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Held at Headquarters, New York,
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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 15 NOVEMBER 1974, THE TIME-LIMIT FOR CORRECTIONS WILL BE 20 NOVEMBER 1974.

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

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- 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)
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Mr. LIN (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation has carefully studied the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and the draft resolution contained in the addendum to it and has listened attentively to the statements made by representatives of various countries on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. We should like to make a few observations now in this regard.

First, the Chinese Government and people have always sympathized deeply with and firmly supported the struggle of the people of various countries to safeguard State sovereignty and national independence and to oppose super-Power aggression and expansion. Proceeding from this position, we actively support the just proposal to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. In our opinion the desire of the countries in the Indian Ocean zone to maintain peace in the region should be respected.

Secondly, it must be pointed out that the root cause of the turbulence and unrest in the Indian Ocean region lies mainly in the policy of aggression and expansion in the region pursued by the two super-Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States. It is precisely these two super-Powers that have in recent years frantically pursued their "gunboat" policy, massed a large number of warships for a show of force and vied with each other in installing military bases there. In its attempt to realize its ambition for world hegemony one super-Power, which flaunts the banner of socialism, has in recent years set up a permanent fleet in the Indian Ocean and dispatched large numbers of naval ships to ply in the Indian Ocean and even to carry out large-scale military exercises there. In the past few years its ship-days in the Indian Ocean have increased almost fivefold. It is seeking by all means to establish military bases along the coasts of the Indian Ocean and is engaging in interference and subversive activities. The other super-Power in its intensified contention has also made tremendous efforts to augment its military strength in the Indian Ocean and expand its military bases there. The facts show that it is precisely the two super-Powers' activities of contention for hegemony that have seriously menaced peace and security in the Indian Ocean region and the independence and sovereignty

of the countries in the region. This cannot but arouse the grave concern of the countries and peoples in the region and will naturally meet with their strong condemnation and resolute opposition.

Thirdly, the Chinese delegation maintains that in order to implement the just proposal to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace it is imperative first of all to put an end to the two super-Powers' military expansion and contention for hegemony in the region, to withdraw all foreign naval fleets from the region and to dismantle all foreign military bases and installations there.

Furthermore it must be pointed out that the establishment of the Indian Ocean peace zone also depends on the countries in the region basing their mutual relations on the principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. However, in pursuance of the policy of expansion and blackmail a certain country in this region has recently openly annexed a small neighbour. This runs entirely counter to the purpose of making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

Finally, we shall vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in the addendum to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Mr. MERENNE (Belgium) (interpretation from French): It is very difficult to put forward practical ideas on the serious problem of global disarmament. Fortunately the task is easier when the ground has already been worked over, as, for instance, in the case of the special problems of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the control of so-called peaceful nuclear explosions, which are the subject of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.690 of which my Government is a sponsor.

Realizing that the preservation of world peace is an objective which takes precedence over all others, the Belgian Government agreed to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty, which it signed on 20 August 1968.

(Mr. Merenne, Belgium)

Indeed, Belgium felt that the risks to peace would be seriously increased by the proliferation of nuclear-weapon States. We said that the non-proliferation Treaty, in spite of the imperfections inherent in any human undertaking, bore within it the hopes of the overwhelming majority of the international community, for it was the first genuine step towards a cessation of the nuclear arms race.

More than four years after the entry into force of the Treaty, Belgium's fundamental stand on this political choice taken in 1968 remains unchanged.

At that time, the communiqué of the Belgian Government already stressed the universal character which the Treaty should have. Indeed, my Government was aware that the participation of a sufficient number of countries, particularly of those which might relatively soon be able to produce nuclear weapons, was indispensable for the total effectiveness of the Treaty. The deeper meaning and the political significance of the Treaty indeed depend on that condition being met.

It is true that more than 100 countries have signed the Treaty and that more than 80 have ratified it. Some signatories are still hesitant to accede to it, and we know that a number of them are waiting for the States members of EURATOM that are directly concerned to ratify the Treaty before doing so themselves. Unfortunately, approximately 30 other countries have thus far not wished to be associated with the Treaty.

In 1968 Belgium, like its non-nuclear partners of the EURATOM Treaty, decided that its ratification of the Treaty should depend on the outcome of negotiations between the European Community and the International Atomic Energy Agency on the implementation of the controls provided for in article III of the Treaty.

The successful outcome of these negotiations made it possible for Belgium, as, indeed, for its other European partners, to start the procedures for parliamentary approval of the Treaty and of the agreement between the member countries of EURATOM, on the one hand, and the International Atomic Energy Agency, on the other. We hope to complete this procedure before the end of the year.

In so doing, Belgium believes that it has discharged its responsibilities as regards world stability.

(Mr. Merenne, Belgium)

Yet, the people of Belgium, like those elsewhere in the world, are troubled by real concern over the events which have occurred -- or, indeed, which have not occurred -- these past few months, namely, the underground nuclear explosion carried out by the Indian Government, on the one hand, and the lack of agreement by the five nuclear Powers recognized as such under the Treaty to limit their nuclear weapons, on the other.

That concern will be shared by the conference to review the Treaty, which in May 1975 will focus attention on the possible short-comings of this agreement and on what can be done to overcome them.

The reasons invoked by countries for not acceding to the Treaty, are many and various. I should like now to examine the chief among them.

The essential and immediate objective of the Treaty is to limit the number of nuclear-weapon States to the number in existence when it was drafted.

Since the Treaty is essentially one of disarmament, it must be considered as a stage and not as the final result with regard to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It was therefore logical that, to make it possible to curb proliferation, certain States should assume obligations more rapidly than others, that is to say, that the first step in the process of nuclear non-proliferation should consist in preventing an increase in the number of States possessing military nuclear explosive devices.

In other words, the idea was to prevent, in the first place, the so-called horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

However, in order to maintain a certain balance between the rights and the commitments of the Parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, it is provided in some of the paragraphs of the preamble as well as in article VI of the Treaty that each of the Parties to the agreement -- and this is meant essentially for any military nuclear Power --

"... undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith ... relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race ...".

That is in fact intended to put an end to vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Merenne, Belgium)

A major difficulty no doubt lies in the fact that no negotiations have been started in which all the nuclear-weapon States would take part.

Agreements on the limitation of strategic weapons have been concluded between two of the Powers parties to the Treaty, the full significance of which we have recognized, but which have barely begun the process of putting an end to the nuclear arms race.

Concrete steps regarding vertical proliferation would constitute one of the means essential for the motivation of the States which are still unsure as to what to do next in order to assure their security. We hesitate to take too hard and fast a position on this situation. However, Belgium believes that it is now more than ever necessary for the nuclear Powers, whose duties and responsibilities have increased simply because of the entry into force of the Treaty, to carry out concrete actions.

And we are not expecting decisive actions on the part of the nuclear States only as regards vertical proliferation. They can also contribute to better ensuring horizontal non-proliferation.

Belgium, together with the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency and with other countries, has been advocating international supervision of all peaceful underground nuclear explosions, not only within the framework of article V of the Treaty but also, more generally speaking, over the explosions carried out by nuclear States. If those States would agree to that kind of supervision, then one of the reasons that some countries put forward for acceding to the Treaty would be eliminated. We hope that current negotiations on that point between the United States and the Soviet Union on additional matters relating to the so-called "threshold" agreement concluded in Moscow on 3 July, will bring new and encouraging elements to bear.

One of the major concerns of the non-nuclear Powers ever since 1968 has been to ensure the protection of their national security against any nuclear action. Their efforts at the time led to Security Council resolution 255 (1968) of 19 June 1968 which was based essentially on Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that one of the ways of further developing guarantees for non-nuclear Powers would be to create non-nuclear zones patterned after the Treaty of Tlatelolco. That Treaty in an annexed Protocol contains the commitment of the nuclear Powers to respect the status of a nuclear-free zone and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any of the Contracting Parties.

Article VII of the non-proliferation Treaty provides expressly that groups of States may conclude regional agreements completely to ban nuclear weapons on their respective territories. The Treaty has been drafted in such a way as to take into account the Treaty of Tlatelolco and is a type of invitation to conclude similar treaties, which we have been discussing in our debate, in parts of the world which are suitable for agreements of this kind. That would strengthen the impact that the non-proliferation Treaty would have.

The safeguards provided in article III of the non-proliferation Treaty have been one of the most critical aspects of the system of non-proliferation set forth in the Treaty.

But things have got off to a fairly good start because the International Atomic Energy Agency has already concluded, or is in the process of concluding, control agreements with those countries which have acceded to the Treaty. The EURATOM/IAEA verification agreement has also been prepared on this point.

(Mr. Merenne, Belgium)

Furthermore, Belgium was one of those countries which, last August, decided on certain rules of conduct regarding uniform rules with which exporters would have to comply in respect of exports covered in article III, paragraph 2, of the non-proliferation Treaty.

Belgium intends to act in accordance with that agreement as soon as it ratifies the non-proliferation Treaty, and it will do so now to the extent that our regulations permit, while bearing in mind the requirements of the Rome Treaty.

Finally, when the non-proliferation Treaty was being negotiated, it was clearly understood that the agreement should in no way impede the full and free development of the civilian use of nuclear energy but that, quite on the contrary, the guarantees that the Treaty contains regarding the non-use of nuclear energy for military purposes should, as a matter of fact, promote the civilian development of that form of energy.

The problem of energy in the world is a very timely and relevant one that makes article IV of the Treaty particularly significant. All States, particularly developing countries, must be allowed to assimilate the sophisticated forms of technology represented by nuclear power. Assistance and co-operation, particularly action by the International Atomic Energy Agency, are essential given the present international situation.

The review conference must strengthen the balance which has at times been challenged between, on the one hand, the right of everyone to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and, on the other hand, the need to avoid using nuclear energy for military purposes. Only if there is national and international control under the guidance of the International Atomic Energy Agency can there be a harmonious use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes throughout the world.

I am now reaching the end of my statement and my main point. I represent a small country which has nevertheless acquired a considerable knowledge of nuclear technology applied in the service of mankind. On behalf of Belgium, which has achieved that objective without resorting to peaceful nuclear explosions, I have adduced a number of arguments and expressed

(Mr. Merenne, Belgium)

a few thoughts and I have done so in the hope that many members of the Committee will vote in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.690 and that those who are hesitant will ask themselves whether their scepticism is warranted.

Mr. MELESCANU (Romania) (interpretation from French): The Romanian delegation is one of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.687 on the mid-term review of the Disarmament Decade because of its constant interest in this question and in the intensification of efforts of all States with a view to the adoption of effective disarmament measures, primarily in the area of nuclear disarmament. In the General Assembly as well as in the Disarmament Committee in Geneva, the Romanian delegation has consistently supported the idea that the preparation of a programme for immediate and long term disarmament negotiations and measures would stimulate the political will of States and would open broad horizons for disarmament negotiations thus making possible a judicious order of priorities for the various measures.

It was in this spirit that, on 3 April 1969, Romania suggested for the first time in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, in document A/7741 (DC/232), paragraph 57, that we should consider proclaiming a United Nations Disarmament Decade, from 1970 to 1980, concurrently with the Development Decade.

One of the fundamental motives for my delegation in 1969 and still valid today is the need for a comprehensive programme of disarmament measures in the context of a decade and the close relationship between disarmament and development.

(Mr. Melescanu, Romania)

It was that idea which led Romania to request the inclusion of a separate item on the agenda of the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly entitled "Economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security." The Secretary-General's report on this subject (A/8469), the debates that took place at the twenty-sixth and twenty-eighth sessions of the General Assembly and, indeed, the work of other United Nations bodies on the subject -- all have underlined the urgent need to take joint action that would make it possible, through effective disarmament measures, to release vast resources at present swallowed up by the arms race so that the necessary means can be made available for the economic and social development of all peoples, particularly the peoples of the developing countries.

Those ideas were introduced in General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) of 16 December 1969, in the adoption of which Romania made an active contribution. That resolution proclaimed the decade beginning in 1970 as the Disarmament Decade.

As was stressed yesterday by the representative of Nigeria, Ambassador Clark, the draft resolution now before the Committee is based upon the idea of reviewing, mid-way through the Decade, efforts and action undertaken in order to follow up the provisions of the resolutions adopted five years ago. Indeed, while reaffirming the objectives and purposes of the Decade, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General and Governments to report to the thirtieth session of the General Assembly on the action and steps which they have taken so far to publicize the Disarmament Decade in order to acquaint the general public with its purposes and objectives. This provision derives from operative paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) of 1969, which reads as follows:

"Calls upon Governments to intensify without delay their concerted and concentrated efforts for effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament and the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction, and for a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

(Mr. Melescanu, Romania)

In the view of the Romanian delegation such an examination is in keeping with the constant concern of our Organization, which has been highlighted once again at this session, regarding the intensification of everyone's efforts to bring about a halt to the arms race and to take effective steps towards disarmament, primarily nuclear disarmament.

As we know, the next session of the General Assembly is to deal with the results achieved in the first part of the Development Decade. The question of the economic and social consequences of the armaments race will once again be included on our agenda, and it therefore seems entirely natural that in this context the General Assembly should be able to take an over-all view of efforts being made in a related area -- that of disarmament -- after the first five years of the Decade.

Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden): I shall in this statement make some observations on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.675, originally submitted by the USSR, and the annexed draft convention.

As is certainly well known, Sweden has for many years given great attention to environmental problems and has devoted both time and resources to finding effective and practical solutions at the international level to the ever increasing threats to the environment, our common heritage. In the course of the general debate my delegation had the opportunity to make a few preliminary comments on the interesting and highly topical proposal of the Soviet Union on the "prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with maintenance of international security, human well being and health." Given the great Swedish interest in environmental matters, I should now like to elaborate on my preliminary comments. If what I have to say could be regarded as rather critical, it should none the less be viewed as a positive attempt to secure an international prohibition of environmental changes for military or other hostile purposes. Let me also say that my comments should not be interpreted as indicating a wish to initiate a discussion on the substance of the Soviet proposal at this session of the General Assembly.

My comments are addressed to the draft resolution and draft-convention in order to illustrate the extremely complicated character of this matter. For that very reason I deem it most important that, should the question be referred to it, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament obtains clear guidance from the General Assembly on how to approach the problem of environmental modification for military and other hostile purposes. Another reason is that other international bodies, particularly UNEP, with its broad co-ordinating mandate in the field of the environment, are actively involved in the question of environmental modification for peaceful purposes, and the International Committee of the Red Cross is at the same time making efforts to forbid certain methods of warfare. So let me repeat that we need a clear-cut definition, on the one hand, of environmental modification for military and other hostile purposes, and, on the other hand, of environmental activities for peaceful and positive aims.

It seems to us that two main aspects merit particular attention by the General Assembly at this stage. The first and most urgent is what action the Assembly should take at this session. Here I am thinking mainly of the draft resolution proposed by the Soviet delegation. As can be seen from the draft, however, this question is closely connected with what I see as the second main aspect -- namely, the desired substantive direction of the further study and consideration of the Soviet proposal.

The text of the draft convention as it now stands raises several difficult questions of interpretation. The delineation between military and civilian action is one such issue.

The broad wording of article I seems to include almost any type of action influencing the environment, whether military or not. When proceeding further with the consideration of this text, it is very important to clarify the intended relationship between several measures proposed in article II and ongoing activities in the same general field in the United Nations system and elsewhere.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

It must, of course, be of fundamental interest for the General Assembly when dealing with the present proposal to avoid inviting any duplication of efforts already under way or, as could even be the case, exerting any negative influence on those efforts. A rewording of article I might be helpful in this regard. One solution could be to make it clear that two types of purpose criterion are foreseen, that is, action to influence the environment and climate in armed conflicts or as a means of exerting pressure on other nations, something which would indeed imply hostile purposes.

Another problem of interpretation concerns the phrase in article I "incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health" (A/C.1/L.675, annex, page 1). This general and broad wording would, it seems to us, create insurmountable obstacles when an attempt is made to define whether a particular action falls under the convention or not. We feel that the phrase in question should be clarified in such a way that it becomes clearer what types of measurement of effects are envisaged.

The procedures envisaged in articles VI and VII for complaints, investigations and sanctions are closely related to the matters of interpretation I have mentioned. The proposal to entrust to the Security Council the sole responsibility of determining what action should be taken when a complaint is lodged, is not acceptable to my delegation. These procedures should, as a matter of principle, be organized in such a way as to guarantee a full investigation. I do believe that for many countries besides my own, it cannot be acceptable that matters of possibly vital importance to them, should be dependent for their solution entirely on the attitudes of one or several of the permanent members of the Security Council.

If we turn now to article II of the draft convention, it is clear that the enumeration in subparagraphs (a) to (1) of measures damaging to the environment involves many highly complex issues. A fundamental question to be asked is what guiding principle should be applied when drawing up such a list. It is not possible to draft, and to reach international agreement on, a comprehensive list covering all possible aspects of these immense problems. We see the list in article II (a) to (1) as a series of examples indicating the main types of activity to which the convention should relate. A suggestion, which could

be explored, would be to try first to create a general framework by formulating certain broad and general principles and then to try to reach agreement step by step on specific measures.

Concerning the substance of article II, suffice it to say that the list of environmental modification activities is indeed very illustrative and thought-provoking. Depending on what definition is adopted, this list could be expanded or reduced. When that time comes, my country will actively participate in the substantive discussion. It is clear that it is extremely difficult to draw up a comprehensive list. At this stage, and merely as an example, I should like to point to one type of problem not mentioned in article II. I am thinking of the problem of genetic manipulation which, in view of its relevance to human health and well-being, might well deserve a place there. It is important that research in this rapidly developing and potentially dangerous area should come under some type of international inspection.

My final remarks on the substance of the draft convention concern articles V and VIII. The wording of article V could be interpreted as a sort of general reservation or escape-clause by which States could avoid their obligations under the convention. This could, in our view, significantly reduce the relevance of such an international instrument. We would find it difficult to accept such a generally worded provision. Another problem of interpretation occurs in article VIII concerning amendments to the convention. We would have difficulties in accepting a provision which would in effect give the depositary Governments a right of veto in this regard.

It appears that the proposal covers a very broad area and gives rise to many problems of interpretation. As I have already said, a possible way out would be to change the perspective, in the sense that the mainly military aspects of these important problems would be considered in this context. If a consensus can be reached in this regard, the matter might well be referred to CCD for study. The Disarmament Committee should in such a case have access to ex-ante advice from the United Nations system and particularly from the United Nations Environment Programme. The General Assembly would then revert to the question next year in the light of the findings of CCD.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

From what I have said, I hope that it is abundantly clear that we want work on this important issue to continue and to progress successfully. Therefore, I hope that we shall be able to reach a common agreement on how to proceed from here. But, at the same time, no one should have any illusions that the successful tackling of the question of bans on the military uses of the techniques discussed would relieve us of further problems in this area. Indeed, the civilian aspects, involving the use of large-scale techniques, in many cases appear to have much wider implications and perhaps an even greater urgency than the military aspects. It is very important that these issues be given increased and prompt international consideration in the proper forums, particularly the United Nations Environment Programme, with a view to reaching concrete agreements.

Mr. BARTON (Canada): I wish to intervene briefly to speak in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.690, of which my delegation has the honour of being a sponsor.

I listened closely to the statement made yesterday by my friend and colleague from India. As was evident from his statement, there is indeed a basic point of difference between his Government, and I suppose some others, on the one hand, and the more than 80 nations which subscribe to the non-proliferation Treaty on the other. I attempted to identify this issue in my statement in the general debate, and at the risk of trying the patience of the members of the Committee, I should like to make a brief quotation from what I said:

"... let us consider the position of those Governments which have rejected the Treaty for reasons of principle and because they feel that it imposes unacceptable limitations on their freedom of action which would be detrimental to their defence arrangements or their economic development.

"There is some justice in their position. Measured by all the regular norms and relations between sovereign States, it cannot be disputed that the balance of obligations and rights leaves much to be desired. But individual Governments have to come to terms with the world as it is. On the one hand, we have the reality of the nuclear Powers. We may not like their self-election to a special status, and we dread the consequences of a mis-step by any one of them. But even if the nuclear-weapon Powers will not themselves accept the same constraints at this time, the rest of the world must still seek to prevent the virus of nuclear proliferation from spreading further.

"We believe that the development, testing and possession of nuclear explosive devices should stop with the existing nuclear Powers, in the hope that ultimately they too will see the logic of abandoning them. We believe, moreover, that to the extent that peaceful nuclear explosions turn out to be useful -- which, in our view, is a very doubtful proposition that has yet to be proven -- they should be carried out under international arrangements of the type envisaged in the non-proliferation Treaty. No matter how peaceful the intent of such nuclear explosions, there is no way at this time to distinguish between the development of nuclear explosive devices for peaceful purposes and those for military purposes; and thus, if nuclear explosions are carried out by countries not now possessing nuclear weapons, they encourage unacceptable nuclear proliferation." (2000th meeting, p. 46)

It follows from those words that we agree whole-heartedly with the representative of India that the highest priority should be accorded to achieving international or universal adherence to a régime of prohibition of all nuclear tests in all environments, but we differ from him in his view that only in the context of a complete cessation of all nuclear weapon tests could consideration be given to the possibility of concluding an international agreement on the regulation of underground nuclear explosions, to be signed by all States.

We shall continue to do all in our power to bring to an end so-called vertical proliferation, but we do not accept the view that, unless or until we are successful in that effort, nothing can be done about the other concern, horizontal proliferation. In this respect, our goal is to ensure that, if or when peaceful nuclear explosions take place, they are carried out under auspices which

(Mr. Barton, Canada)

will satisfy all the Governments concerned that they are in fact what they purport to be. Furthermore, we think that in the present circumstances the procedures set out in the non-proliferation Treaty are the best way of achieving that aim.

Those, in our view, are the underlying issues which should influence delegations in making their assessment of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.690.

Mr. ROSCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): At the last meeting, Mr. Chairman, you pointed out that today we would be voting on three draft resolutions: on the urgent need for cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and conclusion of a treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban (A/C.1/L.683); on general and complete disarmament (A/C.1/L.687); and on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace contained in the addendum to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (A/9629). Since we are to vote on those three items today, the Soviet delegation would like to confine itself to explaining its vote on those three matters.

And so, I should like to ask whether it would be appropriate and convenient to the Chairman and the Committee if the Soviet delegation expressed its views simultaneously on the three draft resolutions on which we are to vote today? I see, Mr. Chairman, that you indicate a positive response to my question and therefore I shall begin with the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683.

As we pointed out in our statement in the Committee on 28 October this year, the Soviet delegation attaches great importance to the question of banning the testing of nuclear weapons, and supports the demand for halting those tests by everyone, everywhere. The Soviet Union has repeatedly expressed its readiness to become a party to an agreement on this problem, that would include the prohibition of underground testing, with the proviso that control over the observance of the obligations flowing from such an agreement would be carried out by national means of detection and identification.

We pointed out that an important step in connexion with the problem of halting nuclear weapon testing was the Soviet-American agreement on the limitation of underground testing of nuclear weapons of 3 July this year.

In connexion with the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683, the Soviet Union entirely shares the concern expressed by its sponsors with regard to the continuing testing of nuclear weapons, particularly in the atmosphere, and expresses its total solidarity with the wishes of the sponsors of the draft resolution to ensure accession to the Moscow partial test-ban Treaty on the part of all States which have not yet acceded to it. We also share the view of the sponsors of the draft resolution that there is an urgent need for the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban agreement.

However, the draft resolution contains a number of provisions the existence of which amounts to an attempt to impose responsibility for the lack of progress in the field of prohibiting nuclear weapon testing on the Soviet Union, among other Powers. The Soviet Union cannot agree with such an approach to the question. We believe, in particular, that a solution to the problem of prohibiting nuclear weapon testing can and must be sought primarily by means of concluding appropriate agreements on the subject and not by means of adopting one-sided obligations on the part of individual nuclear States, since such an approach could lead only to a violation of the principle of the equal security of States.

Since the draft resolution which we are now considering provides precisely for the adoption or the assumption of unilateral obligations which, in our view, are incompatible with the principle of equal security of States, the Soviet delegation should like to state here that it will be unable to support this draft and that we will abstain when it comes to the vote.

Now a few words about the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.687, relating to the Disarmament Decade, confirming its purposes and objectives, which has just been explained by the representative of Romania. The Soviet delegation should like to state that it agrees with the provisions of this draft resolution and will therefore vote in favour of its adoption.

May I now state the views of the Soviet Union in connexion with the vote about to take place on the draft resolution on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, contained in the Addendum to document A/9629. On the question of declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, the Soviet Union proceeds from a position of principle designed to support proposals that would really promote the strengthening of the peace and security of States and the reduction of international tension. Speaking at a dinner in honour of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Mrs. Bandaranaike, on 11 November this year, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Alexei Kosygin, stated as follows:

"We have an attitude of respect for the political initiative of the Asian countries dictated by their concern for peace, including, for example, the idea of creating a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean and the proposal for the neutralization of South-East Asia.

"It is important that all these initiatives should at the same time actually promote the step-by-step conversion of Asia into a continent of peace and co-operation among peoples."

The Soviet position with regard to the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace has been repeatedly set forth at sessions of the General Assembly, including the twenty-eighth session. The Soviet Union is ready to take part, on an equal footing with all other interested States, in the search for favourable solutions to this problem, provided, of course, that there is observance of the generally acknowledged rules of international law. The USSR is ready to consider, on an equal footing with others, and without prejudice to the security of any of the parties, the question of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. But in resolving this problem there should be no artificial delineation of groups of countries that would enjoy particular rights with regard to the preparation and establishment of a régime governing the Indian Ocean.

In drafting the provisions of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, there must be no infringement of the principle of freedom of navigation. - The Soviet Union deems unacceptable any proposal designed to limit freedom of navigation, particularly when it comes to the carrying out of scientific research by means of naval vessels, because the Indian Ocean is an important line of communication for the Soviet Union, and research is being carried out to study the world's oceans and their space.

According to the 1958 Geneva Convention on the high seas, freedom of navigation applies to all vessels. The Soviet Union has always given considerable help to the Indian Ocean countries in their national liberation struggle and in the struggle for economic independence against reactionary and aggressive forces. The Soviet Union has never had or created, and is not now creating, military or naval bases of any kind in the Indian Ocean region. Soviet vessels and ships in that area have never threatened anyone. In accordance with generally acknowledged international practice and the rules of international law, they are carrying out scientific voyages, including the search for Soviet space objects, in the Indian Ocean region.

In addition, Soviet shipping also crosses the Indian Ocean from the European part of the Soviet Union to the Soviet Far East.

Since there are military bases of the imperialist States in the Indian Ocean region, to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace while allowing the retention of those bases would be to place the Soviet Union in an inferior position vis-à-vis those States, to the detriment of the interests of both the Soviet Union and the other countries of the Socialist community, as well as the countries of the area, which are struggling to strengthen their national independence.

Therefore, the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace requires primarily the elimination of all foreign bases in that area. The Soviet Union is guided by this standpoint in its attitude towards the question of United States military bases on the island of Diego Garcia.

In a statement at the last session of the General Assembly, the Soviet delegation pointed out that the proposal that the Secretary-General prepare a report on the military presence of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean region from the point of view of their rivalry was designed to complicate even further a discussion of the question of declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. This view of the Soviet delegation's has been fully confirmed, since both in the first and in the revised versions of this report the Soviet position has not been properly reflected, and the actual policy of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean region has been presented in a distorted light.

In letters addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on this subject, the Soviet Union has set forth its views on the report of the Group of Experts on the military presence of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean, and pointed out that in revised form it is still marked by lack of objectivity and by prejudice. In this regard, the Soviet delegation cannot agree with the provisions of the draft resolution relating to that report.

(Mr. Roschin:

Nor can the Soviet delegation agree with a number of other provisions in the draft on the basis of which an attempt is being made by its sponsors to promote a decision on the question of declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

For all those reasons, the Soviet delegation will abstain from voting on the draft resolution on the Indian Ocean to which I have referred.

(Mr. Roschin, USSR)

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I have some brief comments on the statement made today by the representative of China. We have occasion to regret once again that the representative of China is using every opportunity to distort and misrepresent the position of the Soviet Union on any question. We think that this attempt is to be explained by the wish of the delegation of China to conceal its reluctance to co-operate in matters of disarmament. Indeed, if we took any attempt on the part of the Soviet delegation, or many other delegations, to invite the delegation of China to co-operate in disarmament matters, we have always, unfortunately, received a negative response which blocks the proposals. I would even call it a simple sabotage of the proposals which have been put forward by the delegations.

We have proposed solving the problems of disarmament at a conference of nuclear Powers, so as to come to an agreement about the problem of nuclear disarmament. I should like to stress that two or three nuclear Powers in the present circumstances cannot resolve nuclear problems. Nuclear problems must be resolved by all nuclear States. Otherwise, an unequal situation would be created. China, unfortunately, rejects all those proposals. We proposed convening a world disarmament conference. That proposal stemmed from the desire to bring the non-aligned and developing States into the conference.

The conferences in Cairo, Belgrade, Georgetown, Lusaka, Algiers, all favoured the convening of a world disarmament conference, every single one of them. An urgent solution of this problem was asked for. So why can we not resolve this problem? Because China is disregarding those proposals, because it is sabotaging them, because it is blocking them, because it is erecting obstacles to them.

Of course, we explain this position by the fact that China does not want to co-operate on questions of international settlement of the problem of reducing armament. Similarly, it does not want an easing of international tension, unfortunately, because the principle of reducing international tension is in contradiction to the principles of China's foreign policy. That is the explanation of the fact as to why many initiatives which have been taken here by many States, including

(Mr. Roschin, USSR)

the Soviet Union, cannot, unfortunately, get any further, and that is the factor in the face of which we find ourselves today. It is useless for the Chinese delegation to attempt, without rhyme or reason, to cast aspersions on the policy of the Soviet Union in matters of disarmament. The Soviet Union has always expressed its full readiness to co-operate internationally, on a bilateral basis, with other States with regard to reducing armaments, both nuclear and conventional. We have repeatedly invited China to associate itself with this international co-operation, but, unfortunately, we have had a negative response. That is the position to this very day and I wanted to make that point.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I shall now give the floor to the representative of Japan to speak on specific proposals, not as an explanation of vote since his country is a member of the Indian Ocean Committee which, as a whole, proposed the draft resolution. In accordance with the rules, the sponsor of a proposal cannot explain his vote, but he can speak in favour of the draft resolution which he is co-sponsoring. Therefore, I shall now call on the representative of Japan, as a co-sponsor, to make known his views on the draft resolution, but not by way of an explanation of vote.

Mr. NISHIBORI (Japan): I should therefore like to explain my delegation's views on the draft resolution contained in the Addendum to document A/9629, concerning the implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. That draft resolution was approved unanimously by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean of which my country is a member, for adoption by the General Assembly. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that this development is entirely due to the able guidance and statesmanship-like leadership of Ambassador Amerasinghe who, as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, introduced the draft resolution before us. My delegation wishes to pay the highest tribute to him. My delegation will welcome the constructive implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, which aims at easing international tension and will eventually help to realize the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament.

(Mr. Nishibori, Japan)

My delegation, which is fully sympathetic with the sincere desire of the regional States to establish such a zone, has voted in favour of the resolution to this end since 1971. That position remains unchanged and I wish to recommend that the First Committee adopt the present resolution.

I wish to take this opportunity, however, to make clear my delegation's view that in establishing the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace Member States should give full consideration to the following points to which Japan attaches great importance. They are, inter alia: the preservation of the freedom of the high seas; the obtaining of the widest possible agreement of the States concerned regarding the implementation of the Declaration; the need to take appropriate measures to enhance the security of littoral and hinterland States, as well as to ensure the security of other States concerned which have significant interests in the preservation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

On this occasion I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General, to the experts he appointed, and to the staff of the Disarmament Affairs Division of the Secretariat, for the preparation of an elaborate factual statement of the great Power military presence in the Indian Ocean, and also to express my earnest hope that further deliberations in the Ad Hoc Committee next year will continue to produce fruitful results.

Mr. SULEIMAN (Libyan Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to explain the vote of my delegation on the draft resolution introduced by the representative of the Netherlands on the urgent need for cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and the conclusion of a treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban.

When my country approved and ratified the Moscow Treaty of 1967 and when it signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1968 it was aware that those international Treaties had certain shortcomings. We were convinced that those shortcomings would have to be rectified and that joint efforts would be made to achieve an international treaty that would ban all nuclear tests and prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. But the indications are disappointing. There are still some countries which are conducting nuclear tests either in the atmosphere or underground, ignoring the protests from sections of the international community calling for the cessation of these tests which endanger the environment and eventually threaten other natural resources.

My delegation took a positive attitude during the last session when the draft resolution banning tests in all environments was submitted. Taking that position as a point of departure, the delegation of the Libyan Arab Republic fully supports operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution now before us concerning the banning of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, underground or in outer space. We also demand the immediate cessation of those nuclear tests which are being conducted under certain pretexts by some countries.

My delegation considers that the basic responsibility for achieving a comprehensive test ban and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons lies with the nuclear States. They were the ones which started the production and development of nuclear weapons and conducted tests in all environments. They are the countries which supply others with the nuclear facilities and technical expertise which would put them in a position to conduct nuclear tests for military or peaceful purposes. As has been said already, the difference between the two types of test cannot be determined and it is not possible to differentiate between tests for military purposes and those for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Suleiman, Libyan Arab Republic)

Despite the lapse of more than 10 years since the signing of the partial test-ban Treaty in Moscow, the two super-Powers and the other nuclear States have not taken any positive steps towards the conclusion of an international treaty on a comprehensive test ban. Nuclear tests are still conducted in the atmosphere and underground and measures for the prohibition of underground tests were only taken by the two super-Powers in 1974 when the threshold Treaty was signed. We had expected that that bilateral Treaty would constitute a comprehensive test ban for the two countries. However, that Treaty did not achieve that lofty objective but only banned as from the end of March 1976 tests whose destructive power exceeded 150 kilotons. This means that underground tests have not been banned and the two countries have given themselves the authority to develop these weapons qualitatively. In addition, that bilateral Treaty reaffirmed that inspection should be carried out by national means, and this is one of the basic factors still obstructing the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty under effective international control.

We believe that the first step towards creating mutual confidence between the peoples, a basic element in the establishment of an international climate of peace and security, can only be taken by the nuclear countries, which should destroy their nuclear stockpiles and refrain from producing further nuclear weapons. Until this distant hope is achieved, these countries should cease to conduct any nuclear tests and promise not to use nuclear weapons against other States.

The fifth conference of Foreign Ministers of Islamic countries held in Kuala Lumpur during June 1974, which is mentioned on page 15 of document A/9708, demanded that nuclear countries should pledge themselves not to use nuclear weapons against other countries and to continue serious negotiations to stop the nuclear arms race and achieve nuclear disarmament at an early date. This is requested in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution which calls upon nuclear countries to shoulder their special responsibility and to submit proposals on the conclusion of a treaty on a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

In view of these observations, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683.

(Mr. Suleiman, Libyan Arab Republic)

Finally, I should like to refer to a drafting point in the Arabic text of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683. In operative paragraph 1 it says that the General Assembly "deplores" nuclear tests, while in the English text it says "condemns". So there is a discrepancy between the Arabic and the English texts. We think, therefore, that operative paragraph 1 in the Arabic text should be corrected to read "condemns".

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The paragraph in the Arabic text to which the representative of the Libyan Arab Republic referred will be corrected in the final version and will reflect precisely the language in the English version.

Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): I felt it to be my duty, before we proceeded to a vote on the draft resolution regarding the Indian Ocean peace zone concept to reply to some of the observations that have been made on the draft resolution.

First of all, may I make it clear -- and I should have thought it would not have required any assurance on my part for this to be clear -- that the draft resolution is purely procedural in character. Support for it could not imply and cannot be construed as unqualified endorsement of the Declaration in all its aspects. On the other hand, support for the draft resolution would be an indication, and a clear indication, of the interest of a country in advancing a process which we hope will find its final consummation in the fulfilment of the concept of the treatment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

Nowhere in the draft resolution is it stated that anyone voting for it accepts the concept of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, and, therefore, there is not much substance in the argument that by voting for it one would be supporting the Declaration. But I am surprised that anyone should have any hesitation about supporting the concept. Everyone speaks here so ardently about the cessation of the arms race and the reduction of tensions. There are many who want the arms race to be slowed down and to cease; there are many who express their determination to take all possible measures to relax tensions. But, I regret to say, their actions do not suit their words. Therefore, not much faith can be placed in their protestations or their sincerity regarding disarmament, the reduction of tensions and the cessation of the arms race.

It has been stated that, in translating into reality the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, there should not be any interference with the freedom of the high seas. I have stated more than once -- and it is in the records of this Committee -- that there will not be any interference with the freedom of the high seas. On the contrary, we have stated quite clearly -- even the Declaration does so -- that the use of the commercial shipping lanes across the Indian Ocean would remain unimpeded and unrestricted. Therefore, that argument also goes by the board.

It has been said that, since one major Power has no bases in the Indian Ocean, it would be at a disadvantage vis-à-vis another Power which is said to have such bases, if the Indian Ocean zone of peace became a reality. May I draw the attention of those who advance this argument to the last preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, which reads as follows:

"Further believing that for the realization of the objective of the Declaration it is necessary that the great Powers enter into immediate consultations with the States concerned, with a view to adopting positive measures for the elimination of all foreign bases and of all manifestations of great-Power military presence in the region conceived in the context of great-Power rivalry."

We ask them to enter into immediate consultations in order to adopt positive measures for the elimination of those bases. Why are they so bashful about

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

entering into such consultations? Why do they shrink from consulting with one another? Who is stopping them, except themselves? They must not, therefore, use their own reluctance as an argument against the draft resolution.

It has been said that the report of the experts is unsatisfactory as it presents a distorted picture of the presence of a certain great Power or certain great Powers. The objections to such distortions are clearly reflected in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. The members of the Ad Hoc Committee itself, and a Member of the United Nations not a member of that Committee, stated what their objections were to the report and what they considered to be inaccuracies. So it is not a matter of our having ignored those representations. We have stated them quite clearly and brought to the notice of this Committee and of the General Assembly the reservations that have been made.

But it is not the content of the report that is called into question in the draft resolution. In the draft resolution, we are only seeking to secure -- as we have sought in vain to do these past two years -- the co-operation of the great Powers. All that we ask of them is -- and I have said this before -- that they should co-operate with us by at least entering into a dialogue with us to state what their problem is. But we have not heard anything favourable from them. In other words, they have shown a total indifference to this concept, which is completely inconsistent with their professed interest in disarmament and the cessation of the arms race. If they could be interested in the SALT negotiations and in the mutual and balanced reduction of forces, then I do not see why they should not be interested in the proposals that are made here. These proposals only amount to an appeal to them to consider this matter and to come before this Committee. And if they do not want to come before this Committee, they should at least communicate to us what their problems are, so that we could have discussions and consultations with them under any conditions which they might wish to dictate, in order that, as I said, we may not proceed further on false premises and on a misunderstanding of their position.

It has been stated by one representative that his delegation accepts the desirability of zones of peace but does not accept the creation of régimes in areas that would give certain countries the right to lay down conditions which

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

cannot be internationally accepted. It is precisely with the intention of determining conditions that are internationally acceptable that we have put forward this draft resolution and asked them for their support.

It baffles me -- and I am sure that my colleagues in the Ad Hoc Committee find it equally baffling -- why these major Powers are so reluctant to co-operate with us. I hope that the rest of this Committee will clearly demonstrate its interest in the concept of a zone of peace as one of the most important and vital contributions towards the promotion of peace, the cessation of the arms race and the reduction of tensions, by voting in favour of this draft resolution, despite the resistance shown to it in certain quarters.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): There are no further speakers on the proposals before the Committee. We shall therefore proceed to vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683 on agenda item 29, "Urgent need for cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and conclusion of a treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban". This draft resolution is sponsored by the delegations of Australia, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Iceland, Liberia, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand and Venezuela.

I shall now call on those representatives who have expressed the wish to explain their vote before the vote.

Mr. LIN (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The position of the Chinese delegation on the question of halting nuclear tests is known to all. We understand the desire of the numerous small and medium-sized countries to oppose super-Power nuclear arms race and blackmail and to see the cessation of nuclear tests. However, we must point out that, when the super-Powers possess a huge arsenal of nuclear arms, the mere halting of nuclear tests can neither prevent them from continuing to possess and produce nuclear weapons nor forbid them from using nuclear weapons. Instead, it will only serve to prevent non-nuclear countries and countries with few nuclear weapons from developing their defence capabilities.

(Mr. Lin, China)

The threat of a nuclear war will not be lessened in the least; on the contrary, it will only increase. Therefore, we consider that the proposal for an isolated prohibition of nuclear tests, whether partial or total, is no measure for genuine nuclear disarmament if it is not linked up with the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. Far from settling any problem, it will only play into the hands of the two super-Powers in their pursuance of the policies of nuclear monopoly and threat.

Over the past decade and more, the two super-Powers have played one trick after another on the question of halting nuclear tests. After they had conducted hundreds of nuclear tests in the atmosphere and built up a huge nuclear arsenal, which could be used as capital for nuclear threat and blackmail, they concocted the partial nuclear test ban Treaty. Not long ago, when they had conducted enough underground nuclear tests, they produced a threshold Treaty on the prohibition of underground nuclear tests. No sooner had this Treaty made its appearance than its fraudulent nature was seen through by many people. Some international personages penetratingly pointed out that far from restricting their nuclear race this Treaty would only prompt them to step up a new round of nuclear tests before the Treaty came into force. The facts have proven this to be true. On the question of halting nuclear tests, the super-Power which flaunts the banner of "socialism" is particularly brazen in its behaviour. On the one hand, it babbles that these treaties are "the first bricks laid in the foundation of the edifice of universal peace and security" and have made contributions to the "checking of the arms race". It also clamours that it is for "the complete prohibition of all nuclear tests". But on the other hand, over the past decade and more, it has never stopped its nuclear tests but has continued to increase the number and enlarge the scale of the tests. Not only is the quantity of its nuclear weapons constantly on the rise, but their quality is also being improved with redoubled efforts. The facts have exploded its deceptive propaganda. People have come to see ever more clearly that the super-Power proposal for the so-called halt of nuclear tests is in essence aimed at preserving their own nuclear monopoly and binding the numerous small and medium countries under their threat hand and foot.

(Mr. Lin, China)

to use nuclear weapons and we do not have a single soldier on foreign soil or a single military base. Facts have proved that China's attitude on the question of disarmament is serious and earnest and it honours its word.

Of course, the Soviet Union has made many proposals on the question of disarmament, but what has it done? They have talked about disarmament for so many years but who has seen the Soviet Union disarm a single warship, a single plane or a single warhead? Can the Soviet representative answer that question? Do you dare declare that you will withdraw all your troops from foreign countries and to cease interfering in the internal affairs of other countries? We think that you do not dare to do so. What the people of the world want is not empty words but actual deeds.

As for the question of international tension, many representatives have pointed out very clearly at the plenary Assembly and in the First Committee that the contention, aggression and interference on the part of the super-Powers are the root causes of international tension. Only by firmly opposing the policy of war and contention of the super-Powers can we effectively oppose their creating tension under the banner of disarmament.

(Mr. Lin, China)

In that respect, China, together with the numerous third world countries, has made its contribution. The attempt by the Soviet delegate to distort facts and to shift the blame for the creation of international tension on to China will be completely futile.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): In connexion with the second part of the statement of the representative of China, I should like to draw his attention to the fact that it was more an exercise of the right of reply than an explanation of vote. All representatives will be allowed to exercise their rights of reply later, if that is deemed necessary. Out of procedural considerations, however, I should appreciate it very much if representatives would exercise their rights of reply at the appropriate time. At present members are explaining their votes. Later on I shall call on those representatives who wish to exercise their rights of reply.

Mr. TRAORE (Mali) (interpretation from French): Three days ago I stated the views of the Government of the Republic of Mali on the question of disarmament, so this explanation of vote will be very brief.

We understand very clearly what has been in the minds of those who have sponsored the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683, and we fully understand their objectives. Their concerns and objectives are ours also. Just by way of example, I may say that the Government of Mali has agreed to accede to certain international treaties on disarmament, in particular the Moscow Treaty. But we also think that treaty has certain shortcomings. The hopes born of that treaty have not been realized, and generally speaking, ever since the question of disarmament was brought up the problem has been dealt with as a peripheral matter.

We completely agree with the sponsors that nuclear tests of any kind for military purposes should be opposed. That is a perfectly legitimate stand. But I think the problem between my delegation and the sponsors is more a matter of language than one of differences of principle. We would have liked to see some sort of link between the language of operative paragraphs 1 and 6 of the draft

(Mr. Traore, Mali)

in document A/C.1/L.683. The feelings expressed in operative paragraph 1 lead one to expect them to be picked up in the recommendations, thus establishing some sort of balance, if only a linguistic one. We believe that to ask States to refrain from the testing of nuclear weapons, pending conclusion of such an agreement, maintains a balance between that request and our intense desire to achieve a total ban. At the same time, there are the significant stockpiles of dangerous weapons of which I spoke in my statement of 11 November.

Although the nuclear-weapon States have a certain special responsibility concerning agreements limiting nuclear tests, we still believe that the problem of disarmament concerns the international community as a whole.

Therefore, if the draft resolution is put to the vote, my delegation will be obliged, although we have the same cares and concerns as the sponsors, to abstain on operative paragraphs 1 and 6.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Since no other delegations wish to explain their votes before the vote, I wish to announce that the voting procedure on the draft in document A/C.1/L.683 has begun. From this point on, rule 128 of the rules of procedure is in effect. That rule states:

"After the Chairman has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connexion with the actual conduct of the voting. ..."
A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Khmer Republic, Kuwait, Laos, Liberia, Libyan Arab Republic, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against: Albania, China, France

Abstaining: Algeria, Bulgaria, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Congo, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zaire

The draft resolution was adopted by 72 votes to 3, with 30 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I shall now call upon representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. MARTIN (United States of America): My delegation agrees with the sense of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683 in so far as it stresses the importance of progress towards a comprehensive nuclear test ban. We also agree on the desirability of wider adherence to the Partial Test-Ban of 1963, and we continue to place the highest value on that Treaty. Therefore I should like to explain why the United States abstained in the vote on the draft resolution

(Mr. Martin, United States)

As we have pointed out on many occasions, the question of a comprehensive test ban does not lend itself to easy and immediate solutions. We all know that the achievement of a comprehensive test ban depends on the resolution of the complex and stubborn problem of verification. In the absence of progress towards general agreement on effective verification, my Government does not believe it is useful to call for the urgent conclusion of a comprehensive test ban. Nor can my Government accept a moratorium on nuclear testing pending conclusion of such an agreement, as called for in operative paragraph 6, since a moratorium which was not adequately verified would have many of the same problems as a formal agreement that did not contain adequate verification provisions.

Although the United States did not support this draft resolution, I wish to take this opportunity to reaffirm my country's long-standing commitment to a comprehensive test ban pursuant to an adequately verified treaty, a commitment which, we believe, was advanced this year by the conclusion between my Government and that of the Soviet Union of the Treaty on the limitation of underground nuclear weapon tests.

Mr. MERENNE (Belgium) (interpretation from French): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.685. However, we feel obliged to state that we would have abstained if a separate vote had been taken on operative paragraph 1. This paragraph on which my delegation would have abstained reads as follows: "Condemns all nuclear weapons tests, in whatever environment they may be conducted". My Government regrets the choice of words, because they are so strong as to weaken the effectiveness of the resolution.

Mr. DUGERSUREN (Mongolia): My delegation could not vote in favour of the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.685) which has just been voted upon. My delegation has several reasons for taking this position.

First of all, the draft, which is now a resolution, fails to give a balanced evaluation of the meaning and significance of the Soviet-American agreement on the limitation of underground nuclear-weapon tests, which has been favourably received here by a great number of representatives as a positive step towards the goal we are seeking to achieve. Even some of the co-sponsors duly evaluated this instrument in their statements during the general debate in this Committee. I note further that the Prime Minister of one of the co-sponsoring countries spoke favourably about that agreement. Notwithstanding these facts, operative paragraph 2 of the resolution claims that there has not been any kind of progress in reaching an agreement limiting nuclear weapon tests. That does not truly reflect the real state of affairs.

Secondly, my delegation cannot endorse a stipulation which lumps together different categories of countries. That is to say, countries which have done or are trying to do something about the cessation of nuclear weapon tests have been lumped together with those which are carrying out atmospheric tests in defiance of widely accepted international instruments. I have in mind here operative paragraph 1 of the resolution. I might add that sweeping condemnations cannot help to attain the aim the co-sponsors intend to achieve, an aim which my delegation wholeheartedly shares.

These, inter alia, are the main reasons why my delegation had to abstain on the draft resolution in question.

Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands): The Netherlands delegation, in explaining its vote, would like to put on record certain misgivings it has in regard to the draft resolution that has just been adopted.

The Netherlands delegation wishes to dissociate itself from the wording of operative paragraph 1, which condemns -- and I should like to stress this word "condemns" -- all nuclear tests. Of course, we are in favour of a cessation of all nuclear tests and we fully share the concern at the continuance of such testing as expressed in operative paragraph 2, but it is open to question, to say the least, whether

in the present circumstances and given the stated policies of the countries concerned, a blanket condemnation is justified. Besides, my delegation wonders whether such strong language as is used in this paragraph is conducive to the aim that the co-sponsors of the draft resolution have in mind, that is, a comprehensive test ban. In our view, progress towards that aim cannot be enhanced by condemning the very States on whose co-operation such progress really depends. In this respect, I wish to take this opportunity to express the appreciation of the Netherlands for the decision of France to stop nuclear testing in the atmosphere. This is to be regarded as an important decision and a step in the right direction. My delegation feels that this particular paragraph does not serve any practical purpose and could turn out to be self-defeating. Therefore, if operative paragraph 1 had been put to a separate vote, the Netherlands delegation would have abstained.

Secondly, we are not very happy with operative paragraph 6, in which the idea of a moratorium is put forward. To be effective, the countries involved must have confidence that the moratorium is complied with. A treaty which ensures reciprocity and which includes an agreed verification system is considerably to be preferred to a moratorium which by its character does not include such a system.

(Mr. Kaufmann, Netherlands)

We admit, however, that progress in seismology has reduced this problem, in that many underground tests can already be identified by national means of verification. However, for the same reason, we feel that a treaty banning underground nuclear tests is feasible now.

Another objection is that the lack of binding obligations in a moratorium can lead to disappointments, as we have seen in the past.

On the other hand, my delegation deems it appropriate for the General Assembly to address an urgent appeal to all concerned to strive for a comprehensive test ban. No other measure could contribute more to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to the cause of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Since in our view this is to be regarded as the basic purpose of the present resolution, the Netherlands delegation, notwithstanding its serious reservations on operative paragraph 1, has voted in favour of the resolution as a whole.

Mr. ANDREAE (Federal Republic of Germany): I should also like to explain my delegation's vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683.

As my country's representative, the Minister of State, Mr. Karl Moersch, pointed out in his statement in this Committee on 24 October, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has always been in favour of a cessation of all nuclear, weapon tests in all environments, of a universal membership of the partial test ban Treaty of 1963, and of the speedy conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. My Government would regard such steps as a decisive contribution towards limiting the nuclear arms race and strengthening the policy of non-proliferation.

We feel, however, that more balanced languages in the resolution would better have served the purpose of this initiative, the aims of which we fully support in principle.

It is for this reason that we abstained.

Mr. SCALAERE (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation voted against the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683. Certainly, it is not discriminatory in contrast to some others that have been submitted in past years. Its very severity spares it from being criticized for that, since

it condemns all nuclear tests equally and requests all Powers who carry out those tests to observe a general moratorium.

However, we wanted to show by our vote that the real problem is not stopping nuclear weapon tests but beginning genuine disarmament in this area and in the area of conventional weapons. Let us assume for a moment that all States agree to put an end to all nuclear tests. What would be the result? Let us not talk about atomic pollution for a moment; there has been enough of a debate on that in another Committee under another item. Let us only consider here the consequences of a complete cessation of nuclear tests with regard to disarmament.

To begin with, it can be asserted that such a cessation would take place only when the major nuclear Powers no longer needed to carry out any more tests. What would happen then? Would the number of nuclear weapons be reduced? Would a single rocket be destroyed? That would certainly not happen, and nuclear arsenals would continue to develop, since for the major Powers it is no longer so much a question of making new nuclear explosive devices or of reducing the size of missiles. The problem is to develop the carriers -- rockets, submarines and bombers; to improve the range and accuracy; and to increase the number of warheads transported by the carriers. A complete cessation of nuclear tests, unfortunately, would have no effect on the development of those programmes.

A complete cessation of nuclear tests is desirable and we would be quite in favour of it provided that it formed the culmination of a methodical undertaking of genuine disarmament, or that it took place within the framework of such an undertaking. Otherwise it would just turn out to be one more deception among so many. By adopting useless resolutions we are now hiding from ourselves the truth that we have not dissipated the nuclear threat which weighs more and more heavily on the world. But that is the real problem that needs to be confronted, one which needs to be tackled more vigorously than we have been doing. That is the problem of genuine disarmament and of effective and controlled destruction of weapons. The rest, unfortunately, is mere fiction.

Mr. di BERNARDO (Italy): As was said by my delegation in our statement on 7 November, the Italian Government holds the view that the achievement of real progress on the complete prohibition of all nuclear tests is of vital importance.

(Mr. di Bernardo, Italy)

"Indeed, a complete ban on all forms of nuclear experiment represents a step along the road leading to nuclear disarmament and to general and complete disarmament." (2011th meeting, p. 51)

We said that we were of the opinion that expressions of condemnation that contained in paragraph 1 of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.683, serve any really constructive purpose or prove useful for real progress in disarmament negotiations.

Consequently, we have regretfully found ourselves in the position of not being able to support the resolution in question. Therefore the Italian delegation has abstained.

Mr. ELIAS (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation voted in favour of the resolution in document A/C.1/L.683. We are convinced that cessation of nuclear tests and the conclusion of a general agreement to achieve that goal are necessary and urgent steps to prevent the very serious dangers in the arms race and nuclear proliferation.

However, the language used in operative paragraph 1 of this resolution seems excessive to my delegation because of the moral tone of the word "condemn". The inclusion of that term does not enhance the effectiveness of this important resolution. If the first paragraph had been the subject of a separate vote, my delegation would have abstained on it.

Mr. ZULETA (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Although Colombia's position on this subject has been stated on a number of occasions, I should like to say that a procedural vote in the plenary of the General Assembly made it impossible for us to come here in time for the vote. But we should like the record to show that if we had been present we would have voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.63.

Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): In previous years we have refused to single out for condemnation those countries which were engaged in atmospheric testing. In condemning such countries we felt that we appeared to be discriminating between them and those which were conducting tests underground. Countries conducting underground tests do not deserve any credit for what would appear to be a measure of self-restraint, that is, avoiding atmospheric testing. They do not need to do so because by the conduct of underground tests they are able, as they clearly demonstrated, to maintain and increase their commanding superiority over others which are endeavouring to catch up with them.

We have, however, this year supported the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.63 because it does condemn all tests in whatever environment they are conducted. Our policy remains that there are five elements to a sound policy designed to eliminate nuclear weapons and their means of delivery: first of all, the complete cessation of all tests; secondly, the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty; thirdly, the total cessation of the production of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery; fourthly, categorical and unequivocal renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons; and fifthly, the dismantling of nuclear armaments. Unless we agree on all these five points there will be no progress whatsoever made in this direction.

It is in the hope that we can work towards the realization of such a five-point programme and that this draft resolution is a step in that direction, that we have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. GUVEN (Turkey) (interpretation from French): If operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/L.633 had been voted upon separately, I would have abstained because of the use of the word "condemns". With regard to operative paragraph 6 of this draft, I should like to add that we consider that paragraph as a sincere appeal on the part of the majority of members for the cessation of all nuclear tests. But what should be essential to everyone is to achieve a final cessation of all nuclear tests under effective international control.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): If there are no other representatives which wish to explain their vote I shall consider that we have concluded consideration of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.633.

We shall now proceed to the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.687, relating to item 35 of the agenda, entitled "General and complete disarmament", co-sponsored by the delegations of Argentina, Brazil, India, Liberia, Nigeria, Romania, Sweden and Zaire.

As a result of consultations that I have had, I have gathered the impression that as far as this draft resolution is concerned it appears to me that it would hardly be necessary to take a vote. Of course, if any delegation so wishes, we could proceed to a vote.

If there is no objection on the part of members of the Committee, I shall take it that the draft resolution is adopted unanimously.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I call on the representative of China in explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. LIN (China) (interpretation from Chinese): When the resolution on the "Disarmament Decade" was adopted in 1969, my country did not participate in the discussions. Since we have reservations with regard to certain contents of the resolution, we would not have participated in the vote had the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.687 been put to a vote.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): If no other representative wishes to explain his vote, I shall consider that we have concluded consideration of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.687.

Let us now proceed to the last draft resolution that we will be considering this afternoon, which is contained in the Addendum No. 29 to document A/9629, the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean.

In this connexion, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the administrative and financial implications of this draft resolution which appear in document A/C.1/L.689. All of this concerns item 31 entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace: Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean".

I call on the representative of Bangladesh to explain his vote before the vote.

Mr. KARIM (Bangladesh): I have asked to speak to explain our vote on the draft resolution in the addendum to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (A/9629/Add.1) and to raise a matter of direct and vital concern to Bangladesh.

In the course of his statement in the general debate in this Committee the permanent representative of Bangladesh had occasion to stress this point strongly. I need hardly emphasize the importance of the Indian Ocean to my country, possessing as it does a long coastline and having that Ocean as its only seaboard. In a very real sense the Indian Ocean is an essential lifeline for my country. Given our size, our population, the configuration of our coastline, our strategic location in an area which is gradually becoming the crucible of great-Power confrontation and which has a history of endemic conflict, as demonstrated in the recent past, and given its vital dependence on the seas for resources, food, transportation and navigation, Bangladesh's interest in the Indian Ocean is inevitable and genuine. It is integral to our national interest, therefore, that matters pertaining to the Indian Ocean, and particularly the practical implementation of the concept of a zone of peace, are of crucial significance to us. For those reasons we have welcomed the proposal to establish the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

The Prime Minister of Bangladesh has on several occasions spoken in support of that concept. Addressing the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly in September of this year he said:

"We therefore welcome every effort aimed at advancing the process of détente, relaxation of tension, limitation of armaments and promotion of peaceful coexistence in every part of the world, whether in Asia, Africa, Europe or Latin America. In pursuance of this policy we have consistently supported the concept of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean area, which has received the powerful endorsement of this Assembly." (A/PV.2243, p. 9-10)

Therefore, while wholeheartedly supporting the draft resolution the hope that due consideration will be given to our desire argement of the Ad Hoc Committee's membership so that those

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

countries which were not Members of the United Nations at the time of the establishment of the Committee may have the opportunity of securing a place on the Committee. My country is not the only one which may be interested in securing membership. The march towards decolonization will bring more littoral States into this world body in course of time. Already one country occupying a very vital position in the Indian Ocean region is on its way to statehood. There will be many more such countries in the future. The membership of the Ad Hoc Committee should therefore be enlarged with a view to keeping pace with the increased membership of the countries of the Indian Ocean.

Mr. PAMPHUL (Mauritius): I should like to take this opportunity to clarify a situation which is often misunderstood regarding Diego Garcia, which is in the Indian Ocean, the area we are discussing. Several delegates have referred to this island. I should like to inform the Committee that there has never been any signed agreement between the United Kingdom and Mauritius so far as Diego Garcia is concerned. The island was detached from Mauritius long before Mauritius became independent on 12 March 1969. Mauritius still retains the rights of exploitation of the mineral resources of Diego Garcia, as well as fishing rights. Moreover, Air Mauritius utilizes the landing strip on Diego Garcia.

It is often said that Diego Garcia was sold by Mauritius to the United Kingdom for the price of, I believe, £3 million sterling -- I am not very sure about this; it is a moot question, which I shall certainly not go into at this stage and in this Committee. Is it possible that a colonial Power would sell to itself part of a territory before granting independence to that territory? But, as I say, this is not a matter that I am prepared to go into at this stage.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Mauritius for his clarification. If he would now tell us how he intends to vote, that would be a proper explanation of vote before the vote.

Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius): If I have not made an explanation of vote before the vote, I have certainly clarified the position of Mauritius before the vote.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): We shall now proceed to vote on the draft resolution in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (A/9629/Add.1).

The draft resolution was adopted by 79 votes to none with 27 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I shall now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their vote after the vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. BARTON (Canada): My delegation abstained in this vote. I should like to make it clear, however, that this does not in any way indicate a lack of positive appreciation of or sympathy towards the intention of the co-sponsors. We have every desire to see fruitful consultations among the Littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean and the principal maritime users. We remain strongly sympathetic, in principle, to concepts of denuclearized or demilitarized zones where these are feasible and would promote stability, and we continue to welcome the efforts being made to apply those concepts to the Indian Ocean area. However, as I have explained in previous years, we believe also that the responsibility for elaborating specific proposals for such zones rests primarily with the States of the area most directly concerned and that this goal should be substantially achieved before other States with no direct or immediate interest in the regions concerned are called upon to endorse such arrangements.

(Mr. Barton, Canada)

The concept of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace also touches on the interests of maritime users. Operative paragraph 1 of the resolution which has just been adopted requires Canada and other Member States to urge all States with a direct interest in the Indian Ocean to give tangible support to the establishment and preservation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

But the concept of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace has been defined only by resolution 2832 (XXVI) at the twenty-sixth session. Canada abstained from voting on that resolution because we had reservations as to the definition of the obligations it implied. The fact that we continue to have these reservations was a further reason for my delegation to abstain from voting on the present resolution.

Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom): My delegation fully respects the principles which we recognize to have inspired the resolution upon which we have just voted, but nevertheless we have felt obliged to abstain.

We understand and we share the desire of the sponsors and their supporters to maintain and enhance peace and stability in the region of the Indian Ocean. This basic objective underlies British treaty and other commitments and responsibilities within and beyond the area. Our commitments, of course, present no threat whatever to any State in the area.

We nevertheless consider that the resolution might have the effect of preventing the United Kingdom from fulfilling some of its commitments.

In the second place, we must admit to some concern lest some of the arrangements contemplated in the resolution might affect our lawful commerce and that of others upon the high seas, since it could prejudice the facilities which that commerce requires. Any arrangement affecting an area of the high seas is, of course, the legitimate concern not only of the littoral States and the major Powers but also of the whole international community; and in this connexion we have been happy to note the reassurances which the representatives of Japan and Sri Lanka have given on this point today on behalf of the sponsors of the resolution.

(Mr. Allen, United Kingdom)

In the third place, we believe that in one respect the resolution implies a reversal of priorities. It seems to us that the definition of the limits of the zone, and the question which States are littoral to it, should precede rather than follow the declaration of any peace zone. I was interested to see that the representative of Bangladesh had raised this same question on 7 November.

Having said all that, I should like to repeat that we recognize with sympathy the wish of many of the States concerned for a greater measure of security than they enjoy at present. We do not want the area to be the scene of rivalries or tension: we want to see international tension relaxed, and international peace and security strengthened; and we want to see the problems of the States bordering on the Indian Ocean resolved in conditions of peace and tranquillity.

Mr. MISTRAL (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation abstained from voting on the draft resolution that was before us, and has often had occasion to state its position on the subject of declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. We fully understand the anxiety of the States bordering on the Indian Ocean and their desire to rid that area of the seeds of conflict. However, we feel that the essentially praiseworthy objective of establishing a régime of peace in the Indian Ocean area cannot be sought by establishing arrangements that would lead to modifying the essential principles of international law -- in this particular case, the principle of freedom of navigation on the high seas, which is one of the oldest and most unchallenged principles -- by a resolution of our General Assembly.

My delegation also would like to make known its views on the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, drawn up with the assistance of qualified experts, on the specific situation of the military presence of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean, in all its aspects. I refer to document A/AC.159/Rev.1. That document, in its originally published version, gave rise to protests, and my delegation had to send the Secretary-General a letter, dated 13 June 1974, in which the French Government expressed the most explicit reservations in regard to the contents of that report.

(Mr. Mistral, France)

My delegation would like to state that it is fully convinced that the distinguished experts appointed by the Secretary-General did perform the task entrusted to them with all possible competence and impartiality and in perfect good faith. I should like to state this publicly. And if my Government, like other Governments, had to note that the report submitted to us contained "errors, inaccuracies and omissions", it was because the task which our Committee saw fit to call for was obviously impossible to achieve. I would add that, in our view, it was not in keeping with either the objectives of our Organization or the resources available to it.

It is axiomatic that all military Powers wish to keep confidential facts about their armed forces in general, their chain of command and the movements of their land, air and sea units. This is all a matter of military secrecy, and States legitimately consider this to be a prerogative which affects their sovereignty and security. No doubt, certain indications are given by States themselves; no doubt, certain military movements are obviously noticed and become the subject of reports in newspapers or specialized journals; and of course, too, independent experts, on their own, do undertake over-all comprehensive studies with regard to the armaments of States or their military operations.

(Mr. Mistral, France)

But everyone can see that these indications, when they are not from official sources, are liable to be piecemeal, inadequate, wrongly interpreted, if indeed they are not purely and simply erroneous.

The United Nations, mercifully, has no intelligence service, and does not act as an espionage office for its members, and I hope it never will. So how in those circumstances can we ask it to gather information on facts which at least in part are a matter of military secrecy for States?

Those are the reasons that made us object to the reference to the report of the Secretary-General, which, together with what I have just said about our general position with regard to the zone of the Indian Ocean, prompted our delegation to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution before us.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Would any other delegation like to explain its vote on the resolution which has just been adopted?

As there are no more delegations which wish to speak, this concludes our consideration of the draft resolution contained in the addendum of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (A/9629).

I would now like to make an announcement. Grenada is now to be considered one of the sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.676 on the question of Korea. Tomorrow we shall be having just one meeting in the morning. I am confident that the afternoon will be devoted to consultations, to speed up the procedure of submitting resolutions, and I understand that the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.684 will be voted on at the beginning of the morning meeting.

I should also like to ask the Committee whether it is prepared to vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.690, on general and complete disarmament, which was introduced a few days ago by the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. MERRBURG (Netherlands): I think that it is a little too early to vote on it.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): If none of the sponsors object, we will postpone the voting until a later date. I hope it will be soon. We must make some progress. It is very late. Today we voted on three draft resolutions, but there are consultations going on with regard to many others. So I repeat that our deadline is Friday of next week.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.