our sincere hope that nothing will come in the way of this happy trend towards a more constructive and co-operative relationship between our two peoples and Governments based on friendship, mutual trust and respect.

I should like to take this opportunity to affirm once again the determination of my Government earnestly to pursue those goals in conformity with the letter and spirit of the Simla Agreement.

May I take this opportunity to reaffirm the nuclear policy of the Government of India, a policy which is well established and consistent with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency. As is well known, the Government of India is opposed to the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons and to their proliferation. On the contrary, we are committed to the utilization of nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. We have a wide range of peaceful purposes in view, and one of them is the experimental use of nuclear explosive devices underground for earth moving, mining and the exploitation of our natural resources. Naturally, in the conduct of our peaceful activities, in the nuclear field we shall be guided by the international obligations we have freely undertaken. There can be no question of imposing on India's nuclear programme any régime that is not universal and non-discriminatory and to which India is not a party.

Our participation or otherwise in a nuclear-weapon-free zone will be governed by the foregoing considerations, as well as by the characteristics and commitments of the proposed zone, its geographical limits and other relevant considerations.

With those words I should like to commend the draft resolution submitted by the Indian delegation (A/C.1/L.681) for the favourable consideration of the Committee.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): I do not ever remember having had the great honour of introducing -- as indeed I shall now be doing -- a draft resolution which, as is true of A/C.1/L.684, has been co-sponsored by the 25 States which have been participating in the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

Also, I do not believe that I have ever made a more laconic introduction than I shall now be doing. I also believe that the content of the draft is such that extensive comments are unnecessary.

First, may I say that there was unanimous agreement among the present members of the Committee that five more States should be invited.

Secondly, the invitation will take effect only after 1 January 1975, which means after the United Nations General Assembly has considered and adopted the resolution based on the draft.

Thirdly, the resolution will state the conviction of the Assembly that:

"... to effect any change in the composition of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament specified in this resolution, the procedure followed on this occasion should be observed;" (A/C.1/L.684, para. 3)

We believe that the Assembly will be very pleased to accept the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, Iran, Peru and Zaire as new members of CCD at the beginning of next year.

Before concluding, I would just add, as representative of Mexico -- and we are convinced that all those who are familiar with the background of this question will agree with us -- that the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.684 is a felicitous way of recognizing the supreme authority of the General Assembly and of ensuring that the membership of the negotiating body on disarmament which was established in December 1961 is satisfactory both to the nuclear-weapon States which are members "and the rest of the world" as General Assembly resolution 1660 (XVI) of November 1961 quite correctly pointed out.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico for introducing the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.684. -

I should like to know now whether, after the introduction of this draft, any delegation wishes to speak on the subject, whether there are any general comments or whether anyone wishes to explain his vote before the vote, as the Committee has already decided, we shall be voting on this draft resolution this morning.

In order to explain his vote before the vote, I call on the representative of France.

Mr. MISTRAL (France) (interpretation from French): I am not sure whether the draft resolution to be submitted to us will be the subject of a consensus or of a vote. In either case, my delegation would like to say something.

If there is to be a vote, we shall be obliged to abstain. If there is to be a consensus, my delegation will not object to that procedure.

I should like to say that our position should be understood to mean this, that we do not want to abandon France's traditional position towards the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. That position has been repeatedly set forth in our Committee and relates equally to the composition of the Committee, its geographical and political balance, and the procedures it employs, particularly its system of co-chairmanship. I do not want to abuse the patience of the Committee by going into detail about these positions which are very well known.

I should also like to add that the reservation I have just expressed in no way relates to the admission of the five new members which are to form part of that Committee. On the contrary, we hope that the entry into the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, Zaire, Peru and Iran will make it possible for that body successfully to conclude the important and constructive work it does.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): If no other delegation would like to speak either to make a general statement on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.684 on the subject of "General and complete disarmament", co-sponsored by 25 countries, or to explain his vote before the vote, we shall proceed to the vote.

I should have thought that it would be possible to adopt this draft resolution without actually taking a formal vote; but if any representative wishes to request a formal vote in order to have his vote recorded, I would be pleased to accede to that request.

I call on the representative of China who wishes to explain his vote.

Mr. LIN (China) (interpretation from Chinese): With regard to the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.684, the Chinese delegation will not participate in the vote.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): As there has been no specific request for a formal vote on the draft resolution now before the Committee, I shall take it that the draft resolution is adopted unanimously.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The comments made by the representatives of France and China will be duly set out in the record.

Does any representative wish to explain his vote after the vote?

Mr. TRACRE (Mali) (interpretation from French): My delegation agreed with the consensus on the draft resolution which has just been adopted but if it had been put to the vote we would have abstained on operative paragraph 3.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Since no other delegation has expressed a desire to speak on the draft resolution just adopted, we have concluded our consideration of that draft resolution.

Perhaps, in the light of the result of the vote, I might on behalf of the Committee extend warm congratulations to the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, Iran, Peru and Zaire on their becoming members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in accordance with the resolution.

Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan): May I join you, Mr. Chairman, in extending the warmest congratulations of my delegation to the five new members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament -- the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, Iran, Peru and Zaire. It has been an honour for Pakistan, as a member of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and a friend of those five countries, to co-sponsor the draft resolution which the Committee has just adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I have pleasure now in welcoming my friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Mr. Agha Shahi, and calling upon him to introduce the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.682.

Mr. SHAHI (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, I have immense pleasure in participating once again in the important deliberations of this Committee with so many old friends and colleagues. It is especially gratifying to witness the happy choice the Committee has made in electing you to preside over its proceedings. On a personal note, may I say that, even among the distinguished gathering of diplomatists and statesmen which takes place every year at the United Nations at this time, it would be difficult to find one with a deeper insight into the issues with which we are concerned, or with greater devotion to the achievement of the objectives of this world Organization, than the Chairman who has been elected for this year by the First Committee.

Having myself had the honour, five years ago, of serving as Chairman of this Committee, I can fully appreciate the complexity of the task you face in guiding our deliberations to a constructive and meaningful conclusion.

Progress in the field of disarmament has been painfully slow, and recent developments have rightly aroused grave doubts about the political will of the world community to reverse the race towards world chaos. Unless a more determined effort is made by all nations, collectively and individually, to control vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, the world will become increasingly insecure, and the chances of a nuclear holocaust will grow with each passing year.

There is no disagreement that the nuclear Powers -- and in particular, the two which possess the largest arsenals -- have a special responsibility to set the example in reducing their nuclear armaments and ensuring against nuclear proliferation. At the same time, the non-nuclear-weapon Powers cannot be absolved of responsibility in the promotion of other, collateral measures to obviate the danger of the spread of nuclear weapons to States which as yet do not possess them.

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

This year Pakistan intends to concentrate on two issues in the field of disarmament. The first pertains to the need for strengthening the security of non-nuclear-weapon States, and the other to averting the danger of horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons in the South Asian region. In regard to security, much was said in this Committee and in the Security Council in 1968 during the consideration of the non-proliferation Treaty. I do not think it necessary to recapitulate the views expressed by the non-nuclear States at that time, or subsequently in the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States.

The representatives of France, Ireland and Romania, among others, have reminded this Committee of the inadequacies of the security assurances extended to non-nuclear States under Security Council resolution 255 (1968) and the need to strengthen them in order to counter-balance the commitments entered into by the States that have agreed to renounce the nuclear option, and to inspire greater confidence in the dependability of these assurances.

Pakistan is deeply concerned that the three nuclear-weapon Powers which have declared their intention to act through the Security Council in the event of aggression accompanied by the use of nuclear weapons, have not shown sufficient appreciation of the security preoccupations of the non-nuclear-weapon States. One would have thought that on the question of refraining from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against such States the attitudes of the nuclear Powers would be more positive. Instead, we find that their main concern is with the consequences of extending such an assurance to doctrines of deterrence visualized by them under their respective security arrangements in Europe. My delegation, for one, is not persuaded that it would be impossible to extend such assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States without prejudice to these military doctrines. We are confirmed in this view by the readiness of France to undertake not to threaten others with its nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

The fifth nuclear Power, China, has reiterated several times during the past many years that it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons, or to have recourse to nuclear threat against non-nuclear-weapon States.

The current session of the Assembly has witnessed an increasing consensus among the States of the various regions to free themselves from the dangers of the nuclear arms race by the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. It is now generally accepted that the establishment of such zones in various areas of the world can be an important instrument in enhancing the security of the States concerned, in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and in promoting the objective of general and complete disarmament. The Committee has before it a number of proposals concerning the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

We in Pakistan have always been concerned about the danger of nuclear proliferation in our region. This was manifest in the proposal made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, on 28 November 1972 that the region of South Asia could be declared a nuclear-free zone, and the introduction of nuclear weapons banned. Recent developments have made it both imperative and urgent to act on this proposal.

My delegation has explained the considerations which have impelled my Government to revive the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. At the 2002nd meeting of this Committee we outlined the salient features of our proposal. To recapitulate, these were:

First, that the Assembly proclaim South Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone;

Secondly, that consultations be held as soon as possible among the countries of the region and, at an appropriate stage, with the nuclear-weapon Powers to give practical shape to this declaration;

Thirdly, that the Secretary-General be authorized to invite countries of the region to begin consultations; and

Fourthly, that the Assembly lay down appropriate guidelines in order to facilitate the process of negotiation and give it a sense of direction.

Since then, the Pakistan delegation has held extensive consultations on its proposal. We have also listened with great attention to the views expressed in this debate, and have made an earnest effort to take them into account. Indeed, the fact that the submission of our draft resolution was delayed so long is due to the efforts we have been making to render it as widely acceptable as possible.

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

The draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.682, which I now have the honour to introduce in this Committee, is a measure of the effort we have made to achieve a consensus. My delegation has given considerable attention to the four criteria stipulated by the representative of the United States, Senator Symington, and later by the representative of the United Kingdom, the Rt. Hon. David Ennals, for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. These criteria are: first, that the initiative should be taken "by the States of the region concerned"; secondly, that the zone should preferably include all the States in the area whose participation is deemed important; thirdly, that the creation of the zone should not disturb existing security arrangements; and fourthly, that provision should be made for adequate verification.

In principle these criteria are unexceptionable. It is obvious that all the major countries in the region must be willing to establish such a zone. It is equally clear that some of the other criteria, for example the system of verification, must be the subject of consultations among the interested countries before they can be given practical form but we do not believe that consultations cannot even begin until the four criteria are first fulfilled.

What is relevant is that the countries of a readily identifiable geographical region should be prepared to renounce the operation of acquiring nuclear weapons and there should be a concomitant willingness on the part of all the nuclear-weapon Powers to respect the nuclear-weapon-free status of the region. We believe that these conditions exist in South Asia. The States of the South Asian region, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, have already declared their opposition to the acquisition of nuclear weapons and to the introduction of these weapons into the region.

Nepal is a party to the non-proliferation Treaty. Sri Lanka has proposed the concept that "contemplates the establishment within the Indian Ocean of a zone of peace free of nuclear weapons". Bangladesh has supported the creation of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world, including South Asia, through the agreement of regional States. India has reiterated, both before and after its nuclear explosion, that it will not develop or acquire nuclear weapons. We have also noted the solemn reaffirmation by the

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

Indian representative in this Committee, on 11 November, that India intends to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes. Indeed, as long ago as 5 March 1962, in a communication addressed to the Secretary-General regarding undertakings to refrain from manufacturing, acquiring or receiving nuclear weapons, India stated:

"So far as the Government of India is concerned, it has repeatedly declared that it has no intention of manufacturing itself or accepting nuclear weapons on its territory. The Government of India is therefore willing to enter into any general agreement or specific undertaking in this regard in accordance with the resolution of the United Nations."

That was India's stand in 1962, which I recall now. As for the nuclear-weapon Powers, a noteworthy feature of this year's debate, as the representative of New Zealand has pointed out, has been that the five States possessing nuclear weapons have indicated their support or acceptance of the concept of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. They have also in principle welcomed the proposals to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and in South Asia.

The existence of alliances and treaties of friendship with great Powers have not prevented the establishment or consideration of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other areas. Nor is the proximity of nuclear-weapon Powers an inhibiting factor in the creation of denuclearized zones. This fact, that is the proximity of nuclear-weapon Powers, should not militate against but should be yet another reason for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. For it is through such collateral measures that smaller States can ensure their survival and security.

As was pointed out by certain countries at the Conference of Non-Nuclear States, each region has its own political and military characteristics, but this does not mean that nuclear-weapon-free zones could be established only in certain regions and not in others. The declarations made by the South Asian States not to acquire nuclear weapons, coupled with the encouraging attitude on the part of the nuclear-weapon Powers, have set the stage for initiating consultations for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region. Indeed, in this Committee, we have heard no opposition to the

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

desirability of such a zone, even if certain countries may have differing views as to the best manner in which it can be established.

Turning now to the text of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.682, sponsored by Pakistan, the preambular part is by and large self-explanatory and reflects views on which there is a wide measure of agreement among the members of this Committee. The seventh preambular paragraph outlines some of the elements entailed in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Subparagraph (b) of this paragraph refers to "an equitable and non-discriminatory system of verification and inspection". This formulation is designed to meet the objections of those among the regional States which have criticized the existing system of international safeguards. By this provision, we mean that as between the States composing the nuclear-weapon-free zone, the procedures for verification and inspection of the nuclear facilities will entail equal rights and obligations.

We have felt it desirable to refer, in the last preambular paragraph of our draft resolution, to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We are convinced that the consultations on a nuclear-weapon-free zone for South Asia will profit immensely from the precedent set by this first successful effort to ban nuclear weapons from a densely inhabited area of the world.

It will no doubt be noted that the draft resolution avoids any mention of the controversial issue of peaceful nuclear explosions. For our part, we do not consider that the feasibility of peaceful nuclear explosions has been established. Recent evidence relating to the ploughshare programme in the United States confirms this generally held view. However, we believe that this is an issue which should be left to be determined by the technical studies that are being initiated on this subject. We hope, nevertheless, that until the findings of these studies are available, there will be a moratorium on peaceful nuclear explosions.

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

I now turn to the operative part of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.682. The first paragraph takes note of the affirmation by the States of the region that they intend to pursue their nuclear programmes for peaceful purposes only and that they will not acquire nuclear weapons. This is a statement of fact.

The second operative paragraph would endorse in principle the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. Having in mind the declarations made by the regional States that they do not intend to acquire nuclear weapons, the General Assembly would be warranted in declaring South Asia to be a nuclear-free-weapon zone. However, in response to the wishes of some of the regional States and taking into account the fact that the precise modalities of establishing a zone have yet to be devised, my delegation has modified its earlier intention of requesting the General Assembly to declare South Asia a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Now we are asking no more than an endorsement in principle of the concept of such a zone. We believe that the Assembly can do no less. Since there is no disagreement about the desirability of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone among the regional States of South Asia or the nuclear-weapon Powers, or indeed within the entire membership of this Committee, such an endorsement in principle of the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia would constitute a very modest and cautious step forward.

The action we are seeking is not without precedent. Members will recall that the General Assembly adopted resolution 1652 (XVI) on the denuclearization of Africa on the initiative of Nigeria and some other African States. Detailed consultations had not occurred and in fact some regional States were not at that time in full agreement with the proposal. It was after the Assembly's action that the African summit meeting adopted the Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa which was subsequently endorsed by the Assembly in resolution 2033 (XX). Similarly, the initiative for the denuclearization of Latin America was taken in this Committee by Brazil, together with Bolivia, Chile and Ecuador. The following year about half the Latin American States joined in sponsoring General Assembly resolution 1911 (XVIII).

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

Earlier in my statement I referred to the growing consensus on the desirability of creating nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world. South Asia is as much a separate and distinct region, geographically and politically, as other regions which have become or are in the process of becoming denuclearized zones. We have nevertheless made an earnest effort to accommodate the views of those delegations which feel that our proposal should not rule out the possibility of the zone's encompassing a larger area than South Asia. The eighth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution states that the consideration of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia is without prejudice to its extension to "such other regions of Asia as may be practicable". And operative paragraph 3 of our draft resolution invites not only the States of South Asia but also "such other neighbouring non-nuclear-weapon States as may be interested" to initiate consultations for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

I must emphasize that the possibility of including States other than the six countries of South Asia should not be construed as in any way a precondition of or an impediment to the initiation of the steps envisaged in the draft resolution for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region. It is important that until an agreement is reached the States of the region should refrain from any action that would retard or impair the possibilities of achieving the objective of denuclearizing South Asia. In particular, the conducting of any nuclear tests without appropriate means to verify their peaceful nature could not be viewed as being compatible with the objective of preventing nuclear proliferation in South Asia.

The fourth operative paragraph of the Pakistan draft resolution refers to the important contribution which the nuclear-weapon States will have to make if the objective of preventing proliferation in South Asia is to be achieved. An essential element would be their commitment to respect the denuclearized status of the zone. We welcome the assurance that has already been given by one nuclear-weapon State that it will do so, and in view of

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

their positive attitude on this question we are confident that similar assurances will be forthcoming from the other nuclear-weapon Powers as well. At an appropriate stage the regional States will have to hold consultations with the nuclear-weapon Powers on these matters.

The fifth operative paragraph requests the Secretary-General to convene an early meeting of the South Asian States to implement this draft resolution and to render such assistance as they may require. My delegation believes that the United Nations, and in particular the Secretary-General, must be closely associated with the consultations on the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. As the representative of Romania said on 7 November in this Committee:

"... the active presence of the United Nations to support and stimulate the efforts of States towards that goal" -- that is, of establishing nuclear-free zones -- "is an important obligation of the United Nations, flowing as it does from its purposes and principles." (2012th meeting, p. 36)

A similar view was expressed by the representative of Nigeria at our meeting on 31 October. In connexion with the denuclearization of Africa he said:

"We need the United Nations to assist us to translate into reality and legal form the various declarations on the denuclearization of Africa. We need the United Nations to secure support and acceptance by the Powers, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, ... of our determination to prohibit nuclear weapons in Africa." (2005th meeting, p.11)

We do not underestimate or discount the complex questions that will need to be resolved or the political obstacles that will have to be overcome in order to attain the goal of denuclearization of South Asia. We do not pretend that the draft resolution meets the preoccupations of each and every delegation, nor perhaps can it remove doubts that may arise perhaps not from the text of the draft resolution but from the subjective assessments of the delegations concerned. But questions about the specific modalities of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region or the initial

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

hesitation of some countries should not prevent the General Assembly from taking a decision which would at least accept the broad measure of agreement on the subject of the proposal and encourage and guide the further strenuous efforts that will have to be made to fulfil the desire of the South Asian States -- a desire which is shared by the world -- to remove the nuclear menace from their midst.

(Mr. Shahi, Pakistan)

The countries of South Asia have endured immense suffering and strife. They are even now engaged in overcoming the consequences of the last of several conflicts. The danger of hunger and starvation faces their teeming millions. Neither political conciliation nor economic and social development in the region can be promoted in an atmosphere of insecurity and suspicion. Peace and progress will not come to South Asia under the shadow of the nuclear cloud.

We are confident, therefore, that vision will prevail over calculations of narrow and illusory advantage and that principles will be put above expediency in considering Pakistan's proposal to banish the nuclear threat from the region of South Asia.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Pakistan for the kind words which he addressed to me.

Mr. CRAME (Gabon) (interpretation from French): I should like to make a clarification. I noticed this morning that the representative of my delegation was in the plenary Assembly yesterday, where a vote was taking place. Consequently, he was not able to take part, as he had been asked to do, in the voting in the Committee.

In this connexion then, I should like to say that, in accordance with my statement on behalf of my Government on the global problem of disarmament, we oppose the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683 because of its discriminatory character and because it does not satisfy the idea of universality of disarmament by beginning with the greatest danger, which we have denounced.

As to the other draft resolution, we would have abstained in the vote on it because of the interpretation placed on the third and fourth preambular paragraphs. However, this second draft resolution does, in our view, constitute an effective contribution to a solution of the problem. But, had we been here, we would have asked the sponsors to add to it further.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The clarifications of the representative of Gabon will be duly noted in the records of the Committee.

Mr. MEERBURG (Netherlands): Mr. Chairman, you asked us yesterday if we could possibly vote today on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.690. We thought then that that was somewhat early because the draft resolution was introduced only on Wednesday and, hence, delegations would not have enough time to reflect on it.

I should like to propose that we could vote on it perhaps on Monday or Tuesday.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to bring to the notice of my colleagues that next week we have only eight working meetings -- not eight days because there are only seven days in the week, and a working week has five days, so that we have only eight working meetings. We shall therefore have to conclude, in the course of these eight meetings, consideration of and voting on all the draft resolutions now before us and on those which are still being negotiated before presentation. There are two or three of them of which we are aware, and they are awaiting sponsors. I should like to point out that, although a large number of sponsors is sometimes very impressive, in questions of disarmament delegations know well in advance what the position of their Government is and the presence of a small or large number of sponsors does not have a very great impact on the voting of delegations. On the other hand, it would really help the work of the Committee if we had early presentation and circulation of the draft resolutions.

I am grateful to the representative of the Netherlands for his statement. I therefore propose that on Monday we put to the vote the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.690. I also trust that on Monday, after the presentation to the Committee of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.688, we shall be able to take a decision on it.

Finally, I would express the hope that in connexion with the draft resolutions in documents A/C.1/L.685 and A/C.1/L.686 we shall have an early reaction from the delegation which asked for a deferral of their consideration. With regard to the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.675, which has been before us for a long time, delegations wishing to introduce amendments should do so as soon as possible. If there are no further amendments, then we shall be able to vote on it that much sooner. We have only eight meetings and much to do. I trust, therefore, that the weekend will be put to appropriate use so as to accelerate our work.