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First Committee

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Official Records

Chairman: Mr. Sychou (Belarus)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10

Agenda items 60, 61 and 63 to 81 (*continued*)

Action on draft resolutions submitted on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: This afternoon, the Committee will proceed to take action on the following draft resolutions contained in cluster 1: A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1, A/C.1/51/L.23, A/C.1/51/L.30 and A/C.1/51/L.39. If time permits, the Committee will take action on those draft resolutions that appear in cluster 2 on other weapons of mass destruction.

The Committee will first take up draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1.

I now call on those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1.

Mr. Campbell (Australia): Australia shares the strong desire expressed in this draft resolution to see the ultimate achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons. However, we believe that the draft convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons, as contained in this draft resolution, is unrealistic in terms of present-day realities. Moreover, the text put forward lacks the balance we would like to see and which would be provided by an appropriate reference to the importance of non-proliferation commitments as we work towards nuclear disarmament. The neglect of any reference to this essential element, in Australia's view, renders the proposed approach impractical.

In explaining our position on this draft resolution, I would stress the priority we attach to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone for international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Australia will therefore abstain in the vote on this draft resolution.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): The Pakistan delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution in A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1. Our position is based on the prohibition on the use or threat of use of force contained in Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations. It is also based on the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1 entitled, "Convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons", was introduced by the representative of India at the 14th meeting of the Committee on 4 November 1996. In addition to those sponsors contained in the draft resolution and those that appear in document A/C.1/51/Inf.3, it is also sponsored by El Salvador.

The Committee will now proceed to take a recorded vote on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Malta, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1 was adopted by 76 votes to 26, with 24 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegations of Bhutan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Sri Lanka and Yemen informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Slovakia had intended to vote against draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1.]

The Chairman: I call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote.

Mr. Sha Zukang (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation, as it has in previous years, voted in favour of the draft resolution on a draft convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons

because China has always advocated that, prior to the complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, all nuclear-weapon States should undertake never to be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other or to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones, and that they must achieve a legally binding instrument in this regard.

China has appealed repeatedly to other nuclear-weapon States to respond to the Chinese initiative and to agree to enter into negotiations. We believe that, once a legally binding international instrument is achieved on the matter in question, the potential use of nuclear weapons will be eliminated. This will certainly give great impetus to the achievement of a complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

Based on this position, the Chinese delegation supports the thrust and purpose of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1. We believe that the draft convention annexed to the draft resolution on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons can be used as a basis for future negotiations.

At the same time, however, our views differ on the wording and language of the draft resolution and the draft convention. Our understanding is that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, all States have a legitimate right of self-defence.

Mr. Broadhead (New Zealand): New Zealand has abstained in the voting on the text, contained in document A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1, on a convention of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. My delegation agrees with the sponsors of this draft resolution on the vital importance of reducing the threat of nuclear war and ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons. We also believe that the way to achieve that outcome is through a series of practical disarmament measures, such as the recently adopted Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

A convention banning the use of nuclear weapons may well be an important part of this process at some point. However, my delegation does not believe that the international community is ready at this time to start meaningful negotiations on such a convention. To be truly effective, such a convention would require the support of all the international community, particularly States that possess nuclear weapons. It is clear from the voting that has just taken place that this is not the case. We therefore question whether calls to commence work on a convention represent

a practical measure towards the objective of ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Ledogar (United States of America): As is traditional, the United States voted against this draft resolution, for well-known reasons. I would like to point out that, however, in the annex of this draft resolution, article 3 states that the present convention would enter into force on the deposit of instruments of ratification by 25 Governments, including the Governments of the five nuclear-weapon States. Even though we have no intention of ever signing any such convention, the United States does not regard that provision that we, the United States, would be essential to the entry into force as an attack on our sovereignty.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.23.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.23, entitled "The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)", was introduced by the representative of South Africa, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the African Group of States, at the 17th meeting of the Committee on 7 November 1996. The draft resolution is sponsored by Burundi on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the African Group of States.

It should be noted that, according to the revision made by the representative of Cameroon at the previous meeting, in the third preambular paragraph, line 3, the words "and regional" should be added after the word "global".

The Chairman: The sponsors of this draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted, as orally revised, by the Committee without a vote.

If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.23, as orally revised, was adopted.

The Chairman: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote or position.

Mr. Aguirre de Cárcet (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): As it did last year, the Spanish delegation has

joined in the consensus in favour of the draft resolution on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. That decision is in keeping with the principles that dictate Spanish policy on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. My Government is firmly convinced that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of treaties that have been agreed upon by consensus between the States of the region will strengthen international peace and security.

It is for that reason that during negotiations on the Treaty of Pelindaba Spain on several occasions reiterated its support for the Treaty's objectives. In this connection, I should like once again to recall the decision adopted by the Congress of Deputies on the non-nuclearization of Spain, which applies to all its territory. Spain is a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and has signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Accordingly, my country has entered into a series of commitments and obligations in the field of non-proliferation and nuclear security. On that point, I should like to conclude by stating that the final text of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty is being very carefully considered by my country from a legal point of view. This means that my delegation's support for the adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.23 does not prejudice Spain's final decision on signing Protocol III to that Treaty.

Mr. Yativ (Israel): Once again, Israel has joined the consensus on this resolution because it supports the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones. However, Israel would like to take this opportunity to emphasize its view that each nuclear-weapon-free zone should be tailored to the specific region according to its characteristics, be freely negotiated by all States of the region and include mutual verification arrangements. The negotiation and establishment of each zone should be by agreement of all its members. Therefore, we would like to register our reservations on the third and fifth preambular paragraphs.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.30.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I shall now call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.30, entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-

weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons”, was introduced by the representative of Pakistan at the 14th meeting of the Committee on 4 November 1996. In addition to the sponsors listed in the draft resolution and those that appear in document A/C.1/51/INF/3, it was also sponsored by Egypt.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.30 was adopted by 100 votes to none, with 43 abstentions.

The Chairman: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes.

Mr. Campbell (Australia): Australia supports the pursuit of international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We regard negative security assurances as important confidence-building contributions to the goals of non-proliferation and disarmament. We note that the nuclear-weapon States agreed at the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to consider further steps in this regard. We have, therefore, again cast a vote in favour of the draft resolution.

However, we continue to be disappointed with the impoverished treatment of the subject provided by the text in A/C.1/51/L.30. We underline yet again that only States willing to assure the security of others by joining the international non-proliferation regime should benefit from negative security assurances. Next year, as in the past, we will work with other States to try to amend the draft resolution in order to achieve the broad base of support necessary to ensure that it be taken seriously enough to be acted upon.

I apologize for the earlier confusion.

Mr. Choi (Republic of Korea): My delegation abstained in the voting on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.30. In the past, the Republic of Korea has been in favour of the relevant resolution confirming the necessity for an effective international arrangement to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

This year, however, we decided to abstain on the draft resolution, since it fails properly to take into account the major developments made in recent years in the field of security assurances. We believe that the issue of security assurances received a significant impetus from the adoption in April 1995 of Security Council resolution 984 (1995) and from the unilateral declaration by the nuclear-weapon States providing both negative and positive security assurances.

Furthermore, the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) decided that further steps should be considered to provide assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty and that such steps could take the form of an international legally binding instrument. In addition, my delegation believes that

negative security assurances should be provided only to the States parties to the NPT that are in full compliance with their obligations under the NPT.

However, my delegation's abstention does not mean that the Republic of Korea has changed its basic position on negative security assurances. We are still looking forward to the early conclusion of an effective international arrangement that will provide non-nuclear-weapon States with negative security assurances.

The Chairman: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39.

I shall now call on those representatives wishing to explain their vote or position before a decision is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. Goosen (South Africa): My delegation asked to speak in order to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39, entitled "Nuclear disarmament". At last year's session of the General Assembly, South Africa supported but did not sponsor the resolution, despite our concerns about its failure to recognize the key roles that are played in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); by nuclear-weapon-free zones; and by the important decisions taken at the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT, which gave impetus to the need for concluding the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996 and for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

This year, however, we are unable to support this draft resolution, even without regard to our original misgivings last year about its contents. This year, the draft resolution, in both its preambular and operative parts, makes reference to the programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons proposed by 28 delegations to the Conference on Disarmament on 8 August 1996. The fundamental flaw in this proposal is the linkage that it creates between the negotiations of nuclear disarmament treaties, which in our view holds the singular threat of preventing progress.

On the occasion of the submission of this programme of action to the Conference on Disarmament, the South African Permanent Representative, Ambassador Selebi, addressed the Conference, stating that we had been unable to support the working paper on the programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons because of the linkage that it introduces between immediate and concurrent commencement of negotiations and early conclusion of a

multilaterally negotiated, legally binding instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; a convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons; and a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Ambassador Selebi clearly stated South Africa's principled position on the linkages issue when he addressed the Conference on Disarmament on 25 January 1996. At that time, he stated that:

"My delegation also believes it would be beneficial to our work if we approached our discussions on the agenda this year without relying on so-called linkages. Ever since they were raised at the end of 1994, linkages have led to a disappointing lack of progress on issues which the Conference should address. Linkages are no doubt a neat way of avoiding progress on certain subjects or of trying to ensure progress on others, but the result has instead been mostly to block progress on all fronts."

We will abstain in the voting on this draft resolution.

Mr. Campbell (Australia): Australia is fully committed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, but is also firmly of the view that it is more productive for the international community to concentrate on actually achieving further progress towards nuclear disarmament rather than to seek to debate an artificial timetable.

Our priority is practical, realistic steps to achieve the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. We consider that calls for a restrictive, time-bound approach, as espoused in this draft resolution, are not realistic and therefore do not advance the cause of disarmament in any concrete or practical way. What is required to advance nuclear disarmament is a patient and dogged pursuit of the various interlocking steps on the path to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. In Australia's view, it simply does not make sense to advocate the sort of tight, sterile linkage that holds one negotiation or process hostage to the conclusion of another.

It is for these reasons that we will vote against the draft resolution.

The Chairman: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39, "Nuclear disarmament."

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39, entitled “Nuclear disarmament”, was introduced by the representative of Myanmar at the 18th meeting of the First Committee on 11 November 1996. In addition to the sponsors listed in the draft resolution and in document A/C.1/51/INF.3, the draft resolution is also sponsored by the following countries: Burundi and El Salvador.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Cyprus, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, New Zealand,

Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39 was adopted by 87 votes to 38, with 20 abstentions.

The Chairman: I now call on delegations wishing to speak in explanation of vote after the voting.

Mr. Felicio (Brazil): Brazil voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39, entitled “Nuclear disarmament”. However, we dissociate ourselves from the content of the sixth preambular paragraph and would have abstained had a separate vote been taken on that paragraph. In our view as signatories of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty,

“the cessation of all nuclear weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects”. (*A/50/1027, Annex, fifth preambular paragraph*)

Moreover, while fully endorsing the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the sooner the better, we welcome any partial or progressive measures which may contribute to the attainment of this goal.

Mr. Sha Zukang (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39, submitted by a group of non-aligned countries. We did so because China supports the goal and objectives set forth in the draft resolution.

As is well known, China has consistently advocated the complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons. To give impetus to the realization of that objective, Mr. Qian Qichen, Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister of China, proposed, as early as the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the formulation, as in the case of the complete prohibition on chemical and biological weapons, of a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons. Under the convention, all nuclear-weapon States would undertake the total destruction of their nuclear weapons and to implement such obligations under effective international control.

Meanwhile, he also set forth a series of complete and interrelated nuclear disarmament proposals on behalf of the

Chinese Government. I wish to take this opportunity today to elaborate further on some of China's views on nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament.

The creation and development of nuclear weapons and their subsequent reduction has been a long and tortuous process. It must be pointed out that the nuclear-weapon States had different historical backgrounds and considerations in developing their nuclear weapons. China pursues an independent foreign policy and was forced to make the decision to develop nuclear weapons under specific historical conditions. In the past 100 years and more, the Chinese nation has been subjected to every kind of foreign aggression and oppression.

After the founding of the new China, the nation remained subject to threats of war, including the use of nuclear weapons. To survive and develop, China had no alternative; the small number of nuclear weapons that we manufactured and developed were intended not to threaten other countries, but solely to address our defence needs and to safeguard our sovereignty and territorial integrity, the peaceful and tranquil life of our people and world peace by obviating nuclear blackmail and threats and preventing a nuclear war until such time as nuclear weapons were eliminated forever.

From the very first day when China came into possession of nuclear weapons, it solemnly declared that it would never be the first to use them. China also undertook unconditionally not to use or to threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones at any time or in any circumstances. China is the first nuclear-weapon State in the world to have made and abided by this commitment. China has never deployed nuclear weapons abroad, nor has it used or threatened to use nuclear weapons against other countries.

China and the non-aligned, non-nuclear-weapon States at large have common or similar historical experiences. Today, we share the same concerns with regard to the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. As a nuclear-weapon State, China does not intend to and absolutely will not evade its responsibilities and obligations to nuclear disarmament. We are ready to join the other nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States at large in a joint effort to bring about a nuclear-weapon-free world at an early date.

It goes without saying that the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons will take some time to materialize and continue to depend on the solid and

earnest efforts of all countries. The extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the proposed cut-off convention, among other things, are part and parcel of the movement towards the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. It is our hope that the international community will define specific steps and a timetable within the framework of the negotiations on a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Against the current background, the nuclear-weapon States concerned, as well as members of the military treaties, should be the first to undertake to review and revise their obsolete theories and policies of nuclear deterrence. The countries that possess more than 90 per cent of the most sophisticated nuclear weapons and nuclear arsenals in the world should continue to reduce their nuclear arsenals drastically. Indeed, such countries still bear a special responsibility and primary obligations towards nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Broadhead (New Zealand): New Zealand has abstained on the text contained in document A/C.1/51/L.39, entitled "Nuclear disarmament". It is the view of my delegation that the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons will be reached only through a series of practical measures that will enhance the process of nuclear disarmament. We see the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as a significant step forward in this regard and hope that negotiations on a convention prohibiting the production of fissile material, the so-called cut-off convention, can be given the impetus they deserve.

However, my delegation does not believe that calling for these negotiations to be pursued in a time-bound framework contributes to this process. To do so is to ignore the reality that negotiations on nuclear disarmament will be influenced by developments in global and regional security, which are outside the influence of such frameworks. New Zealand fully shares the aims of the sponsors of this draft resolution in seeking to reduce the threat of nuclear war and eventually to eliminate completely nuclear weapons. For that reason, we could not consider opposing this text, but we believe that setting a time-bound framework for negotiations is not conducive to advancing our common objective.

Mrs. Kurokuchi (Japan): Following the decisions taken this morning, I would like to make a combined explanation of vote on some of the draft resolutions in cluster 1 on nuclear weapons on which this Committee has

just taken action: draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1, entitled "Convention of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons"; and draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39, entitled "Nuclear disarmament".

Japan, which experienced the calamity of atomic bombing, fervently desires that the use of nuclear weapons, which cause incomparable human suffering, should never be repeated and firmly believes that continuous efforts should be made towards creating a world free of nuclear weapons.

Having said that, I would like to make Japan's position clear as to these draft resolutions. As far as draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1 is concerned, Japan considers that, in the present international situation, in which nuclear bombs do exist, it is more important to achieve steady progress in nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament than to seek to conclude a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, as proposed in A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1.

To this end, Japan attaches particular importance to the strengthening of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime and the early commencement of negotiations on a cut-off treaty, in accordance with the principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as to the concrete efforts made by the nuclear-weapon States towards nuclear disarmament.

Therefore, Japan abstained in the voting on this draft resolution.

Secondly, with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", I would like to state the following.

It is our understanding that this draft resolution is not the product of a coordination of the views of the countries concerned, such as the United States, the Russian Federation and other nuclear-weapon States. Japan, which seeks to promote nuclear disarmament by means of steady disarmament efforts, cannot regard the draft resolution as having been formulated on the basis of appropriate consideration and consultations.

Furthermore, this draft resolution does not contain any reference to the highly important NPT review process, which is a follow-up to the outcome on the NPT Review and Extension Conference held last year. Japan considers that the NPT review process is one of the most effective, realistic and solid frameworks for the promotion of nuclear

disarmament. For these reasons, Japan could not support draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.39.

Mr. Moradi (Iran): I would like to explain our reservation on the third preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.23, entitled "The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)".

Our reservation concerns the designation of the Middle East as a zone of tension. We do not agree with that designation. We hold the view that all areas of the world are areas of tension. This reservation holds true for any similar reference in any other draft resolution before the Committee.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolutions in cluster 2 on other weapons of mass destruction.

I have been informed that the sponsors of draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.48 and A/C.1/51/L.49 wish to postpone action on them, due to ongoing consultations among interested delegations.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.2.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.2, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction", was introduced by the representative of Hungary at the 11th meeting of the Committee on 22 October 1996. In addition to the sponsors listed in the draft resolution and in document A/C.1/51/INF.3, the draft resolution was also sponsored by El Salvador.

With reference to this draft resolution, I wish to make a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General.

By paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.2, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depository Governments of the Convention and to provide such services as may be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Review Conference, as well as the decisions contained in the Final Report of the Special Conference, including all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Group. The General Assembly would also, by paragraph 4, welcome the convening, at the request of the

States Parties, of the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention at Geneva from 25 November to 6 December 1996.

It should be recalled that in the note by the Secretariat (A/C.1/50/L.59) concerning the responsibilities entrusted to the Secretary-General under draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.1/Rev.1, adopted as resolution 50/79, on this item, it was understood that its implementation would require assistance and substantive support services from the Secretariat. In addition, no modification would be required in the activities under section 2, Political Affairs, of the 1996-1997 programme budget.

Related requirements for conference servicing, travel, daily subsistence allowance and temporary assistance of the Fourth Review Conference, estimated at \$2,876,600, had no financial implications for the United Nations regular budget. The estimates were subsequently revised to \$1,226,400 on the basis of past experience and anticipated workload and communicated to the Preparatory Committee in July 1996, as contained in document BWC/CONF.IV/PC/3/REV.1).

It should be noted that the Fourth Review Conference is a Conference of States Parties to the Convention. As was the case in the past, conferences on multilateral disarmament treaties, such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Seabed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof and the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, included in their rules of procedure provisions concerning arrangements for meeting the costs of the conferences, including the sessions of their preparatory committees. Under those arrangements, no additional cost was borne by the regular budget of the United Nations.

Accordingly, the Secretary-General considers that his mandate under draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.2 to provide necessary assistance and required services for the implementation of the decision and the recommendations of the Review Conferences and the Special Conference has no financial implications for the regular budget of the United Nations and that the associated costs would be met in accordance with the financial arrangements to be made by the Conference of the Convention.

Furthermore, all activities related to international conventions or treaties that, under their respective legal instruments, are to be financed outside the regular budget of the United Nations may be undertaken only when sufficient

resources to cover the activities in question have been received from the States parties in advance. Contributions received to date for holding the Fourth Review Conference amount to \$191,784.

The Chairman: The Committee takes note of the Secretary's statement.

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.2 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.2 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call on those delegations wishing to explain their position after the decision on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.2.

Mr. Yativ (Israel): Israel joined the consensus on this draft resolution, as it did at last year's session of the General Assembly. Israel supports the objective of a global prohibition of biological weapons. In our view, any arrangement reached must include, in a comprehensive manner, all the States in our region.

It is our view that there exists an inherent difficulty in the establishment of a credible verification regime in this area, as the Iraqi case clearly proves. Therefore, as a minimum, arrangements involving compliance and enforcement require the establishment of a credible verification regime so as to confer confidence in the Convention.

On the regional level, the verification arrangements should be on a mutual basis.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.24.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.24, entitled "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes", was introduced by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the African Group of States at the 17th meeting of the Committee on 7 November 1996.

The draft resolution was sponsored by the representative of Burundi on behalf of the States Members

of the United Nations that are members of the African Group of States. In addition, other sponsors are listed in document A/C.1/51/INF.3.

The Chairman: I note that the sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.24 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call on those representatives wishing to explain their position on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.24.

Mr. Ledogar (United States of America): We sympathize with the main thrust of the draft resolution we have just adopted, which expresses legitimate concern about the potential hazards that would result from irresponsible disposal of nuclear wastes.

However, we have stated in the past and wish to re-emphasize today our firm belief that the United Nations First Committee is not the appropriate forum to deal with this essentially environmental issue. This is not a question of disarmament.

Mr. Campbell (Australia): As we foreshadowed in our explanation of vote last year, Australia had been consulting with a number of other delegations on the possibility of including a new preambular paragraph in the draft resolution by which we would take note of the Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention) of the South Pacific Forum.

As those consultations did not reach the desired or fruitful conclusion and since we did not wish to delay action on the draft resolution or in any way undermine the consensus support it has enjoyed, we have decided to hold this proposal in reserve for next year.

In so saying, we wish to thank members of the African Group for their support during these consultations.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.36.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.36, entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons", was introduced by the representative of Belarus at the 14th meeting of the Committee on 4 November 1996.

In addition to the sponsors listed in the draft resolution and in document A/C.1/51/INF.3, the draft resolution was also sponsored by El Salvador.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.36 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.36 was adopted.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.41.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.41, entitled "Measures to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol", was introduced by the representative of Colombia on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at the 14th meeting of the Committee on 4 November 1996.

Mr. García (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to seek a clarification on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. It is my understanding that no request has been made for a recorded vote, but I should like that to be confirmed.

Mr. Ledogar (United States of America): The United States requests a recorded vote.

The Chairman: I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and

Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Belarus, Israel, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Marshall Islands, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine, United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.41 was adopted by 132 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee has concluded its action on draft resolutions contained in cluster 2.

I call on the representative of Iraq on a point of order.

Mr. Hasan (Iraq) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I apologize for interrupting, but I will be brief.

The representative of Israel mentioned my country in his statement in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.2. I should like to make the following clear: Israel possesses every variety of weapon of mass destruction — nuclear, chemical and biological — yet it refuses to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to the Biological Weapons Convention. It is clear to everyone that Israel's claimed intention of negotiating with the States of the region is a pretext to try to justify its continued possession of nuclear weapons in order to blackmail the States of the region.

I do not believe that this is the appropriate forum to refer to my country, since Iraq is subject to enforcement measures under Chapter VII of the Charter. Iraq has violated none of its international obligations regarding the prohibition of the use of biological weapons.

Programme of Work

The Chairman: I would like to inform members of the Committee that at its next meeting, as I indicated at our previous meeting, the Committee will proceed to take action on the following draft resolutions contained in cluster 1: draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.3, A/C.1/51/L.21, A/C.1/51/L.37 and A/C.1/51/L.45.

Thereafter, the Committee will proceed to take decisions on the draft resolutions contained in cluster 3 on conventional weapons: A/C.1/51/L.16, A/C.1/51/L.35, A/C.1/51/L.40 and A/C.1/51/L.46.

Then, if time permits, the Committee will take decisions on those draft resolutions that appear in cluster 4 on regional disarmament and security: A/C.1/51/L.31 and A/C.1/51/L.44.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.