



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 54th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ROCHE (Canada)

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 71, 72 and 73 (continued)

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

The CHAIRMAN: This morning the Committee will take decisions on the draft resolutions on international security agenda items, namely draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1/Corr.1, A/C.1/43/L.84/Rev.2, A/C.1/43/L.85/Rev.1, A/C.1/43/L.86, A/C.1/43/L.87 and A/C.1/43/L.88.

The draft resolutions will be taken up in order of the agenda item number.

I shall first call on those delegations wishing to introduce draft resolutions and then on those delegations wishing to make statements other than explanations of vote. Subsequently, I shall call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote before a decision is taken and then, after the Committee has taken a decision on all the draft resolutions, delegations will have an opportunity to explain their position or vote after the decision.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I should like to inform members of the Committee that the following countries have become co-sponsors of the following draft resolutions:

A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1: Madagascar

A/C.1/43/L.87: Afghanistan

The CHAIRMAN: I call now upon representatives wishing to introduce draft resolutions under agenda items 71, 72 and 73.

Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution on the need for a result-oriented political dialogue to improve the international situation (A/C.1/43/L.85/Rev.1).

In pursuing this initiative launched at the forty-first session of the General Assembly the German Democratic Republic wishes to make a distinct contribution to the promotion of positive trends in international relations and to the strengthening of the United Nations. The revised draft resolution is the result of what can be described as a third round of intensive and frank consultations with a large number of delegations, which I wish to thank once again in this context. My delegation was willing to accept further amendments and to render parts of the text more precise.

As I have already explained, in my statement of 25 November, the main ideas and purposes of the draft resolution, I can follow a good tradition of the Committee and be brief. Our initiative proceeds from the fact that all the major political forces of our time have expressed their commitment to a policy of dialogue and co-operation and that States have declared their readiness to strengthen the United Nations. While we do not intend to disguise the differences in interests and positions, we wish to encourage further the much-needed sustained improvement in the political climate and the settlement of global problems. With this as a basic premise, I do not think that it is necessary to comment further on the preambular paragraphs and operative paragraphs 1 and 2.

(Mr. Zachmann, German
Democratic Republic)

Operative paragraph 3 calls for enhancing the role of the United Nations as a forum for dialogue and negotiation in order to resolve the main issues on the Organization's agenda. It is formulated in a balanced way and takes account of the basic positions of all Member States.

By rendering the wording of operative paragraph 4 more precise, my delegation has responded to suggestions made during the consultations.

In operative paragraph 5 the fact is welcomed that the Security Council has been able recently to carry out more effectively its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

We consider it just as timely for us to encourage the Secretary-General to continue his efforts, as is done in the operative part of the draft.

The draft resolution as revised shows that my delegation has taken into account the concerns expressed by non-aligned and Western States, including neutral European ones, regarding reference to the holding of periodic meetings by the Security Council.

I believe that from what I have said it will have become quite clear that great efforts have been made to prepare a draft acceptable to all sides. My delegation has shown the necessary flexibility and readiness for compromise. We are in favour of achieving consensus whenever it seems possible.

In a year when much has been accomplished through result-oriented dialogue at many levels, we would be pleased if all States committed themselves to a continued policy of dialogue and co-operation, to the resolution of global problems and to strengthening the United Nations in all its fields of activity. This would no doubt contribute very much to enhancing the positive trends in international relations and to making them irreversible in the interests of all States.

Mr. KALUDJEROVIC (Yugoslavia): I wish to introduce, on behalf of a number of countries - Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Pakistan, Romania, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda and Yugoslavia - the draft resolution entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" (A/C.1/43/L.88).

The review of the implementation of the Declaration provides the General Assembly with an opportunity to express its perception of international security, to assess the current state of affairs in international relations and to point to the direction for solving the most important problems of the international community.

Important changes have taken place on the international scene in the past year. The sponsors of the draft resolution have pointed out and welcomed the favourable climate which has developed within the international community and the progress that has been recorded in some important fields of disarmament, such as the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, and the endeavours to solve some of the crises that have long bedevilled the world.

However, there are still problems that continue to pose a serious threat to international security, such as the continuation of the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race, its extension into outer space, competition for spheres of influence, domination and exploitation in many parts of the world, the use of force or the threat of force, interference and foreign occupation, infringement on the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries and the lack of solutions to the world's economic problems. That is why the sponsors have pointed out once again the principles that should be respected in order to achieve lasting peace and security.

(Mr. Kaludjerovic, Yugoslavia)

On that basis, the United Nations continues to be an irreplaceable forum for the maintenance of international peace and security. The successful initiatives taken recently by the world Organization have confirmed its irreplaceable role.

We are therefore entrusted with the most important task of strengthening the role and importance of the United Nations and directing its activities towards a full realization of the purposes and principles contained in its Charter and in the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

In conclusion, let me point out that the sponsors earnestly hope that the draft resolution will receive the broadest possible support from the members of the First Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.86, which was introduced by the representative of Malta at the 53rd meeting of the First Committee on 29 November and is sponsored by Algeria, Cyprus, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Morocco, Romania, Tunisia and Yugoslavia.

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.1/43/L.86 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon representatives who have asked to make statements in explanation of their position on the text just adopted.

Mr. ALPMAN (Turkey): I would like briefly to explain my delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.86, entitled "Strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region," which the First Committee has just adopted.

As it has in previous years, my delegation joined the consensus on the adoption of the draft resolution. This is an expression of our keen interest in the maintenance and strengthening of peace and security in the entire Mediterranean region.

I should note, however, that the draft resolution refers to documents adopted at meetings in which Turkey did not participate. I would like to put on record that our taking part in the adoption of the draft resolution should not be construed as Turkey's agreement with every element contained in the documents adopted at those meetings.

Mr. ARNOUSS (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation joined in the consensus on the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.86. We would like to reaffirm our position regarding operative

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

paragraph 7, which takes note of the idea of the establishment of a Mediterranean forum as a multidisciplinary framework for the promotion of co-operation in the region. That idea still needs further study.

Mr. ZIPFORI (Israel): My delegation is once more pleased to have been able to join the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.86 on the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region. We must, however, place on record our strong reservations regarding some of the documents mentioned in the text, which include unjustified attacks on Israel and are not conducive to promoting co-operation between the countries in the Mediterranean basin.

We believe that all meetings dealing with problems common to all States bordering the Mediterranean should be in principle open to all riparian States. In some fields, particularly those dealing with safeguarding the ecology of the Sea, it has been found to be feasible to hold meetings open to all and to arrive at agreements to which all subscribed. For example, Israel is active in the Action Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the Mediterranean. Israel, along with other Mediterranean States, is active in the Committee for Mediterranean Research, whose headquarters is in Monaco. Israel is also active, along with other Mediterranean countries, in several projects of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), such as ECOMOS. This is the path that should be followed in the future and could be considered as confidence-building measures on the long road to peace in the area.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has now concluded its consideration of agenda item 71.

The Committee will now take action on draft resolutions under agenda item 72, namely, draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.84/Rev.2, L.85/Rev.1, L.87 and L.88.

The Committee will first take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.84/Rev.2, which was introduced by the representative of Cameroon at the 51st meeting of the

(The Chairman)

First Committee. The sponsor of the draft resolution 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 act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.84/Rev.2 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now turn to draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.85/Rev.1. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the German Democratic Republic at the 54th meeting of the First Committee on 30 November. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

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

Against: United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.85/Rev.1 was adopted by 100 votes to 1, with 25 abstentions.*

* Subsequently, the delegation of Zaire advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.87, which was introduced by the representative of Poland at the 51st meeting of the First Committee on 28 November and is sponsored by Afghanistan, Algeria, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Costa Rica, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mongolia, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, 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: None

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.87 was adopted by 103 votes to none, with 26 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: We turn next to draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.88. This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Yugoslavia at the 54th meeting of the First Committee, held on 30 November, and is sponsored by the delegations of Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Pakistan, Romania, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda and Yugoslavia. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, 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, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, 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: United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.88 was adopted by 102 votes to 1, with 25 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I call now on representatives wishing to speak in explanation of vote or position after the decisions.

Ms. TAYLOR (United Kingdom): I wish to speak in amplification of our vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.85/Rev.1 and L.88.

My delegation abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.85/Rev.1, "Need for a result-oriented political dialogue to improve the international situation". My delegation has particular reservations about paragraph 3 referring to "the right to self-determination of peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation". In our view, this appears to limit the right of self-determination. Self-determination is a continuing principle and is not tied to peoples freeing themselves from colonialism.

My delegation also abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.88, "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security". My delegation has particular reservations about the fourteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 9, linking international peace and security and international economic relations. We do not accept that problems in international economic relations automatically pose a threat to global peace and security.

Mrs. SECRET (France) (interpretation from French): Because of the importance of the subject and the objectives of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.84/Rev.2, on the strengthening of regional and international peace and security, which include in particular encouraging the peaceful settlement of regional conflicts, my delegation felt it could join in the consensus on its adoption. Like the sponsor of the draft resolution, we welcome recent progress towards the settlement of various regional conflicts and the role played by the Secretary-General in that progress.

(Ms. Taylor, United Kingdom)

Having said this, I should add that we have some doubts about the legal validity of some of the wording in the text. We should certainly have preferred a less ambiguous text, particularly with respect to operative paragraph 1. In fact, my delegation does not clearly understand the meaning and scope of "in the implementation of agreements reached with the United Nations regarding peace-keeping arrangements" (para. 1). I should note in that connection that the new concept of "peace-keeping arrangements" is difficult to translate into French.

Moreover, reference is made in the same paragraph to "decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly". My delegation believes that the term "decisions" cannot be applied in this resolution except to the Security Council

The CHAIRMAN: We turn now to agenda item 73, and will take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1. I call on representatives wishing to explain their vote before the voting.

Mr. ABE (Japan): Japan will be voting against draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1 for the following reasons: In carefully studying the draft resolution my delegation certainly appreciated the intention to promote dialogue expressed in the text. However, we still have several reservations that will compel us to vote against the draft resolution.

First of all, there is the expression "comprehensive approach". We first heard about a comprehensive "system", and this has now been changed to a comprehensive "approach". We have received background papers on this concept and have heard that at the core of the concept is the paper by General Secretary Gorbachev of the Soviet Union.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

We are still not clear how these concepts, these thoughts, are related to this comprehensive approach. That is one reason why we will vote against this draft resolution.

Secondly, it is suggested in the draft resolution that all kinds of issues ranging from political to economic, social, human rights and environmental issues are to be dealt with by a comprehensive approach. In our view those specific issues have their own specific United Nations organs or United Nations associated specialized agencies that are better fitted to deal with those issues - economic, social, human rights or environmental. Therefore we feel that to include all those issues under one umbrella might open the possibility of introducing an unnecessary politicization of those specific issues.

Thirdly, there is mention of the strengthening of the United Nations system in the draft resolution or in the background papers associated with the draft resolution. We feel that those specific suggestions for strengthening the United Nations should be dealt with in the specific forum best fitted to consider each suggestion, be that the Sixth Committee, the Second Committee, the Third Committee, or another. We feel that is a more realistic and practical approach. For these reasons we shall vote against the draft resolution.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): The United States will vote "no" on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1, the draft resolution on a comprehensive system of international peace and security. On 28 November in this Committee Ambassador Walters presented our detailed concerns about this draft resolution and I shall not belabour the point on this occasion. I must simply note that we remain concerned that the current text as written and explained by its sponsors will undermine existing and effective Charter arrangements. The language of the draft resolution remains vague and open to many interpretations. The

(Mr. Okun, United States)

possible implications of the draft resolution remain sweeping. It remains unclear what problem the sponsors wish to correct.

The United States is prepared to engage in a wide-ranging dialogue with other Members of the Organization in considering ways to improve operations under the Charter. We are in fact engaged in such an undertaking at this very moment in appropriate committees. When the sponsors of the draft resolution under consideration choose to submit their concrete ideas to the relevant bodies of the United Nations for study they will find the United States a ready and willing partner in conducting the serious business of this institution. One of the major reasons we feel obliged to vote against the current draft resolution is that we believe its acceptance will only impede the effort to engage in such useful and practical work.

Finally, a spirit of mutual accommodation and compromise on the part of all Members of the Organization is necessary if such a dialogue is to succeed. The United States approached the sponsors of this draft resolution, made concrete suggestions for improvements in its language and indicated a desire to work towards a serious consideration of the issues involved. I regret to say that our overture did not meet with any response from the sponsors and, consequently, we were unable to alter our view of the dangers of this draft resolution. The United States continues to believe that a meaningful and useful dialogue on international security issues is important, necessary and possible. We remain ready to engage in such discussions when there are serious proposals to consider.

Mr. CHACON (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution that gave rise to resolution 41/92 "Establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security". That initiative was aimed at strengthening, not weakening the Charter of the United

(Mr. Chacon, Costa Rica)

Nations and that is why we voted in favour of it. A year later our position changed when the First Committee considered the draft resolution that became resolution 42/93, which bore the same title.

We completely changed our stand during the forty-second session because we felt that the text contained an essential contradiction. There was a difference of purpose between the preambular paragraphs and the operative paragraphs. In the preambular paragraphs the draft resolution gave us principles which our country could immediately accept since they were aimed at strengthening and supporting the Charter and various bodies within the United Nations in the area of international security. In the operative paragraphs, on the contrary, the draft resolution would have obliged us to take a number of decisions tending to revise or reform the United Nations Charter.

Last year on 25 November, in explanation of vote, we said that Costa Rica was not prepared to support a proposal similar to the proposal that was to be found in the second part of the earlier draft resolution. We believe that the Charter of the United Nations remains valid in all its aspects, in spite of the real or imagined deficiencies it might be accused of having. We believe that all Member States of the Organization have an obligation to respect the tenets of this key document and to make a daily reality of the principles embodied in it by those who drafted and inspired it.

We saw that the reforms suggested would create machinery parallel to the United Nations. For that reason we felt it was not desirable to begin to strengthen a trend aimed ultimately at replacing the Charter, neutralizing it, or weakening it. For these and other reasons we voted against that draft resolution.

Today we have before us a new draft resolution on agenda item 73 entitled "Comprehensive approach to strengthening international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations". The new proposal shows certain

(Mr. Chacon, Costa Rica)

basic changes which we have to take into account in taking a position. With the change of name we now no longer have anything but an approach. That is a step forward towards taking up the matter from a different perspective, the perspective that is offered in fact by the United Nations Charter. Secondly, this text is much clearer and more precise. It dispels the doubts that were in our mind last year. As we requested, it refers explicitly to the Charter of the United Nations not only in the preambular paragraphs but also in the operative paragraphs. We believe that now we no longer have the grounds we had for rejecting the earlier draft.

Thirdly, the new draft resolution emphasizes the role and effectiveness of the United Nations in the area of international security. Our delegation will therefore vote this year in favour of the draft resolution. We will do so on the understanding that the draft resolution under discussion is based on good faith and is not designed in any way to weaken the Charter of the United Nations. For that reason we leave open the possibility that in future we might change our position if the intentions behind draft resolutions similar to these change.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and corr.1.

The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the 47th meeting of the First Committee and has the following sponsors: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Viet Nam.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Japan, United States of America

Abstaining: Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Fiji, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Luxembourg, Malawi, Morocco, Netherlands, Pakistan, Portugal, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Suriname, Swaziland, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1 was adopted by 83 votes to 2, with 39 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call upon those delegations who wish to explain their vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. FISCHER (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): To explain our abstention, we wish to say that at the last two sessions Uruguay voted in favour of the initiative that underlies draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1. We entered the clear reservation, however, that we would be following very closely future developments in regard to that draft resolution.

Our understanding was that the functioning of international peace and security would not be changed, that the manner in which such problems were treated would not be subject to new approaches. We said that we felt that all States of the international community should work together in that area. Because of their greater influence and decision-making authority, the permanent members of the Security Council should act in concert and should not discharge their obligations in a competitive manner, a point that we had made earlier.

We continue to believe that differences of opinion work against the effective strengthening of international peace and security for which we hope. It should be achieved through political co-operation, a meeting of the minds, when consensus is absent.

The report of the Secretary-General on this subject concluded that, as a result of the exchange of opinions between States, it was clear that further deliberations and consultations should take place in order to bring about a greater understanding and a broader consensus in regard to the concept of international security and the work of the United Nations as a whole.

During the debate that has ended today, we followed very closely the efforts being made by the sponsors, in particular the efforts of one of the permanent members of the Security Council who, through the draft resolution being promoted, had repeated its desire to implement the provisions of international law. That

(Mr. Fischer, Uruguay)

delegation, in its various statements, has made constructive proposals to strengthen the comprehensive system of international peace and security. Our interpretation is that it is a public commitment to work in keeping with the comprehensive system and we welcome that demonstration of political will.

We have also closely followed the arguments of those delegations that have made a point of saying that, at the very moment when the United Nations seems to be growing stronger because principles are being observed and when a number of international conflicts are moving towards a peaceful settlement through the implementation of the United Nations machinery of collective security, it would not be appropriate to change the approach on which that progress is based.

Interpreting both of those positions, we believe that confrontation may stand in the way of a consensus, and that does affect the positions of the members of the Security Council. We realize that, quite aside from the fact that a majority might be willing to go along with the new text, current differences of opinion are unlikely to lead to the kind of political co-operation that would strengthen the comprehensive system of international peace and security. We must acknowledge the sponsors' efforts to accept and incorporate in a flexible manner the objections that were raised, and we recognize their efforts to bring about broad acceptance for the text.

However, the delegation of Uruguay, which has been carefully following that initiative ever since it was taken, believes that we must not adopt the text solely on the basis of its merits without relating those merits to its origins and political motivations, especially not during this, the third year in which the matter is being considered in the General Assembly.

For any State, especially for small States, it is essential to define what course of action is being taken. It is essential to make one's commitment clear

(Mr. Fischer, Uruguay)

whenever a decision regarding collective international security is adopted. The present text, though it does ensure a broader basis of acceptance, does not succeed in dispelling doubts and misgivings regarding the direction of efforts and future actions that will be taken in keeping with the basic tenets of the draft resolution. The basis for a comprehensive system of international security could, if not properly followed, lead to an erosion of the basic tenets of the Charter. Uruguay believes that the document is a fundamental and irreplaceable instrument for the preservation of international peace and security.

That is the message we wanted to send with our abstention.

Mr. FAHMY (Egypt): I should like to explain my delegation's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and corrigendum 1.

Last year, Egypt abstained on resolution 42/93, which in essence dealt with the same subject. We indicated at that time that we had abstained because there remained elements of that draft resolution that were not clear to us, and because, those ambiguities notwithstanding, the draft resolution was implicitly endorsing the need to establish a new system of security, the one suggested being "comprehensive".

(Mr. Fahmy, Egypt)

We also indicated that we would contribute to any constructive dialogue on the ideas suggested, but could only commit ourselves to a new system after full and optimum use had been made of the present collective security system envisaged in the Charter and an assessment reached that further elements had to be agreed upon to enhance that system.

This year, draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1, which is much more succinct than last year's and less ambitious, provides for a dialogue on the concepts or approach without prejudicing any particular position. We therefore voted in favour of this year's draft resolution.

I would, however, like to emphasize that in voting in favour of the draft resolution we commit ourselves only to a constructive dialogue on the subject, the same commitment we made last year. Our position has not changed; the language and content of the draft has.

We view the whole process as a modality for improving the effectiveness of the United Nations and, if necessary, its Charter. We are ready to discuss and exchange ideas. We are not, however, at least at this stage, committed to any new approach or system.

The sponsors of the draft resolution have made reference to the aide mémoire or memorandum distributed explaining this proposal. I must state clearly and frankly that we have committed ourselves here to enter a dialogue. We do not, however, endorse the memorandum. While some of its parts are acceptable, others, frankly, are objectionable. We shall address these issues as, when, and where appropriate and interject our own ideas as well.

The issues involved in the draft resolution are very complex and have implications for many aspects of our work, particularly within the United Nations system. They will not receive appropriate consideration if the draft resolution

(Mr. Fahmy, Egypt)

continues to generate a divisive attitude within the Committee. Without in any way impinging upon the right of any delegation to present draft resolutions to this or any other Committee, I would like to express the hope that future draft resolutions, if and when presented, take into account, both in their content and timing, that this is an issue which will need wide-ranging discussions and may require some time to settle.

Finally, I would be remiss if I concluded without expressing my delegation's sincere appreciation to the sponsors for the efforts they have made to take into account our concerns and proposals as well as those of other delegations.

Mr. NOREEN (Sweden): Sweden voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1. I should like to summarize some fundamental concerns which have guided Sweden in its consideration of the draft resolution.

The United Nations and its Charter already offer principles for the conduct of international relations and the machinery for co-operation between States. They offer every nation an opportunity to participate in the work for peace and a better future. We would live in a much safer world if all States lived up to their commitments under the Charter and complied with its clear and unambiguous provisions.

My delegation recognizes that considerable improvements have been made in the text since last year's consideration of the question and we appreciate the flexibility shown by the sponsors. We are particularly satisfied to note the connection to the Charter that has been made with regard to a comprehensive approach to strengthening international peace and security, since the Charter contains the basic principles for the attainment of such a noble aim.

(Mr. Noreen, Sweden)

As my delegation has stated before, it is not the United Nations that has not lived up to us. It is we who have not lived up to the ideals of the United Nations. At the same time my delegation regrets that at least one element remains in the draft resolution which continues to cause problems for us. We do not share the view that non-interference is a generally recognized principle. The recognized norm is non-intervention. However, we are pleased to note from the main sponsor of the draft resolution that we can foresee a change in this regard in next year's draft resolution under the same item.

Mr. ANDERSEN (Iceland): Iceland abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1 on the grounds that we do not consider it necessary to amend or review the United Nations Charter. On the contrary, it is our view that the recent successes of the United Nations have born out the abiding validity and effectiveness of the current system.

Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1 entitled "Comprehensive approach to strengthening international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations".

This year's draft has been significantly improved compared to previous texts and my delegation appreciates the fact that the sponsors have met all the major concerns expressed.

We consider the draft resolution an appeal to all Member States to do their utmost to strengthen multilateral co-operation within the framework of the United Nations and to make every effort to promote international peace and security on the basis of, and in accordance with, the Charter.

As to specific suggestions and proposals, it is our firm position that these must be considered in the appropriate United Nations forums.

Dame Ann MERCUS (New Zealand): New Zealand voted in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1. We agree with its central thesis. In our view, the United Nations Charter is the fundamental and irreplaceable mechanism for the preservation of international peace and security. The United Nations has demonstrated its effectiveness in helping to resolve a number of serious international situations. New Zealand believes that if all States commit themselves to working within the present United Nations system and to strengthening existing United Nations processes, solutions can be found to the international problems raised in the draft resolution.

Accordingly, New Zealand doubts that there is a continuing requirement for a draft resolution such as this to be adopted each year by the General Assembly. We therefore consider that the sponsors of the draft resolution would be performing a more useful service to the Organization if they channelled their energies into those arrangements already in existence to enhance the United Nations, such as the Charter review process, rather than continuing to put forward draft resolutions duplicating current work.

Mr. SAINT-PHARD (Haiti) (interpretation from French): My delegation wishes to express its reservations about the need for draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and the relevant corrigendum, on which we abstained. My delegation remains unconvinced of the need to do anything which would even suggest that we were calling into question the very basis of the Charter and the machinery it has provided us with so far for strengthening the role of the United Nations, particularly within the context of the success of our Organization in 1988.

Mr. RODEZNO FUENTES (Honduras) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.74/Rev.1 and Corr.1, bearing in mind its purposes.

First, we regard as positive the appeal to increase dialogue in order to strengthen international peace and security, as well as the appeal to countries to adhere to the principles of international law. But we had doubts about the intentions behind a comprehensive approach to strengthening international peace and security, which would give rise to certain changes in the Charter. We appreciate the efforts of the sponsors to eliminate a number of ideas which it would have been difficult for us to accept.

The CHAIRMAN: We have now concluded our action on agenda items 71, 72 and 73.

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I wish to draw the Committee's attention to conference room paper A/C.1/43/CRP.1, dated 29 November 1988, which provides a summary of programme budget implications for the bienniums 1988-1989 and 1990-1991 resulting from draft resolutions or draft decisions adopted by the First Committee during the forty-third session of the General Assembly. This paper has been submitted in accordance with rule 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

CONCLUSION OF THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of Cameroon has asked to speak, but I am in a dilemma, as some representatives who are waiting to make brief remarks have informed me they have a very tight schedule and wish to proceed. Perhaps the representative of Cameroon would kindly allow me to proceed with the scheduled statements, and then I shall of course return to him at the earliest possible moment. Is that acceptable to the representative of Cameroon?

Mr. ENGO (Cameroon): The Cameroon delegation would not wish to delay our work, Mr. Chairman, but I think that the time you have taken to explain all this could have been used to complete the comment I want to make. If the delegations scheduled to speak are to speak on a geographical basis to congratulate you, Sir, on the work you have done, I think it would be more appropriate if I spoke before them. But if they are making general comments about the Committee's work as individual delegations, I shall defer to them.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot be certain of the content of the statements, but that is a normal way of concluding our business. I expect that the delegations on my list will be making some comments about the Committee's work. That is what I am interested in hearing. I would again appeal to the representative of Cameroon to allow me to proceed, and I shall return to him.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Without wishing to delay the statements to be made shortly by the Chairmen of the various regional groups in expressing to you, Sir, our appreciation, which you have earned, of your efficient and devoted work as Chairman of the Committee, I should like again to refer to the subject about which I spoke at the beginning of the general debate on disarmament questions - the cessation of all nuclear tests.

The Committee will recall that on that occasion I referred to the amendments proposed by six States parties on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the conclusion

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water to make it a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

For my delegation and the other sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.23 - Indonesia, Peru, Sri Lanka, Venezuela and Yugoslavia - it is a source of great satisfaction that the draft resolution was adopted with 108 votes in favour. That vote reflects the broad support of the international community for the proposal to convert the Moscow treaty into a treaty completely banning nuclear tests.

I wish to conclude by giving figures showing similar support. Twenty-seven States have now communicated to the depositary States their support for this initiative. The support of only 12 more is needed to make mandatory the convening of a conference to revise the Treaty.

Mr. BELONOGOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I have the honour to speak today as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States as the First Committee concludes its consideration of the disarmament and international security questions entrusted to us.

At this, the forty-third, session of the General Assembly the Committee's work has been helped, as never before, by the political climate created by positive trends in real disarmament and the strengthening of international security, in which steady progress is being made.

(Mr. Belcnogov, USSR)

We have in fact moved into a more peaceful period, and we have done so, essentially, because the representatives of an overwhelming number of countries are now determined to change the world for the better, to learn peaceful coexistence, to learn and understand mutual co-operation. Those trends have unquestionably had an impact on the First Committee's work, which has proceeded in a tranquil and businesslike atmosphere.

We note with great satisfaction that this year there has been a notable determination to reach agreement through consensus and to engage in a constructive and engaged dialogue on all the agenda items assigned to us - questions dealing with disarmament, the strengthening of international security and problems concerning Antarctica. As a result the number of draft resolutions and decisions adopted by consensus has increased. We believe that those decisions are complementary measures that will build confidence in United Nations activities and in the role of the United Nations in today's world.

On behalf of the Eastern European countries I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Chairman of the First Committee, the Ambassador of Canada, for the creative work he has accomplished with such talent and for the professional way he has guided our deliberations, which has played a large part in helping the Committee to achieve such positive results.

I should also like to thank the other officers of the Committee, as well as the Under-Secretary-Generals, Mr. Akashi and Mr. Safronchuk for their support. We are grateful to Mr. Kheradi, the Secretary of the Committee, as well as to the other members of the Secretariat and to the interpreters, who have been so helpful in our work.

In conclusion, I should like to express the conviction that the trend towards taking a new approach to the activities of our Organization is based on the search

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

for balance between the various interests of Member States without prejudice to their national interests. We trust that that trend will continue to grow stronger in the future, and that the United Nations will thereby be led to new dimensions of activity.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, I should like to thank you and to wish you every success in your future activities.

Mr. SHARMA (Nepal): On behalf of the Chairman of the Group of Asian States, I have the honour to express our collective appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for the skill and wisdom with which you have guided the work of this important Committee to a successful conclusion. Our expression of thanks goes beyond the formalities, for you have earned the esteem of the Asian Group both as an outstanding diplomat and as the representative of your great country, Canada, which is highly regarded for its commitment to the process of arms control and disarmament. The Committee has benefited immensely from your rich experience and understanding of the issues. Your total commitment to the responsibility placed upon you was evident from your wide-ranging consultations as well as the rationalization of the Committee's work. Your organization of work made possible a record attendance and probably a record number of speakers to express their views in a well-structured debate. Similarly, the programme of work provided more time for consultations on draft resolutions, as is evident from the mergers of quite a few of them on important items and the adoption of a substantial number of draft resolutions without a vote. The impartiality and authority with which you guided our work and the thoroughly professional attitude you brought to the Committee will be long remembered.

I should also like to place on record our appreciation to other officers of the Committee, to our Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Luvasandorjiin Bayart of Mongolia

(Mr. Sharma, Nepal)

and Mr. Viktor Batiouk of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, as well as to Mr. Virgilio Reyes of the Philippines, our Rapporteur. Our appreciation goes also to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Under-Secretary-General in the Department for Disarmament Affairs, to Mr. Vasiliy Safronchuk, Under-Secretary-General in the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs and to Mr. Carl-August Fleischhauer, Under-Secretary-General and Legal Counsel, who were always ready to place their knowledge and expertise at the service of the Committee.

We should also like to thank the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, and his able and efficient colleagues from the Secretariat, who have spared no efforts in assisting the Committee. The interpreters, the personnel of the Department of Public Information and the conference officials have all earned our deep gratitude for a job done in an admirable manner.

We have dealt with some of the most crucial issues of our time: disarmament and security. The unprecedented opportunity offered by the improvement in East-West relations and the accomplishments of the United Nations in the alleviation of regional conflicts have generated a strong sense of optimism for substantial progress in the arms limitation and disarmament agenda. The debate this year reflected that optimism, as well as a high degree of mutual respect and tolerance. We hope that those positive developments will serve to advance the disarmament and security agenda in a meaningful way in the years to come.

May I again express to you, Mr. Chairman, our deep gratitude on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. KIBIDI (Zaire) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman on behalf of the Chairman of the Group of African States for the month of November, Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, I should like to say what a pleasure it has been to work with you during this session. We also congratulate all the other officers of

(Mr. Ribidi, Zaire)

the Committee on the splendid job they have done, as well as the members of the Secretariat, particularly Mr. Akashi, Under-Secretary-General in the Department for Disarmament Affairs. We also thank the interpreters and technical staff who have assisted you in the performance of your duties.

The work of the First Committee has been performed this year in an atmosphere of tolerance and progress, evidence of the political will of States and their determination to reverse negative trends and eliminate the crises in international relations. The world seems to be moving slowly towards one in which disarmament will no longer be a dream, but a reality.

I must, however, express our regret at the fact that the question of South Africa's nuclear capability was not taken up by the whole of the international community in a spirit of condemnation of the system of apartheid. However, we are not discouraged, convinced as we are that we can count on the good will of all and that, in the end, the threat the apartheid régime poses for the whole of the African continent will be removed.

We also regret that all delegations did not give equal weight to consideration of the question of Antarctica. We believe that the United Nations should play a paramount role in questions concerning the Antarctic Treaty.

Africa, like all other regions of the world, has great expectations of multilateral dialogue on disarmament issues. Africa does not have any nuclear weapons, and we would like to move towards economic and social development in a climate of peace and international security that would guarantee progress and independence.

(Mr. Kibidi, Zaire)

Therefore it is with great pleasure that the African Group has viewed the ever more palpable progress that has been recorded not only in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States but also in relations among all other members of the international community as we move towards the objectives of the United Nations Charter.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of El Salvador, Mr. Melendez Barahona, who will speak on behalf of the Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. MELENDEZ BARAHONA (El Salvador) (interpretation from Spanish): As we come to the end of the work of the First Committee I am pleased to express to you, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean our most sincere congratulations on the skilful and excellent manner in which you have conducted proceedings during the current session of the General Assembly. The efficiency, punctuality and order that you have brought to the work of the First Committee is a reflection of your experience, your skill and your knowledge of the very complex, sensitive and difficult issues being considered by the Organization. Thanks to your influence we have satisfactorily completed consideration of the various items on the agenda and have done so on time.

Our congratulations also go to the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur of the Committee for the co-operation they have provided throughout the debate.

The Latin American and Caribbean Group wishes to express to you, Sir, its appreciation of your interest in regional issues. You have shown this by supporting the initiatives of the delegations that belong to our regional group. We express our appreciation to Mr. Akashi, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Kheradi, Secretary of the Committee, and to all the support group for their efficiency and co-operation in the work of the Committee.

(Mr. Melendez Barahona,
El Salvador)

We also express our appreciation for the co-operation provided by the Secretary-General and extend our thanks to the translation services.

The work of the Committee during the present session showed more harmony and understanding. There was a greater degree of co-operation and, therefore, we increased the number of draft resolutions adopted by consensus. A number of delegations have reaffirmed the trend towards greater co-operation and the tendency to support and strengthen multilateralism in keeping with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. We hope that in future this trend will continue and the co-operation shown in this area will also be seen in the search for greater rationalization of the work of the Committee, which we feel should take place over the short term, on condition that this rationalization should not be understood as a limitation on initiatives that all States have the right to take in defence of their legitimate interests.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Belgium, Mr. Michel Servais, who will speak on behalf of the Chairman of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. SERVAIS (Belgium) (interpretation from French): After hearing what the Chairmen of the other Groups have said it is very difficult to be original. On behalf of the countries of the Group of Western European and other States, it is my honour and pleasant duty to express to you, Sir, the deep appreciation and sincere congratulations of our Group on the exemplary manner in which you have conducted proceedings in the First Committee. Your patience, your experience and your dedication, so often tested, have never been found wanting, and thanks to your constant efforts the First Committee has completed its work on time.

(Mr. Servais, Belgium)

Our appreciation and congratulations go similarly to the other officers of the Committee and to all the members of the Secretariat. Without their dedication and their competence we would most surely not have been able to attain our objectives.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Jordan, Dr. Khalid Obeidat, Chairman of the Group of Arab States.

Mr. OBEIDAT (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): I have the honour to address you, Sir, as we conclude the important work of the Committee, in the name of the Arab Group, as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is the Chairman of the Arab Group for this month.

Of all the work of the United Nations the work of the First Committee is of paramount importance since it deals with international security and disarmament. International security and disarmament are two issues in which the entire international community has a stake. The production and deployment of increasingly sophisticated and destructive weapons jeopardize equally all peoples and nations, large or small, strong or weak. Hence it is essential for all States and peoples to participate in disarmament and international security issues. The large number of draft resolutions which the Committee has had to deal with, together with their profundity and significance, are proof of the great responsibility it shoulders.

Acting on these draft resolutions in a smooth and able manner and in accordance with the time-frame established testifies to the co-operation among the various groups and delegations in the Committee. Moreover, the Committee has shown interest in putting forward proposals and recommendations aimed at improving its effectiveness in future. We sincerely hope that the international community will display the political will conducive to the implementation of the draft resolutions adopted by the Committee.

(Mr. Obeidat, Jordan)

By virtue of your ability, expertise and perseverance, Sir, you have wisely steered the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion. The Arab Group wishes to express to you its appreciation of your efforts. It also asks you to convey its appreciation and thanks to the Under-Secretary-General, the two Vice-Chairmen, the Rapporteur and his colleagues from the Secretariat, the simultaneous interpreters, translators, conference services staff, technicians and all those who have contributed to our work.

The CHAIRMAN: I indicated earlier to the representative of Cameroon, Ambassador Engo, that I should be pleased to call on him. I think he knows that when he raised this question on Monday I expressed considerable sympathy with the dilemma that had been created and in order to ensure that Ambassador Engo would receive full satisfaction within the parameters of the rules of the United Nations I requested the Department of Conference Services to do even further research so that the representative of Cameroon and I - and I think all the members of the Committee - could benefit from an examination of this question.

(The Chairman)

I believe that this research has been done as I had requested and that it would be helpful for the Committee to have the benefit of the views expressed by the Department of Conference Services, which is the body responsible for the publication of the verbatim and other records of the Committee, which is in effect beyond the control of the First Committee itself.

In introducing the item, as requested by Mr. Engo, I should now like to ask Mr. George Patterson, Director and Chief Editor of the Editorial and Official Records Division of the Department of Conference Services, to say a word concerning the request I had conveyed to the Department for further research on the matter.

Mr. PATTERSON (Director and Chief Editor, Editorial and Official Records Division, Department of Conference Services): I have the honour to reply on behalf of the Department of Conference Services to the questions raised by the representative of Cameroon in the Committee's meeting of 28 November.

The First Committee and the Special Political Committee are the only Main Committees of the General Assembly which have verbatim records. Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly also entitled to verbatim records are listed in the note by the Secretary-General on the control and limitation of documentation, A/INF/43/1 of 20 May 1988.

I know of no case in which, in the preparation of verbatim records for those bodies as well as for the plenary meetings of the General Assembly, there have been exceptions to the principle that verbatim records include only statements actually made at meetings and do not include any additional written material.

As stated in the document Information for Delegations, verbatim records cover the proceedings of a meeting in extenso and are limited to what is actually said. If any portion of a written statement is not actually read at meetings, it will not appear in the text of the relevant record. Corrections to verbatim records are

(Mr. Patterson)

limited to errors and omissions in the recording of statements as actually delivered. When a request is submitted for a correction, a check is made against the sound recording of the relevant statement.

The practice of limiting verbatim records to what was actually said in meetings was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 2837 (XXVI) of 17 December 1971, approving the conclusions of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly. The text of those conclusions is included as annex V in the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly.

The Special Committee considered proposals for the submission of written statements to be included in the records of plenary meetings, and concluded that:

"The submission of written statements should not be formally instituted with regard to the general debate." (A/520/Rev.15, annex V, para. 49)

The Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs drew attention to that decision in writing to the Permanent Representative of Tunisia in January 1973 to explain why written material submitted by the representative and referred to in his speech in the General Assembly had not been included as an addition to the verbatim record of the meeting in question. That letter was circulated as a General Assembly document, A/9042 of 9 February 1973, in order that the clarification might be of service if a similar case should arise in the future.

An exception to the rule that verbatim records include only statements actually made during the meetings would set a precedent leading to further exceptions that could affect the integrity of the verbatim records. It would make more difficult the proper understanding of the basis upon which decisions or resolutions were adopted. It would create complications with respect to the exercise of the right of reply. In addition, it would give rise to a number of

(Mr. Patterson)

technical difficulties, not to mention financial implications in the preparation and issuance of meeting records.

Considerations such as those led the Special Committee to recommend against inclusion of written statements in verbatim records. The Secretariat has steadfastly upheld the principle adopted by the General Assembly that written statements not actually spoken should not be incorporated into the verbatim records of a meeting.

I hope that the above information provides the clarification sought. This should not in any sense be considered as unwillingness on the part of the Secretariat to co-operate with delegates or as a refusal to permit a representative to express the views of his or her Government. Please be assured that the Secretariat seeks to act in accordance with guidelines established by the General Assembly in the best interests of the Organization as a whole. Our intention is to do our utmost to facilitate the conduct of meetings of the General Assembly, its Main Committees and subsidiary bodies.

Mr. ENGO (Cameroon): I wish first of all to thank the representative of the Department of Conference Services for the statement, which I believe he has written with great care in order to justify the actions that have been taken.

I should like first to observe that the Organization is experiencing a financial crisis. It had been the hope of my delegation that we would not spend time, energy and the paper on which a lot of explanations have been written, including letters addressed to my delegation, which will have serious financial consequences.

I heard very clearly what the representative of the Secretariat has said. I should like first to say that our query went strictly to his Department and not to the entire Secretariat. I would like to make it clear that we have received full co-operation from other sectors of the Secretariat.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

I am very delighted to hear that, in spite of everything he said, the consideration does not include errors and omissions. The issue that we were addressing is not the right or the wish of the Cameroon delegation to insert a new text, to present a text that it has not read or that it intends even to amend a text. The question is that the Cameroonian delegation announced that, in fact, the text that was already in the hands of the Secretariat and of the authorities in the Committee had not been read in full because it was not desirable to read it in the particular form in which it was.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

At that stage, the Secretariat made no comment about whether or not this would be proper. We had announced that we would send the full text from our delegation to confirm what the Secretariat already had, so with all the respect I have for the tenacity and dedication of the Secretariat the Department of Conference Services, I do not believe that the answer we have been given addresses the specifics of this case.

However, I want to remind our friends in the Secretariat that their duty is to facilitate, not block, our work. In this particular instance, if steps had been taken at that time to inform the Cameroon delegation that they would prefer that we read the missing page 7, we would gladly have done so on the same day because they had a copy and we did not have a copy because the speech was handed in less than two minutes before we took the floor in order to comply with the Chairman's wishes.

We have gone through this process of letter-writing and so on, which is a very unpleasant experience and, as I said last time, a bitter pill to swallow. But I would like to remind our colleagues that the objective of the decision mentioned and of the discourse that ensued is to avoid a situation in which a delegation has spoken and then comes back to the Secretariat to present a different case. As you have correctly pointed out, it would be difficult in respect of the exercise of the right of reply. However, that is not the situation here. The situation here is merely that some unfortunate incident had happened under the pressure of work of the Committee, and the delegation offered to submit it the same hour as the speech was made.

In future, in order to avoid all this unpleasantness, I would suggest - and I only can suggest, I cannot dictate, to you just like the Secretariat cannot dictate to us - that contacts should be made with the delegation concerned. I can say that the Secretariat has not talked to me on this issue from that office and I feel sure that we would have saved money, time and unpleasantness if in fact that had been done.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

I deeply regret that the Chairman was used to express views which I think should in the first place have been expressed by the Secretariat, and that the Chairman, who has more important duties to perform, has been dragged into an unnecessary debate. I understand that in order to save the situation, that the Secretariat insists that we read that page to the Committee so that it can be included in the record of the meeting of 25 October. I do so without prejudice to the opinion that we hold, which is contrary to the opinion of the Secretariat on this issue. I do so in order to facilitate the work of the Committee and in order to ensure that, above all, the most important consideration is that States must be given an opportunity to state clearly what their views are, not only for their own gratification, but for other nations to understand what they said without changing their mind.

For that purpose, I will read out only the page concerned. Page 6 ends:

"Cameroon fully shares the concerns of these two leaders and Mr. Mitterrand's renewed call for an increase in the role of the United Nations in the struggle against proliferation and use of chemical weapons. We are prepared to"

and I now begin page 7:

"to join in a universal effort to elaborate a decisive convention in the field. We look forward to participating in the proposed Paris conference on nuclear weapons.

"It is our intention to join in ensuring the adoption of a consensus resolution on this subject.

"We consider that another practical step towards arms control and disarmament is the establishment of denuclearized zones. Non-proliferation as provided by the NPT is impossible de facto where steps are not taken to

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

establish and guarantee the status of such zones. The threat of proliferation in Africa remains vivid as long as the racists of South Africa continue to possess and to develop nuclear weapons.

"We would recommend that the Disarmament Commission conclude its work on the denuclearization issue in Africa. Deadlocks are no solutions. Friends of South Africa must understand that the NPT is greatly threatened by what appears to be hypocrisy in attempting to exempt the racist cliques.

"President Paul Biya drew attention to the real danger to peace involved in this unfortunate situation. In the desperation to which circumstances have driven Botha and his collaborators, the retrograde immorality and international crime being committed there could be no guarantees either way. The men, women and children live each passing day under a cloud, creating uncertainty for generations to come as to the nature of the track to be trod in building a multiracial South Africa some day."

I sincerely hope that this will put to rest the non-issue that has become an issue and that the text will be properly reflected. I thank everyone for their co-operation and the members of the Committee for bearing up with this undesirable debate.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Department of Conference Services and Ambassador Engo for the spirit of co-operation which has enabled the Committee to resolve this last outstanding question in a satisfactory manner.

The time for departure has arrived and since you have heard about 200 speeches in the First Committee since 17 October, I will not subject you to another.

In terminating the work of the Committee, I wish to express my very deep thanks to everyone. It was a pleasure and an honour to be the Chairman of the Committee - an honour that I shall never forget. You made my work pleasant and the Committee was productive because of the spirit of co-operation that marked our work.

(The Chairman)

With regard to the first part of our agenda, on disarmament items, I felt there were five highlights. The first was the desire for co-operation. It was more than the absence of confrontation. There was a very positive atmosphere and, as one representative remarked, the atmosphere in the Committee today can hardly be recognized as compared to a few years ago. That is a direct result of what you have done and this is in turn a reflection of the great change in the international atmosphere. Evidence of that atmosphere was seen in the mergers. We had mergers on very important issues; mergers on draft resolutions on the United Nations role in verification, in outer space, in arms transfers, in a nuclear freeze and in objective information on military matters. That was certainly a highlight of our work.

(The Chairman)

We had a consensus on 40.8 per cent of the 67 draft resolutions adopted - a higher percentage of consensus resolutions than ever before.

Secondly, a highlight was the clear support for the Department for Disarmament Affairs, manifested particularly in the letter from the Committee to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, in which we stated that support for the Department should be enhanced and strengthened in order that it should have resources commensurate with its mandate. And we did increase the Department's mandate, particularly by assigning to it a number of studies. The five studies mentioned in the resolutions adopted are the highest number of such assignments that the First Committee has given to the Department. We have asked for studies on the role of the United Nations in verification, on nuclear weapons, on arms transfers, on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and on scientific and technological developments. There is also, of course, the ongoing study on chemical weapons. That is in itself a reflection of our feelings this year about the Department.

Thirdly, although varying degrees of priority can be assigned to all the resolutions, I think there was common agreement that our work on chemical weapons this year, particularly in preparing for the forthcoming Paris conference and the consensus resolutions, will intensify the efforts now under way to achieve a convention banning the production of chemical weapons. We have also been able to strengthen the Secretary-General's role in the investigation of alleged uses of chemical weapons. The substance of our work here on chemical weapons is certainly a centre-piece of the progress the Committee can rightly claim.

Fourthly, we still face an underlying main problem - how multilateralism can be effectively employed in the quest for security at lower levels of arms. In my judgement, the relationship of multilateralism to the bilateral negotiations that are going on still needs to be improved; the work that we are doing in enhancing multilateralism needs continued development.

(The Chairman)

We saw progress at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, although it left room for a considerable amount of further progress. Here in the First Committee we have been able to build on that progress. I am only pointing out what I consider to be the chief problem the First Committee faces. We and our successors will face the problem of how to resolve the question of the application of the principles of multilateralism to arms limitation and disarmament.

Fifthly, we now have enough evidence to be able to state that there is a historical momentum today in the fields of arms limitation and disarmament. We are clearly making progress. All representatives have said so in their statements, and I shall not repeat what they have said. There is a contradiction in that at times the road seems blocked although progress is being made to be sure - but that is part of the contradiction of our times. Fortunately, we have sufficient resilience in the Charter and certainly enough dedication and competence in those working in the Committee and in the United Nations generally to resolve and overcome this contradiction.

Discussions were conducted under the auspices of the group of Friends of the Chair concerning the rationalization of the agenda. I am grateful that in the application of last year's resolution 42/42 N, which dealt with the improved processes that it has been possible to build into the Committee, we had 25 per cent more consultation time in considering draft resolutions on disarmament. That extra time made a contribution towards effecting the mergers. Of course, there must be the will to do it, but the increase in the time available I believe helped the Committee to make the progress that it did make.

The question of the agenda remained. The more I studied it, the more convinced I became that a restructured agenda was absolutely essential if we were to make further progress in reducing draft resolutions as well as progress on the

(The Chairman)

question of mergers and consensus. So I put together some suggestions for attaining greater organizational clarity and coherence without sacrificing the substance of the issues or compromising the right of delegations to request the inclusion of new items on the General Assembly's agenda. There was a considerable discussion about that.

My suggestions are now going forward in a working paper (A/C.1/43/9), which I gladly bequeath to my successors. In it I have set out a number of comments. I shall not go through them now, but I hope they will prove useful in the Committee's future work. I am hopeful that the trends that have developed towards a better atmosphere, more pragmatism and a clear-cut desire for mergers and greater consensus, as well as the trend to focus on important areas to study and to reflect more deeply on new agenda items, are a manifestation of the Committee's concern to approach global issues in a more positive and forward-looking way.

We have just completed our work by considering questions of international security. I probably do not need to give any review now, but I believe that here we have made some progress. I think that our deliberations this year have contributed to a better understanding of States' views and approaches with regard to international peace and security. That is particularly true of the debate on the proposed comprehensive approach to security, and I think it will help the Committee to continue to make contributions in the security area.

All members are fully aware that the positive evolution to which I have referred was largely due to the present climate of relaxation in international relations, which provided a favourable backdrop for our work. Many delegations reiterated that the positive impact of recent developments on the maintenance of peace and security had facilitated our work.

(The Chairman)

I hope that in return the Committee was also able, through our work at this session, to make its modest contribution to improving the international situation.

(The Chairman)

I think we all recognize the need to revitalize the work of the United Nations and its bodies in respect of the maintenance of peace and security, and I leave the Chair confident that that process is well under way.

I could not conclude my work as Chairman without a very deep and warm expression of thanks to those individuals who have been particularly close to me over the past few weeks. Certainly the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Akashi, and the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Safronchuk, have earned my deep gratitude. But I must also thank the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Komatina, who gave me a good deal of wise counsel.

I think you would all want to share in my tribute to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, whose particular qualifications have been a tremendous contribution to our work. I am the first to attest to that in my day-by-day and even hour-by-hour consultation with him. His knowledge of the disarmament field and all its issues, his diplomatic abilities and his organizational skills have certainly enriched our work, and I want him to know how deeply grateful I am to him - and to his colleagues, our colleagues, who have helped us day by day. I am really grateful to Mr. Sattar, Miss Patil, Mr. Gerardi Siebert, Mr. Ion, Mr. Ishiguri and Ms. Marcaillou, all of whom have rendered tremendous service to me. I am grateful, of course, to the conference officers, to the interpreters and to all who have enabled the Committee to function efficiently and effectively.

(The Chairman)

I now bid you farewell and wish you Godspeed in your work and on your journeys. I ask you to leave knowing that you have contributed in a realistic way to the attaining of peace and security in the world in which we live.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.