



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 34th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ROCHE (Canada)

CONTENTS

- CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS
[51 to 69, 139, 141 and 145] (continued)
- ORGANIZATION OF WORK

*This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2 250, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/43/PV.34
15 November 1988
ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 51 TO 69, 139, 141 AND 145 (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON DISARMAMENT ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: Intensive consultations are under way on many draft resolutions, and these are having a positive effect. We shall be saving time over the next few days as a result of those consultations, and I want to encourage them as strongly as I can, because the reports I am receiving are very positive. I think that, at the end of our work, we shall have reason for satisfaction.

This morning the Committee will take action on the following draft resolutions: in cluster 4, draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.14, L.32 and L.42; and in cluster 5, draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.4, L.43 and L.55.

The remaining draft resolutions in cluster 4 and in clusters 1 and 2 are still the subject of consultations, and it is my view that those consultations should continue, at least until Monday, 14 November.

I call now on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I should like to inform the Committee that the following countries have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: A/C.1/43/L.12: Suriname; L.19/Rev.1: Romania; L.34: Samoa; L.54/Rev.1: Romania and Indonesia; L.64: Samoa and Ghana; L.40: Suriname and Jamaica; L.45: Iceland and Afghanistan; and L.38 and L.48: Afghanistan.

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of India wishes to make a statement on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.54.

Mr. SHARMA (India): Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.54, under agenda item 66, is entitled "Scientific and technological developments and their impact on international security." The draft resolution has undergone revision in response to helpful and constructive suggestions received from various parties and has been reissued as document A/C.1/43/L.54/Rev.1. I should like to summarize the drafting changes between the original and the revised versions.

First, in operative paragraph 1 the term "scientific and technological developments" has been amended to read: "future scientific and technological developments".

Secondly, in the same operative paragraph the proposal concerning the setting up of a panel of qualified experts has been modified to read: "assistance of qualified consultant experts, as appropriate". That change affords more flexibility to the Secretary-General to use the resources available in an optimal manner.

Thirdly, the reference in operative paragraph 1 to "subsequent reports as may be necessary" has been deleted, and the proposal is now limited to a request to the Secretary-General "to submit a report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session".

(Mr. Sharma, India)

Lastly, operative paragraph 2 has been expanded to provide an opportunity to Member States to give their views and proposals to the Secretary-General.

We are happy to note that the proposal to include this item in the deliberations of the First Committee has met with widespread positive response. The changes made in the original draft resolution are in response to suggestions on the most practicable way to proceed with the proposal. The proposal has no implications for research and development programmes for any country or for transfer of technology. It does not seek any commercial or defence-related information that is not already available. It only seeks to focus on an area of key concern that we feel should receive the close attention of the Committee.

At the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament the threat posed to international peace and security by the growing arms race was recognized by the international community. It was agreed that, along with quantitative measures, qualitative measures in the field of disarmament also needed to be addressed if the arms race was to be halted effectively. In the absence of that dual approach the disarmament dialogue would remain partial and incomplete and might even channel the arms race into more sophisticated areas not covered by negotiations.

We believe that the international community has to be alert to this real danger, in the interests of genuine disarmament. However, in the decade that has passed since the adoption of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament most bilateral and multilateral disarmament efforts have focused on the quantitative expansion of arsenals. The issue of the qualitative arms race has been almost entirely sidelined. Since the body of minimum information required for an informed debate on the subject does not exist in a consolidated form, it is felt that the assistance of the Secretary-General and the

(Mr. Sharma, India)

Department for Disarmament Affairs may be utilized to help in the preparation of a basic document on the subject, with the assistance of consultant experts.

It seems to us that there would be two broad areas involved in such a study. One pertains to the future direction of military research-and-development spending and refinement of weapons systems, and the other pertains to qualitatively new areas of weapons technology that could transform or have far-reaching implications on the security environment. An awareness of likely and possible developments in both areas is a matter for global concern. We believe that we can learn from past experience.

It is instructive to speculate whether the security environment today would not be better if shared opinion could have created awareness of the development of many technologies with the military applications of which we are burdened today. Given the pace of scientific and technological advance, weapons systems in the future will be more subtle and threatening. They need to be anticipated and, it is to be hoped, those developments arrested that could make the security environment more complex and insecure.

The impact of some of those technological developments can already be surmised in such areas as graduated use of nuclear explosive power, miniaturization and large-scale computing capabilities using microelectronics, directed energy and laser technology, fuel technology, advances in artificial intelligence and so on. Many others can only be seen dimly at present, but it is sobering to realize that all weapon technologies and systems begin with the postulating of an idea. Human ingenuity and inventiveness do the rest.

(Mr. Sharma, India)

It is clear that the world stands on the threshold of a new arms race and that only watchful self-examination can prevent its horrific manifestations in terms of sophistication, lethality and complexity of verification. We must show a common determination to give science and technology a human face and not wilfully come into possession of its ever-increasing destructive power. We feel that the draft resolution sponsored by the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Hungary, Poland, Sri Lanka, Venezuela and India represents a modest starting point on the path we have to travel for our own self-preservation. It is our hope that the proposal will receive universal support.

The CHAIRMAN: Does any delegation wish to make a statement on cluster 4? If not, I call on the representative of India, who wishes to explain his vote before the voting.

Mr. SHARMA (India): My delegation is constrained to abstain on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.32, entitled "Prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes" under agenda item 64 (i). The Final Document adopted by consensus in 1978 at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament clearly set out the stages for the process of nuclear disarmament in paragraph 50, which reads:

"Cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes" (resolution S-10/2)

This draft resolution attempts to separate the two issues, namely, the cessation of production of nuclear weapons and the cessation of production of fissionable material intended for weapons purposes. A partial approach as represented by the draft resolution in question is not in conformity with the Final Document, which correctly views the issue in its totality. In our view there should be a simultaneous stoppage in the production of nuclear weapons and of fissionable material for weapons purposes. Only with such a total approach can we introduce a universal, equitable and non-discriminatory system of international safeguards on all nuclear facilities. We believe that draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.56 correctly reflects the goals set out in the Final Document.

The CHAIRMAN: In cluster 4, we shall now take up draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.14. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of China at the 30th meeting of the First Committee. The sponsor of the draft resolution

(The Chairman)

has 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 adopt it.

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.14 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.32. This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Canada at the 32nd meeting of the First Committee on 9 November and it has the following co-sponsors:

Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Romania, Samoa, Sweden and Uruguay.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: France

Abstaining: Argentina, Brazil, China, India, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.32 was adopted by 126 votes to 1, with 6 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.42. This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Argentina at the 31st meeting of the First Committee on 9 November and it has the following co-sponsors: Argentina, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Ecuador, German Democratic Republic, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Romania, Sweden, the United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Bahamas, Denmark, Iceland, Israel, Japan

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.42 was adopted by 114 votes to 13, with 6 abstentions.

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

Mr. HU Xiaodi (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.42. We did so because China has always been opposed to the arms race, including the nuclear-arms race, and we stand for a comprehensive prohibition and total destruction of all nuclear arms. We maintain that the two super-Powers with the largest nuclear arsenals bear a special responsibility for nuclear disarmament. They should take the lead by stopping their arms race and substantially reducing their nuclear arsenals.

For the above reasons the Chinese delegation believes that the Conference on Disarmament should step up its work in order to address nuclear disarmament. We endorse the establishment of an ad hoc committee. We also feel that discussions can take the form of informal meetings. We have noted, however, that there are differences of opinion with regard to the scope of the mandate of such a committee.

Mr. RIDER (New Zealand): New Zealand has decided to vote in favour of this year's draft resolution entitled "Cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament" which is contained in document A/C.1/43/L.42.

We believe that the sponsors have made some significant improvements in the language of the draft resolution. We also believe that its goal - the eventual complete elimination of nuclear weapons - is of vital importance to the international community. As the draft resolution acknowledges, both bilateral and multilateral action will be necessary to achieve that goal. For these reasons New Zealand has supported it.

At the same time, however, we believe that serious thought must be given to the security conditions necessary to achieve the ultimate goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons. It is because there are differing views on these conditions

(Mr. Rider, New Zealand)

that the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to agree on the mandate for an ad hoc committee on the prevention of nuclear war. If the negotiations advocated by this resolution are to move forward, as we believe they should, an accommodation of views will be necessary.

New Zealand supports mutual balanced and verifiable reductions in the nuclear arsenals of the world, but we also recognize that satisfactory progress in conventional-force reductions must accompany developments in nuclear disarmament if international stability is to be enhanced. This fact should not be overlooked, and nuclear weapons cannot be considered in isolation.

When this subject is raised in the Conference on Disarmament next year we urge all Members to bear in mind the factors, including the imbalances in conventional forces, that have given rise to the quantity of nuclear weapons that have been built up over past years.

Mr. CAPPAGLI (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Argentina abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.32 because it considers that the question of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes should not be separated from the general context of disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: I am now ready to move to cluster 5, and I call on the representative of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, who wishes to make a statement.

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic considers that the problems dealt with in draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.43, entitled "Prevention of nuclear war" are extremely important and shares fully the view stated in the preambular paragraph:

(Mr. Martynov, Byelorussian SSR)

"that the prevention of nuclear war and the reduction of the risk of nuclear war are matters of the highest priority and of vital interest to all people of the world".

From our point of view the existing multilateral disarmament machinery can play an important and unique role in this area. There is a need for bilateral and multilateral efforts here to complement and enrich each other. In particular, what would be in keeping with these goals would be the speedy establishment of a special committee at the Conference on Disarmament for negotiations on agreements on appropriate and practical measures to prevent nuclear war. In the context of multilateral efforts to prevent nuclear war, what would be useful and worthy of practical development is the idea of the Secretary-General on the establishment of a multilateral centre to reduce the risk of nuclear war.

In the light of these views the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR declares that it will be among the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.43 entitled "Prevention of nuclear war" and requests that this be recorded.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now deal with draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.4.

This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the German Democratic Republic at the 27th meeting of the First Committee, on 4 November, and it has the following sponsors: Bulgaria, Cuba, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia and Romania.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.4 was adopted by 104 votes to 17, with 7 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.43. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Argentina at the 31st meeting of the First Committee, on 9 November, and has the following sponsors: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, German Democratic Republic, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Romania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.43 was adopted by 116 votes to 3, with 14 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/1.55. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of India at the 30th meeting of the First Committee, on 8 November, and has the following sponsors: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Romania, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining: Greece, Ireland, Israel, Japan

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/I.55 was adopted by 112 votes to 17, with 4 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon those delegations wishing to explain their votes on the draft resolution just adopted.

Ms. COURTNEY (Australia): I take the floor to make an explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.43, "Prevention of nuclear war" and on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.4, "Non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war".

The Australian delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution on prevention of nuclear war contained in document A/C.1/43/L.43. We strongly support the objective of the prevention of nuclear war by all possible means.

Australia would, however, have preferred to see the draft resolution drafted in such a way as to give due recognition to the fact that the issue of the prevention of nuclear war has not necessarily been a matter of indifference in the past and that it is not something that can be dealt with in isolation.

One of the most important ways to prevent a nuclear war is through prevention of all wars. My delegation supports the establishment of an ad hoc committee on that issue in the Conference on Disarmament. Although we are not certain that such an ad hoc committee would be able to undertake negotiations on the matter at this stage, the Australian delegation would like to see the Conference on Disarmament consider and identify possible areas for its detailed examination of the issue, similar, perhaps, to the Ad Hoc Committee established for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Accordingly, the Australian delegation urges the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee at its 1989 session so that it can undertake discussion of this issue of priority concern in the field of disarmament.

The Australian delegation voted against draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.4 on the non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war. Let me reiterate that prevention of nuclear war is an objective of the highest priority and one to which the Australian Government is earnestly committed.

(Ms. Courtney, Australia)

Unfortunately, we were unable to accept the implication contained in that draft resolution that the pronouncement of certain unverifiable statements of military doctrine is a truly useful way to prevent nuclear war. In Australia's view, there is only one fail-safe way to prevent nuclear war, and that is by eliminating nuclear weapons.

Mr. MOLANDER (Sweden): I wish to explain the Swedish vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.4, "Non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war".

Let me first reiterate that the Swedish Government views unilateral declarations by the nuclear-weapon States committing them not to be the first to use nuclear weapons as an important concept in the efforts to reduce the dangers of an outbreak of nuclear war. We hope that all nuclear-weapon States will find it possible to make such declarations. It is obvious that the establishment of an overall balance in conventional forces on a lower level would facilitate such commitments. In the view of the Swedish Government, a firm commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, made through an international instrument of legally binding character, would be an important contribution to successful efforts to prevent nuclear war. That is one reason for the support my Government has given today to draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.4.

(Mr. Molander, Sweden)

However, such an international instrument should deal solely with the concept of non-first-use of nuclear weapons and should not contain any further elements not directly related to it. In fact, the Swedish Government considers that the prohibition of the use or threat of use of force in international relations laid down in Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations is mandatory and sufficient. What is required, rather, is improved compliance by Member States with the existing prohibition and with the obligation, also laid down in the Charter, to settle their international disputes by peaceful means.

Sweden voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.55 concerning a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. We have done so, as with similar draft resolutions in previous years, because Sweden supports the concept of prohibiting, by means of an international legal instrument, the use or threat to use nuclear weapons. It seems that such a prohibition corresponds to an international norm stating that the use of nuclear weapons contravenes the laws of humanity and the dictates of the public conscience. There is an urgent need to close the gap between that norm and international law. Therefore, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Sweden stated in the general debate on 27 September 1988:

"The time is also ripe to investigate the possibility of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, based on international law." (A/43/PV.7, p. 48)

Such a prohibition is not deducible from the Charter. However, there are already many rules of international law which limit or prohibit the use of nuclear weapons under certain circumstances. A comprehensive ban on the use of nuclear weapons in an appropriate, legally-binding form would be an important political step which should be explored.

(Mr. Molander, Sweden)

Sweden has reservations concerning the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution and its interpretation of the Charter. My delegation also feels that the preambular part contains elements which do not adequately reflect the improved international situation and the more positive atmosphere in the debates of the Committee. To attain the objectives set forth in the operative part, relevant positive international developments need to be duly taken into account.

HJ Xiaodi (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.55. We note that, apart from some necessary technical changes in the draft resolution, its content is the same as that of resolution A/42/39 C adopted by the last session of the General Assembly. Therefore, though we continue to support the principal objective of non-use of nuclear weapons contained in the draft resolution, we nevertheless maintain that some of the wording of the preambular part and annexes of the draft convention need further discussion.

China's views with regard to the non-use of nuclear weapons are well-known. It is our consistent view that before nuclear disarmament can be accomplished, and order to reduce the danger of nuclear war and create conditions for the complete destruction of nuclear weapons, all nuclear States, especially the nuclear States with the largest nuclear arsenals, must undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States and nuclear-free zones in any circumstances. That would lead to the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons with the participation of all nuclear States.

At the same time, it is our view that in a situation where there are still huge nuclear arsenals, the mere prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons cannot eliminate the fundamental cause of the danger of nuclear wars. In order to ensure

(Hu Xiaodi, China)

international peace and security, it is imperative that the present huge nuclear arsenals be drastically reduced, thus leading finally to the complete destruction of all nuclear weapons. Only in this way will the material conditions for nuclear wars be eradicated and the people of the world be free from the threat of nuclear war.

Mr. NYBERG (Finland): I wish to explain Finland's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.4, entitled "Non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war". Nowhere is it professed that nuclear war is an element of rational policy. The major nuclear Powers have jointly stated that nuclear war cannot be won and should never be fought. Finland appreciates that statement. In our view, nuclear weapons should never be used in any circumstances.

Mr. RIDER (New Zealand): After careful consideration, New Zealand has decided to vote against draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.4, on the non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war, and A/C.1/43/L.55 on a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, as it has in the case of similar draft resolutions in the past. We have done so because those draft resolutions make no attempt to reflect the reality of the international security environment. They exhort all countries to adopt a single policy, without regard to the particular security circumstances and perceptions of the countries involved. They completely ignore the disparities in conventional weaponry in Europe, a vital part of the strategic landscape which cannot help but influence the policies adopted by western European countries.

New Zealand is pleased to note that the prospects for serious negotiations on conventional weapons have recently improved. The countries concerned are to be encouraged to put every effort into pursuing those negotiations and making them work. A recognition of the importance and relevance of this issue and the desirability of achieving real progress in the negotiations is the sort of

(Mr. Rider, New Zealand)

improvement which would be required in the draft resolutions in order to secure a wider base of support. The draft resolutions before the Committee must also reflect today's realities.

In the past year, there have been important new developments in the disarmament area which must infuse the Committee's deliberations. It is not enough to trot out set formulas. All Member countries and, in particular, those sponsoring draft resolutions, have a duty to search for innovative and broadly acceptable approaches to the important issues the Committee grapples with. It is heartening to note the effort that has gone into achieving consensus and compromise texts this year in the General Assembly thus far. Regrettably, draft resolutions L.4 and L.55 are out of line with this trend. We therefore call on the sponsors of those draft resolutions to re-examine their texts and bring to the Committee next year new, improved versions worthy of all our support.

The CHAIRMAN: We have now concluded our action on resolutions in Cluster 5.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I want to encourage continuance of the consultations - some of them very intensive - that have been taking place on a number of draft resolutions. For that purpose, it is my intention to cancel the meeting scheduled for this afternoon.

On Monday the Committee will take action on the draft resolutions in clusters 9, 11 and 14 and the remaining draft resolutions in clusters 1 and 4. On Tuesday morning the Committee will take action on the draft resolutions in cluster 8, those in cluster 6 that are mature, those in cluster 7, and the remaining draft resolution in cluster 2.

The other officers and I feel that by the end of Tuesday the Committee will be in a very good position with respect to the remainder of the week. There will be time for final consultations on draft resolutions still under discussion.

So I am pleased with the progress the Committee is making, and I think that our target date for the conclusion of our action on all disarmament-related draft resolutions, Friday 18 November, will be met.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.