



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. Roche (Canada)

CONTENTS

- CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON DISARMAMENT ITEMS [51 TO 69, 139, 141 AND 145] (continued)
- LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE [115]

*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 DC2-750, 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.27
8 November 1988
ENGLISH

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

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

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic): Today I have the pleasure of introducing the draft resolution relating to agenda item 67 (j) entitled "Non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war" contained in document A/C.1/43/L.4. It is sponsored by Cuba, Hungary, Romania and my own delegation.

The German Democratic Republic has taken the initiative with respect to this draft resolution because it remains a task of the highest priority to ward off the risk of nuclear war. Not only was this noted in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, but it was reaffirmed in the deliberations at both the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the current session of the General Assembly. The item "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters" has been on the agenda of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament for five years now. While discussions have been held on the subject, negotiations have not yet begun. There is agreement that nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons are the most effective means of averting the threat of nuclear war. It is generally accepted now that, until this goal can be achieved, practical measures of an international legal nature are needed to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear inferno.

According to the present draft resolution the General Assembly would welcome practical measures, such as the creation by the nuclear-weapon Powers of centres for the reduction of the risk of nuclear war. An internationally binding commitment by all nuclear-weapon States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons would be another step in that direction.

A relevant commitment would, in our view, be an expression of the political will to advance on the road towards nuclear disarmament. Such a commitment would

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

be an important confidence- and security-building measure, a stimulus for further bilateral, multilateral and regional moves to reduce, and finally eliminate, the risk of nuclear war and, last but not least, a step towards a purely defensive military doctrine.

Using paragraph 58 of the Final Document adopted at the first special session devoted to disarmament as a starting-point, draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.4 calls upon all nuclear-weapon States to follow the example set by China and the USSR and to assume the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament is requested to commence negotiations on the item "Prevention of nuclear war" and to consider the elaboration of an international instrument of a legally binding character on the non-first use of nuclear weapons. Wishing to contribute their share to the solution of a priority task in the field of disarmament, my country and the other sponsors hope to receive the widest possible support for the draft resolution.

Mr. AL-KITTAL (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): With reference to agenda item 64 (b), entitled "Prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons", I wish to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/43/L.25, which is sponsored by Jordan and Iraq.

Though humanity has been exposed to the dangers of radiation since the X-ray was first discovered, that is to say - long before the beginning of the atomic age, after 1938, the awareness of the dangers radiation poses to man and his environment was heightened in the wake of the feverish race to explode nuclear devices in the atmosphere for the purposes of testing and the consequential global spread, of radiation.

This heightened concern over the dangers radiation poses to man and his

(Mr. Al-Kittal, Iran)

environment was one of the factors that led to the prohibition of testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere. The efforts of the international community did not stop at that. They have included the striving within the framework of multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations after the conclusion of an international convention that would prohibit the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons as such weapons are extremely dangerous, massively destructive and indiscriminate. Those efforts were coupled with an increasing awareness that such a convention would be incomplete unless consideration were given to the prohibition of armed attacks on operating nuclear facilities containing radioactive nuclear materials, as such attacks may lead inevitably to the release of certain quantities of nuclear materials into the atmosphere, with consequences equal to those of radiological warfare, even if the attack is made with conventional weapons.

Sweden has crystallized this international conviction in its proposal of 1980 to the Conference on Disarmament. The proposal called for expanding the scope of the Geneva Protocol of 1977 annexed to the Geneva Convention of 1949, to include the prohibition of armed attacks against nuclear facilities because such attacks lead to the release of dangerous materials.

(Mr. Al-Kittal, Iraq)

Following the Israeli armed attack against the Iraqi Tammuz nuclear reactor in July 1981, a group of experts set up by the Secretary-General presented a report in 1983, in which it stated:

"intentional destruction, by either conventional or nuclear weapons, of nuclear power plants and some other kinds of nuclear installations might cause the release into the environment of huge amounts of radioactive material and may result in radioactive contamination of large areas.

An attack on nuclear facilities could have grave consequences not only for the State subjected to such an attack, but also for neighbouring States, since the radioactive material released by an attack might travel far beyond the borders of the State attacked." (A/38/337, paras. 119, 120)

The draft resolution before this Committee is contained in document A/C.1/43/L.25. It is similar to the draft resolution adopted by the Committee last year. The fact that this matter is being brought before the Committee once again demonstrates our concern about the lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament towards prohibiting armed attacks against nuclear facilities. It is also an indication of our grave concern about this important matter - concern that we hope the Committee will support by adopting this draft resolution.

The first of the four operative paragraphs of the draft resolution calls for a reiteration of the fact that the effects of an armed attack of any kind against a nuclear facility equal the use of radiological weapons owing to the dangerous radioactive forces that such attacks cause to be released. This fact was amply demonstrated by the events following the tragic incident at Chernobyl. The whole world witnessed how the released radiation spread to areas far from the site of the incident, causing dangerous pollution of varying degrees.

(Mr. Al-Kittal, Iraq)

Paragraph 2 once again requests the Conference on Disarmament to intensify further its efforts to reach an agreement prohibiting attacks against nuclear facilities. Paragraph 3 reiterates the request to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to provide the Conference on Disarmament with technical studies which could facilitate the conclusion of such an agreement. The IAEA is the technically competent body to make such studies: it has sufficient information and expertise by virtue of its role in following up the numerous nuclear accidents in different parts of the industrial world. Following the Chernobyl accident, it was able to conclude two agreements in a very short time indeed - namely the Agreement on the Early Notification of Nuclear Accidents, and the Convention on Rendering Assistance in Case of Nuclear Accident or Radiological Contingency. It does not stand to reason therefore, not to put such expertise to use in the service of the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. ZAPOTOCKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The Committee now has an impressive collection of 72 draft resolutions and decisions dealing with virtually all aspects of the problem of disarmament. These drafts are the result of the work of a great number of delegations of Member States. In our view they emphasize the urgent nature of problems in the area of arms limitation and disarmament and reaffirm their significance.

We believe that the intensive consultations that are under way will lead to agreed positions on an extremely broad range of questions and to the adoption of constructive and substantive resolutions. In that connection, the Czechoslovak delegation would like to express its view on some of these questions.

It is probably not fortuitous that proposals dealing with the question of verification in all its aspects were among the first draft resolutions submitted.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

This reflects the real progress that has been made in that area over the last few years. The convergence of views of all groups of States regarding major issues of verification, reaffirmed this year, is our common property. The preservation and intensification of such unity is in the interests of all Member States. This is in keeping with the overall need to step up negotiations on disarmament.

As the co-sponsor of one of these drafts - that contained in document A/C.1/43/L.1 - Czechoslovakia fully supports the idea of strengthening multilateralism in resolving verification issues. We are convinced that the practical implementation of the principle of multilateralism in the area of verification can take place only within the context of the United Nations or in the closest interaction with it. Our support for such an approach is also demonstrated by the draft resolution, sponsored jointly by Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, on the establishment of a universal system of verification that was submitted several months ago at the third special session on disarmament.

At the same time we share the view that these questions require further intensive study, which could lead not only to the clarification of individual aspects but simultaneously to a strengthening of the foundations for a realistic concept of verification. We believe that an important step here would be the study that the Secretary-General is being asked to carry out. On the question of work on that study and of its main aspects, there is a substantial unanimity of views. We should like to emphasize the importance of preserving the consensus that has characterized the discussion of questions of verification at previous sessions of the General Assembly.

The problem of verification is also closely linked to the issue of compliance with agreements on arms limitation and disarmament. The inclusion in these agreements of effective verification measures is a major condition for preventing a

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

loss of confidence regarding their implementation. Along with the technical aspects of verification, the question of compliance with agreements has important political and legal aspects. Only strict compliance with agreements on arms limitation and on disarmament and consistent implementation by States parties to them of all obligations they have undertaken can transform these agreements into effective instruments to strengthen international peace and security.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

The conscientious implementation of treaties of a military-political nature is, at the same time also, a prerequisite for the strengthening of the international legal order. For these reasons, we believe that it is right for the United Nations to continue to pay close attention to this question of compliance.

From the very beginning, Czechoslovakia has supported the inclusion of this question on the agenda and it is a co-sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.53 at this session. We believe it is significant that the discussion of questions of compliance in the First Committee has always concluded in a positive spirit and has led to constructive conclusions. We believe that in the future such conclusions will also include the adoption of recommendations aimed at the specific use of United Nations machinery on compliance issues. For example, the United Nations could deal with the gathering of any relevant information from Member countries regarding compliance with treaties on arms limitation and disarmament. In our view, the strengthening of positive attitudes in the disarmament field can also promote a positive approach by United Nations Member States to the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions dealing with disarmament.

As one of the broader elements in the question of the effectiveness of United Nations machinery as a whole and, at the same time, as an independent problem, the implementation of resolutions on disarmament is, we believe, a matter which in any case merits serious attention and more intensive study. That is the reason for the submission of draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.20, of which Czechoslovakia is a co-sponsor.

We believe that conditions for the practical implementation of resolutions containing recommendations should be prepared even while they are being written and that, to a significant extent, they depend on the quality of the process of preparation. We view resolutions in the disarmament field as the result of efforts

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

aimed at the effective co-ordination and unification of points of view on a broad and democratic basis. We believe that due attention should also be paid to ensuring that the contents of resolutions are appropriate to the nature of the questions they raise and also to the realistic possibilities for achieving progress, taking into account the specific situation.

We attach great significance to the adoption of resolutions based on the political will of States to conduct a businesslike dialogue and constructively to participate in the preparation and implementation of measures to limit arms and promote disarmament. We are convinced that it would be beneficial for the greatest possible number of United Nations Member States to communicate their views to the Secretary-General regarding ways and means to improve measures for the implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolutions on disarmament. Such information could provide the basis for a more concrete discussion of the appropriate generally acceptable measures.

In the view of the Czechslovak delegation, an extremely important matter concerns ensuring all the necessary pre-conditions for the successful conclusion of the meeting which is now ending in Vienna of States parties to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. A significant role here could also be played by the productive results of our work, which, in more general terms, deals with a great number of aspects of the all-European process. A constructive approach, based on the authority of the entire international community, to such issues as confidence-building, disarmament in the area of conventional weapons, verification, compliance with agreements on arms limitation, openness in military affairs and related matters could serve significantly to stimulate the all-European process and create a favourable atmosphere for its successful development. This is particularly important at the present stage when negotiations are to begin in

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

Europe not only on further important steps on confidence-building measures, but also regarding the practical reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons.

At the meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs which took place on 28 and 29 October in Budapest, the allied socialist countries expressed the view that confidence-building and security-building measures, in the military sphere and efforts to reduce armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe are closely linked matters. Negotiations in these two areas, and the agreements that will be achieved in these areas, must closely interact, complement and strengthen each other. In the view of the socialist countries, negotiations on confidence-building measures and security in Europe must be based on the Madrid mandate and should be conducted in accordance with the Final Document of the Vienna meeting. Moreover, it would also be useful to make progress in the area of the development of already existing measures, as well as in producing new ones, on the basis of the proposals submitted by participating States.

These positions of the socialist countries are a realistic and constructive response to the need to achieve agreement at the present decisive stage of the Vienna meeting. However, such agreement can be achieved only in Vienna at the meeting itself, which we believe is the sole appropriate forum for decisions on all questions linked to this subject. Such an understanding was achieved in our Committee last year when, as we know, the draft resolutions dealing with European problems were withdrawn by mutual agreement.

In our view, the results of the discussion in the First Committee last year thus demonstrated that the endeavour to overcome differences in the positions of participants in the Vienna meeting through a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly would not at the present time be very productive. That is also the point of view of the Czechoslovak delegation regarding draft resolution

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

A/C.1/43/L.61, on confidence- and security-building measures and conventional disarmament in Europe, submitted this year; although, at the same time, we do see certain positive elements in it.

Czechoslovakia firmly believes that discussions of disarmament questions in the United Nations should be conducted in a spirit of mutual understanding and fruitful co-operation, which should become the guiding principle in this area as well. The Czechoslovak delegation is the sponsor of a draft resolution on international co-operation for disarmament, document A/C.1/43/L.16, which, following consultations with other countries, we shall submit in the course of the Committee's further work.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): I am pleased to take the floor to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.53, entitled "Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements".

This draft resolution is very similar to last year's General Assembly resolution 42/38 M. There is a new element in operative paragraph 5, in which the Assembly would welcome co-operative measures aimed at increasing confidence in compliance with existing measures. Examples of such steps include, among others, those taken by agreement among the participants in the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction to adopt supporting and strengthening measures. In view of the significance of compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements for international stability and security, this draft resolution also provides for inclusion of the subject as a separate item in the provisional agenda of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

In 1985 the United States and eight co-sponsors also strongly committed to effective arms control and disarmament, including Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, New Zealand and Norway, introduced in this Committee a draft resolution which had the same title. That draft resolution received less than 100 votes in this Committee and, while no Member State opposed it, 23 abstained.

During the past three years we have all seen develop in the First Committee a much improved atmosphere, an atmosphere of co-operation and good will and of broad recognition of the vital importance compliance plays in the arms control and disarmament process. This conviction is reflected in the adoption by consensus of similar resolutions at the forty-first and forty-second sessions of the General Assembly. This year it is further demonstrated by the long list of co-sponsors of

(Mr. Okun, United States)

draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.53 - a list that transcends all traditional geopolitical boundaries and includes not only the eight original co-sponsors but the following States as well: Australia, Austria, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Ivory Coast, Japan, Morocco, Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Uruguay and Zaire.

The United States is highly gratified that compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements is now firmly established as a matter of concern to the global community of nations. If arms control agreements - past and future - are to be effective, the parties must comply with all of their provisions. Not only is it important for each party to make sure that it is in compliance, but it is just as important to remove any doubts that others may have regarding that party's compliance. Confidence in existing agreements is a significant part of the foundation of future agreements. It is self-evident that negotiating parties are more likely to come to agreement in an atmosphere of greater mutual trust, predicated on a record of compliance with existing agreements. On the other hand, non-compliance cannot but have an adverse effect on the prospects for future agreements and efforts to enhance international peace and security in general. Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements is, therefore, an essential aspect of our commitment to the fundamental objectives and purposes of the United Nations.

The United States believes that the adoption of this draft resolution again by consensus would constitute a strong reaffirmation by the world community of the crucial importance of compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements. We are grateful to the numerous co-sponsors of this draft resolution, and we invite all members of this Committee to give it their full support.

Mr. INZKO (Austria): It is a great pleasure for me to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.59, entitled "Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction". It appears that this draft has gained the largest number of sponsors in the First Committee, namely, 38 countries. In this regard, let me express our gratitude to all those who are co-sponsoring our draft resolution this year - and I am pleased to inform the Committee that we were able to increase the number of co-sponsors as compared with last year.

My delegation is once more submitting a draft resolution on the Second Review Conference on the Convention, as we consider this subject to be a matter of great importance. In this connection, it will be recalled that Austria presided over the Second Review Conference on this Convention in 1986.

In the preambular paragraphs, the General Assembly expresses its hope for the widest possible adherence to the Convention. Furthermore, it recalls the Second Review Conference, held in Geneva from 8 to 26 September 1986, as well as the adoption of the Final Declaration by consensus. It notes with satisfaction that there are now more than a hundred States parties to the Convention.

In the operative paragraphs, the General Assembly notes with appreciation the holding of a meeting of experts in Geneva from 31 March to 15 April 1987. In recalling the significance of that event, let me point out that it was in the course of that meeting that the important work on modalities for the exchange of information and data was able to be finalized, thus enabling States parties to follow a standardized procedure. These modalities were then incorporated in the Final Declaration of the meeting and adopted by consensus.

(Mr. Insko, Austria)

The first such exchange of information and data took place in the period before 15 October 1987. As any further exchange is to be carried out by 15 April of each year, this year's draft resolution welcomes the second such exchange of information and data. In order to intensify such exchanges, the General Assembly this year calls upon States that have not exchanged information and data to do so. We consider this firm language to be an expression of the particular appreciation, on the part of the international community of States, of confidence-building measures.

Hence again, in the context of bacteriological weapons, as in many other instances, the assistance of the Secretary-General is indispensable. Therefore the General Assembly here requests the Secretary-General to render the necessary assistance.

In order to achieve universal adherence to the Convention on biological weapons, the General Assembly would call upon all States that have not ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so without delay. Apart from the very technical aspect of membership, we consider universal adherence to the Convention to be of great importance in the context of international confidence-building.

Taking into account the large number of co-sponsors of the present draft resolution and, furthermore, the overall consensus on the subject, I should like to express the hope that, as has been the case in past years, draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.59 will be adopted without a vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Jordan, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

Mr. OBEIDAT (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): First let me stress that I am speaking on behalf of the Group of Arab States, since my country, Jordan, is chairman of the group for this month.

I shall confine my ,if in these comments to item 63, concerning chemical weapons.

Islamic civilization, of which Arab civilization is an important and effective aspect, is based upon humanitarian values and well-established principles and ideologies which can be summed up in the idea that man is the most valuable and noble element in the political sphere. The primary objective of all our efforts is to safeguard the nobility of man. The supreme aim of all who work in the sphere of disarmament is to safeguard that nobility against the destruction caused by armaments.

The Arab group within this Committee therefore urges the Conference on Disarmament to give the highest priority during its 1989 session to stepping up its negotiations with a view to concluding a convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the modernization, development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons of any kind, and on their destruction, taking into account all proposals and initiatives.

In the same context, the Arab group supports the repeated appeals for rigorous application of, and complete respect for, the Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare of 17 June 1925, and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

Basing itself upon the principles of international humanitarian law in cases of armed conflict, the Arab Group calls upon States to take account in their

(Mr. Obeidat, Jordan)

respective national policies of the need to limit proliferation of chemical weapons until a comprehensive convention on this matter has been adopted.

We are encouraged by the developments in the work of the First Committee in the prevailing climate of international détente. The Arab group will endeavour to ensure that, as far as possible, draft resolutions are adopted by consensus. We stress the fact that we take an objective and positive view of the draft resolutions and wish to conform to the new guidelines for the Committee's work. We believe that, as you have often stressed, Mr. Chairman, the proliferation of draft resolutions on a given subject, particularly draft resolutions which do not take account of future developments in this area, might not be very helpful in the attainment of our objectives.

In conclusion, we reaffirm that our hope of achieving chemical disarmament should not change our disarmament priorities and international efforts to bring about nuclear disarmament. In this context the Arab Group believes that France's call for the convening in Paris from 7 to 11 January 1989, of a conference bringing together the States parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and other countries is a positive contribution in this direction. We hope that conference will give the desired impetus to the Conference on Disarmament finally to put the finishing touches to a comprehensive, non-discriminatory international convention banning chemical weapons.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.9, on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons, on behalf of the delegations of Hungary, Indonesia, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

The subject of radiological weapons has been considered by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva since 1982, both in a subsidiary body and by the plenary Conference. I had the honour of acting as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on this subject this year. The state of work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons up to the start of this year is described in detail in previous reports of the Conference on Disarmament to the Assembly, in particular its special report prepared in April this year. I shall not repeat that here. I should, however, like to comment briefly on developments which have taken place in 1988.

The Ad Hoc Committee this year was quickly able to decide to continue the method of work which it had adopted under my predecessor, Ambassador Miezster of Hungary, in 1987. Under these arrangements - which have come to be called the dual-track approach - separate contact groups are established to deal separately with radiological weapons in the traditional sense and the question of prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities.

The Ad Hoc Committee agreed that the contact groups should carry further the work done in 1987 in assembling possible elements for a convention. In the spring half of the session the two groups looked at possible verification and compliance considerations, as well as other main elements not examined the previous year. During the summer, the contact groups reviewed the texts contained in the co-ordinated records.

Once again, the nature of the task which the Committee was set was to encourage delegations to register their positions. This was a realistic aim and the co-ordinators of the contact groups were able to compile a full and honest record of views expressed. This is a useful basis for the continuing work of the Ad Hoc Committee. I have to add that, although helpful progress proved possible during 1988, considerable gaps remain between the positions of delegations. A good deal of work remains to be done.

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.9 notes the recommendation of the Conference that the Ad Hoc Committee should be re-established at the beginning of its next session and requests that the Conference continue work on the subject and report on its work to the next session of the General Assembly. The hope of the co-sponsors is that the resolution will be adopted without a vote and it is in this spirit that I submit it to the Committee.

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

I should also like to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations" contained in document A/C.1/43/L.47. I do this on behalf of the delegations of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

I do not need to underline to this Committee the immense significance for all the nations represented in this room of the progress made in the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. These two countries possess between them the overwhelming number of nuclear weapons in the world, as well as the greatest capability for the military use of space.

In this Committee last year I introduced on behalf of the same sponsors a resolution on this subject which recognized the completion of negotiations by the Soviet Union and the United States on a treaty to eliminate intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, and encouraged those two States to proceed to further negotiations on a complex of questions concerning space and strategic arms. The intervening year has seen the ratification of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - and the commencement of its implementation. The people of the world, through the medium of television, have watched real disarmament in action in the destruction of the first of these intermediate and shorter-range missiles by both sides. The provisions in the treaty for effective verification have already begun to be implemented not only on the territory of the countries primarily involved but also in other countries, like my own, where the missiles have been stationed.

This Committee has also heard from the two Powers that they have made substantial progress in the past year towards a treaty on a 50 per cent reduction in strategic offensive arms within the framework of the Geneva nuclear and space

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

talks. The matters under negotiation are complex and vital security issues are at stake. Nevertheless both sides have recorded extensive and significant areas of agreement, and detailed positions on remaining areas of disagreement. The negotiations are firmly set on a positive path. An early successful conclusion would be of great importance to international peace and security.

The two Powers have both reported on the state of negotiations to the General Assembly, and have also given briefings to the Conference on Disarmament. In doing this they have responded to the invitation in General Assembly resolution 42/38 A to keep other Member States informed of progress.

It seems to us desirable that the United Nations should both welcome the achievements of the bilateral process in 1988 and call for continued progress in the year ahead. This is the thrust of the draft resolution we are introducing today. These two points have been emphasized in virtually every speech in our plenary debate and it should therefore be possible for us to agree on a single-resolution text and adopt it without a vote. Such an outcome would enable the General Assembly to give a clear and strong statement of encouragement. My delegation together with the other co-sponsors look forward to continuing discussions with the delegate of Zimbabwe, sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/43/L.7, in an attempt to achieve this.

Mr. STEPHANOU (Greece): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Twelve member States of the European Community on item 64 of our agenda, which concerns conventional weapons transfers. The Twelve consider it important that this question, which is of great concern to the international community, is now being discussed by the Committee.

The Twelve have consistently stressed the importance they attach to greater transparency and openness in military matters, which would generate confidence and

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

remove mistrust and misperceptions - aims which are significant for easing international and regional tensions, promoting arms control and disarmament measures, and contributing to international peace and security.

In his statement before the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Genscher, speaking on behalf of the Twelve, raised the question in connection with the major role the United Nations can play in achieving transparency and openness. He said

"Would it not be possible for the United Nations likewise to provide a framework for more openness and transparency with regard to world-wide arms exports and imports?" (A/S-15/PV.8, p. 23)

Under the United Nations Charter, Member States have undertaken to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security. We wish to do so with the least possible diversion of the world's human and economic resources for armaments.

The Twelve also wish to reaffirm the importance they attach to the inherent right to self-defence embodied in the United Nations Charter. They also stress the need of States to protect their security.

The Twelve further recall paragraph 22 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament which states:

"There should also be negotiations on the limitation of international transfer of conventional weapons". (resolution S-10/2)

The views of the Twelve concerning conventional disarmament and the particular relevance of regional agreements have been repeatedly underscored in this Committee. Furthermore, the Twelve have always expressed concern regarding the serious economic strain on a large number of countries resulting from the

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

absorption of an undue proportion of national resources for the increasing expenditure on conventional armaments and forces.

In discussing the problem of international arms transfer, it is clear that the exporters of conventional armaments include countries both large and small, developed as well as less developed. It is also clear that among the importers of large quantities of conventional armaments are some of the least affluent countries of the world, including many in areas beset by tensions. It is therefore a problem for us all, and needs the emergence of an international consensus concerning the way forward.

The Twelve are convinced that new efforts are needed if we are to lower the level of conventional armaments throughout the world. Restraint in the arms trade and restriction of the acquisition of armaments to levels which are legitimately needed for national or regional defence purposes could be one means of achieving that.

We believe that the time has come for joint efforts to encourage such restraint. A measure which could be taken now is the identification of ways of promoting greater openness and transparency in international transfers of conventional arms on a universal and non-discriminatory basis.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

While the illicit and covert arms trade is increasing, the nature and mechanisms of international arms transfers have become more complex. Governments, which are the main suppliers and buyers of armaments, should consult on how to strengthen existing co-operation aimed at constraining illicit international trade in conventional arms and at identifying possible additional measures to halt it.

We recognize that agreement on these issues is difficult. Everybody knows how complex they are. This calls for an approach which, while taking into account the right of States to self-defence and the protection of their security, allows us also to lay down a solid foundation for concerted international action for dealing with these pressing problems in all their dimensions. In that context, one of our partners, Italy, has submitted draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.28.

The emergence of a consensus on this agenda item would be an important achievement for this Committee.

Mr. AL-SHAKAR (Bahrain) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me pleasure to inform the members of the Committee that yesterday Bahrain became a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In a special ceremony held yesterday at the United States Department of State, the Ambassador of Bahrain to the United States, Mr. Ghazi Mohammed Alqosaibi, deposited the document by which Bahrain acceded to the non-proliferation Treaty.

Bahrain's accession to the Treaty is part of our contribution to the international effort to ban nuclear weapons, which is a focal point of our foreign policy. With Bahrain, the number of signatory States is now 138.

As soon as my delegation receives copies of the document of accession, it will transmit these to the Secretary-General for inclusion in the records of the United Nations.

AGENDA ITEM 115

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

The CHAIRMAN: I wish again to draw attention to the letter dated 12 October 1988 addressed to me by the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, as contained in the annex to document A/C.1/43/4. This letter relates to revisions in the medium-term plan. Members will recall that following receipt of this document I held wide and intensive consultations with the open-ended Group of Friends of the Chairman. We held a number of meetings and the consultations have been very extensive indeed.

It is thus my hope that the Committee will now be in a position to adopt an agreed text to be transmitted to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee. Copies of the draft text will now be distributed, and I shall ask the Secretary of the Committee to read it out.

I call on the Secretary.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): The draft text of the letter from the Chairman addressed to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee reads as follows:

"I have the honour to refer to your letter dated 12 October 1988, requesting the First Committee to communicate to the Fifth Committee its views on the relevant chapter of the revisions of the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 (extended to 1991) (A/43/6 and A/43/16, part II), and on the Secretary-General's note containing the draft introduction to the medium-term plan for the period beginning 1992 (A/43/329).

"I wish to inform you that the content of the communication received from you was brought to the attention of the First Committee on 14 October 1988 (A/C.1/43/4).

(Mr. Kheradi)

"Taking into account the importance of the subject-matter involved, the First Committee, after due deliberation, has decided to transmit the following agreed text to the Fifth Committee in reference to the revisions of the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 (extended to 1991).

"In view of its primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security, the United Nations must continue to play its central role and actively contribute to arms limitation and disarmament measures. The United Nations is a valuable forum for all Member States to contribute collectively to the harmonization of views in the process of the consideration and negotiation of multilateral disarmament measures. It is, therefore, essential that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should continue to provide to Member States adequate assistance, including all relevant Secretariat services, in their efforts to advance arms limitation and disarmament efforts contributing to the strengthening of international peace and security.

"In his draft Introduction to the next medium-term plan (A/43/329) the Secretary-General indicates that "the Organization must also continue to accord high priority to the work of its disarmament organs". In order to reflect this priority and to carry out its increased workload, every effort should be made to maintain the effectiveness of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, one of the smallest units of the Secretariat, and the resources accorded to the Department should be commensurate with the requirements of its mandated tasks within the existing resources of the Secretariat and in accordance with resolution 41/213. In this respect, the Committee noted the recommendation contained in paragraph 37 of the

(Mr. Kheradi)

report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the work of its twenty-eighth session (A/43/16). Considering the universality of interest in disarmament, widespread geographical representation, in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, should be fully reflected. Without prejudice to this principle, the employment of women at all levels should be encouraged.

(Mr. Khe.adi)

"Concerns have been expressed with regard to some concepts contained in the Secretary-General's note (A/43/329). Taking into account the importance of the subject matter involved and that arms limitation and disarmament must remain a high priority of the United Nations in the coming years, the Committee considers that more time should be devoted to the examination of this document. It transmits the views of Member States as annexed herewith."

This brings me to the end of the text of the letter authorized by you, Mr. Chairman, to be read into the record. However, I must point out that the appropriate punctuation marks have, of course, not been read out, in view of the time factor involved. However, the authorized text as given to us by you will be reflected in the records of this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Secretary of the Committee for reading out the letter. I will pause for just a moment to ensure that everyone has had a sufficient opportunity to read the letter before I ask whether the Committee is prepared to adopt the letter as read out and distributed to members.

If there is no objection to the letter, I take it that -

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): I had assumed that the purpose of reading the letter into the record was to make it possible for Member States who are not present here today, when they read the verbatim record, to know what we are going to discuss.

As I indicated in our private meetings, my delegation has difficulties with some of the language in the fourth paragraph - that is, the first paragraph of the draft agreed text. The first sentence of that paragraph states that:

"the United Nations must" - "must" is the word - "... actively contribute to arms limitation and disarmament measures."

(Mr. Akalovsky, United States)

That is not the view of the United States. As is stated in the following sentence, the United Nations:

"is a valuable forum for all Member States to contribute collectively to the harmonization of views".

Furthermore, the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field is broader than that stated in the first sentence. The United Nations, as we all know, is conducting the World Disarmament Campaign, organizes all kinds of meetings with non-governmental organizations, assists regional centres, and so on. Therefore the role which is described in the first sentence should be described in broader terms and I would suggest that the end of the first sentence should be reworded to read:

"... arms limitation and disarmament efforts."

Secondly, in the following sentence, reference is made to "consideration and negotiation of multilateral disarmament measures". The United Nations may have a role in the negotiation of multilateral disarmament measures of global scope; yet there are multilateral agreements in existence and other negotiations currently in progress in which the United Nations either did not play any role or is not now playing any role and in fact cannot do so, as was indicated by the representative of Czechoslovakia just this morning on a specific item.

Therefore I would suggest that the end of the sentence be amended to read:

"... disarmament measures of global scope".

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of the United States has suggested two specific amendments; in the fourth paragraph of the draft letter, he has proposed changing the last word of the first sentence from "measures" to "efforts", and, at the end of the following sentence, he proposes adding after the word "measures" the phrase: "of global scope".

(The Chairman)

I invite comments on those two suggested amendments.

Mr. HYLTIENIUS (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, let me start by thanking you for this excellent draft and expressing the warm appreciation of the Swedish delegation of your untiring efforts to achieve consensus language in this important matter.

The Swedish delegation would have preferred perhaps to go a bit further in expressing the necessity of providing the Department for Disarmament Affairs with adequate resources to cope with its increasing workload, but consensus is, of course, of crucial importance in this matter and therefore I think all of us should do our utmost to find language on which there is consensus.

So, Mr. Chairman, the Swedish delegation can certainly accept your draft letter as it is. As there have now been suggestions for some modifications in your draft, I should like to state on behalf of my delegation that we think that your original wording is preferable but the changes proposed by the United States are acceptable to us.

Mr. BATIOUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, first of all I should like to thank you for the intensive efforts you have made over many days and which I think have been fruitful in producing the text of the letter on this important question, which, therefore, should have the support of the entire Committee.

(Mr. Batiouk, Ukrainian SSR)

On the question of the prospects for planning and priorities in the Fifth Committee it is very important that there be an agreed-upon opinion of the First Committee. After participating in discussions that have gone on for many days now on this question both among the offices of the Committee and, for the most part, in the open-ended Group of Friends of the Chairman it seems to me that the views of all delegations have been taken into account as fully as possible and this letter is a common denominator.

Of course we know that all delegations, including my own, have maximum positions - and we might perhaps have preferred the variant of the day before yesterday - but we must speak out with one voice. I should therefore like to call on all delegations to support your compromise draft letter and empower you to send it to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee. Of course, any delegations wishing to do so have a full right to state their understanding of this letter during its discussion in the Fifth Committee.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom): My delegation, too, would like to applaud you for your patience and your persistence in dealing with this matter.

I was basically seeking the floor to make a comment on the subsequent paragraph in the draft agreed text. You may wish me to defer that comment. Meanwhile, I support the amendments that have been put forward by the delegation of the United States.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to preclude the representative of the United Kingdom from making a comment on the second paragraph of the draft agreed text at this time. I am taking general comments now and at the end I will go through the letter paragraph by paragraph for your approval.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom): Regarding the sentence towards the end of the second paragraph of the draft agreed text beginning "Considering the universality of interest in disarmament" followed by the reference to "widespread geographical representation", we have no difficulty with the language that is contained in that sentence, but we do think that Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter contains a consideration which is of even more importance and which is described in the Charter itself as being of paramount importance: the question of the personal qualities of the staff of the Secretariat. Therefore we would like a reference in as brief a form as possible to that, and would suggest that after the expression "widespread geographical representation" we should add the following words: "as well as the paramount consideration referred to in"; the words "in accordance with" could then be deleted. The following sentence, which now reads "Without prejudice to this principle", should be amended accordingly to read "Without prejudice to these principles".

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): Let me begin by thanking you for the text you have placed before us, which represents a great effort on your part to try to reconcile various positions on this document. May I add that the United States is not the only member that has difficulties with this document. We are not fully satisfied with the draft.

For us the fundamental description of the activity and involvement of the United Nations in disarmament is provided in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and, particularly, where it states that:

"The principal goals of disarmament are to ensure the survival of mankind and to eliminate the danger of war, in particular nuclear war ...".

(Resolution-10/2, para. 19)

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

It is then stated in paragraph 27 that:

"In accordance with the Charter, the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament."

Further, again in paragraph 19, it is indicated that:

"Progress towards this objective requires the conclusion and implementation of agreements on the cessation of the arms race and on genuine measures of disarmament."

I would say that through the effort that you have been making to try to reach consensus on this paper, these ideas are reflected in an attenuated way in the text that you have placed before us. We would have preferred clearer and more direct language, and language more in conformity with the Final Document. However, at this stage, my delegation is prepared to accept and support the document you have proposed so that we can find a satisfactory solution to the question we have been discussing for several days now.

I repeat that, although we are not fully satisfied with the document that you have proposed, my delegation is prepared to accept it so that we can reach a final consensus on this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will not be surprised to hear me say that that is the kind of intervention that the Chair finds extremely helpful. As all members of the Committee know, there has been widespread consultation. I have taken account of the views of delegations on all sides of the room and the text you have before you is a compromise text. All of us have been at the United Nations long enough to know that if one is serious about trying to reach a consensus on an important subject there has to be compromise, and this is a serious subject. The essence of this statement is for the Committee to give a strong vote of confidence in, or signal of support for, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, and to ensure

(The Chairman)

that its resources be commensurate with the mandate that it has been given. That is the essence, and I feel that we are very, very close to a consensus and I certainly want to keep working towards it, having regard for the views of all delegations. I hope that we can continue, as we are now doing, to proceed towards a consensus on this important subject.

Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic): We also appreciate your efforts to arrive at an agreed text of the letter to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.

In a spirit of compromise, we are prepared to agree to the text prepared by you, which is now before us. I must also add, however, that we would have preferred stronger language. That being said, I should like to state that a consensus concerning this letter will not prejudice our position concerning the fact that for many years now the phrase "equitable geographical distribution ..." has been the agreed language, to which we should adhere to the extent possible.

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

Nevertheless, having said that and holding such a position, we are prepared to agree to the text before us now.

Mr. CHUNGONG (Cameroon): My delegation is certainly aware of the serious efforts you have made, Sir, to have this document ready for consideration today. We do not therefore intend to open a debate on it, but merely wish to propose a minor amendment to the second paragraph of the draft agreed text. The amendment pertains to the word "maintain", which we would wish to have replaced, if there are no objections, by the phrase "enhance and strengthen". We do not of course wish to insist if there are any objections to that change.

The CHAIRMAN: Am I correct in saying that the proposed amendment relates to the second sentence of the paragraph beginning "In his draft introduction" and that you are suggesting, that the word "maintain" be changed to "enhance and strengthen"?

Mr. CHUNGONG (Cameroon): That is correct, Sir.

Mr. SOOD (India): My delegation should also like to thank you, Sir, for the efforts you have made to reach a consensus during this exercise. While we realize that the language is not exactly all that we could wish for, I believe that my delegation would be happy to participate and contribute to efforts in that regard. Before I make my own minor substantive point, let me say that I should like to support the amendment proposed by the representative of Cameroon.

As for my own amendment I propose that in the second sentence in the first paragraph of the draft agreed text, the word "in" should be replaced by "to". In the opinion of my delegation that would be more in keeping with the activities that we are suggesting, for which the United Nations proves a valuable forum.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): It would not only be discourteous but extremely unkind to fail to recognize the extraordinary efforts you have made, Sir, to find consensus on this important matter. It is because those efforts have been so extraordinary and protracted and have produced such an evidently good result that I should like to express to the Committee my concern about the process that we are now witnessing.

I tell you frankly, Sir, that I believe that my delegation would probably accept all of the amendments that have so far been proposed. But I do think those amendments have one central characteristic in common, which is that they actually, more or less, change nothing. But the other characteristic they may have in common is that they could destroy consensus on this text.

The last amendment that was submitted, for example, is at best not a major one. I wonder whether the representative of India would feel that it is essential for that amendment to be accepted if his delegation is to join consensus on this text.

The amendment that was proposed by the representative of the United Kingdom with regard to paragraph 101 of the Charter, is of course absolutely accurate, but, I sincerely suggest, unnecessary, because the part of paragraph 3 of article 101 of the Charter that we are referring to is the part that, in your discussions with others, delegations felt should have particular attention drawn to it. And surely, that is the point.

If there is a single, central point in this draft, in the view of my delegation, it occurs in the second paragraph of the agreed text. It is the point to which you yourself, Mr. Chairman, have drawn attention. It is that we are saying to those who make decisions on the allocation of United Nations resources: "Please allocate resources that are adequate to the mandated tasks that have been

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

given to the United Nations in respect to disarmament." I suggest that that is what is at issue in this letter. If that were not there, my delegation would not join consensus. But as it is there, we are satisfied.

By the way, I believe we could ourselves also suggest a couple of amendments that would make the draft more tasteful to us. But we will not do so. My appeal to this Committee is that we accept this draft now and get on with our other business.

The CHAIRMAN: May I say, parenthetically, that the representative of Australia has hit the nail on the head.

Mr. FAN Guoxiang (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation should like to express its gratitude to you, Sir, for the great patience you have shown and the great efforts you have made.

The text of the letter to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee has actually gone through four or five revisions. On many occasions, a variety of views has been sought. I am very pleased to see that the draft text presented to us today has incorporated a number of opinions from all sides.

In my understanding, the chief element of the draft lies in the second paragraph of the agreed text. In it, the Secretary-General is quoted as saying that:

(spoke in English)

"the Organization must also continue to accord high priority to the work of its disarmament organs".

(continued in Chinese)

The following sentence is also a main element:

(spoke in English)

"In order to reflect this priority and to carry out its increased workload,

(Mr. Fan Guoxiang, China)

every effort should be made to maintain the effectiveness of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, one of the smallest units of the Secretariat, and the resources accorded to the Department should be commensurate with the requirements of its mandated tasks ...".

(Mr. Fan Guoxiang, China)

(continued in Chinese)

It is my view that, as you put it, Mr. Chairman, this is the focus of the letter, and it was agreed upon after several days of consultation. The Chinese delegation is prepared to join in a consensus because there is such an element - a focus - in this letter.

As regards other elements, representatives can express their different views, but it is impossible for everybody to agree with everything in the letter. Therefore I agree with the view expressed by the representative of Australia: that the letter that you, Mr. Chairman, after many consultations, have arrived at and have presented to us today should be agreed to by all representatives. If we were to go through the document paragraph by paragraph we could put forward many suggestions and amendments but the delegation of China suggests that if we are agreed upon the chief elements we can arrive at consensus in a spirit of compromise and co-operation.

The CHAIRMAN: Having heard several very helpful statements, I should like to assess our present position. All of us - certainly I myself - are subject to two deadlines. The first is the deadline imposed upon us by the Chairman of the Fifth Committee - namely 4 November - for the reply to be given to him. The second is the deadline for the closing of this meeting, which we are now approaching.

In the comments that have been made I did not hear any delegation state that it objected to the text as such. In fact, what I heard from many was recognition of the fact that this is a compromise text, and some have said that in their view it is the best compromise that it is possible to obtain, all circumstances considered. They have raised the question whether or not the text could go forward as it stands, bearing in mind that all of us, if we had unlimited time, could refine or fine-tune anything.

(The Chairman)

But the basic point that was raised concerns the fact that the amendments that have been suggested so far - and I say this with respect for those amendments - are not of an essential character so far as the fundamental purpose of this letter is concerned, and on that basis several delegations have raised the question whether the letter could go forward as it is.

This prompts the Chair to ask if those who have suggested amendments feel that they must insist on them. Or would they be prepared, in the spirit of co-operation and compromise that has characterized the First Committee throughout its proceedings at this session, to allow the letter to go forward in its present form. If I could put the question to the Committee whether or not the amendments suggested are absolutely essential, that is what I would do, bearing in mind the pressure of the clock and of the calendar.

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): As I indicated in our informal discussions on this matter, the view of my delegation was, and in fact still is, that the request you received, Mr. Chairman, addressed primarily - in fact, exclusively - matters of substance, namely the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan referred to in the note of the Secretary-General in document A/43/327. The draft agreed text states: "Concerns have been expressed with regard to some concepts". In other words, we do not all agree on the substance of the matter. That is, of course, accurate.

But this lack of agreement on substance is also reflected in the first paragraph of the draft agreed text, which deals with a matter that has been discussed for years in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, among other bodies, namely, the role of the United Nations. As we all know, it has not been possible for consensus to be reached, at least thus far.

I note that there is again a proposal to put the item on the Disarmament Commission's agenda next year. Consequently my delegation cannot accept

(Mr. Akalovskay, United States)

formulations that prejudice its position on certain fundamental aspects of this particular issue.

The representative of China indicated that he regarded the second paragraph as the chief element of the draft agreed text, and it so happens that we are very close to agreement on this paragraph. I think that the suggestion made by the representative of the United Kingdom is very valuable and important. Indeed, in the view of my delegation, it is not quite proper to elevate one aspect of Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter, to the status of principle, while ignoring other aspects which in the Article itself are described as the "paramount consideration".

On the basis of all this, perhaps the solution would be to drop the first paragraph entirely. We do have an introductory sentence in the second paragraph referring to the high priority the Organization must continue to accord to its work on disarmament. It seems to me that in general terms that covers all that we could say, at least at this point, on the basis of agreement. I repeat: the first paragraph of the draft agreed text as it stands is very difficult for my delegation to accept - for a number of reasons, some of which I have already alluded to.

Mr. KOKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I think that the document before us is an excellent one, and the more we try to improve it the further we will be from consensus. You, Mr. Chairman, have referred to two deadlines. It seems to me that there is a third. We are your friends - at least that is what we call ourselves; indeed that is what we are - and it is the task of a friend to help out in difficult situations. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the present situation is not the easiest. I think that now is the right time to show that it is the Friends of the Chairman who have gathered together, and no doubt it would be useful, as was proposed by the delegations of Australia and China, to stop trying to improve this text.

(Mr. Kokeev, USSR)

I think that the amendments proposed up to now, including the amendments proposed by the delegation of the United States to the first paragraph, have not given rise to any particular objections. This applies also to the amendments proposed by the delegations of the United Kingdom, Cameroon and India. I therefore propose that we adopt the text with the slight amendments that have been made, and thereby conclude our work.

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of the Soviet Union has made a specific suggestion. He stated that this letter was an excellent document and that too much effort to improve it would take us further from the consensus that all of us feel we are now close to reaching. He has suggested that we can reach a consensus if we accept the amendments that have been proposed thus far, based on the fact that there has been no objection to those amendments, even though some members would like the text unamended. To be precise, I would ask whether I can now proceed paragraph by paragraph for the adoption of the text as amended. Given the problem of time, I believe this procedure might lead us to a successful resolution of this matter.

I shall therefore proceed now to go through the draft letter paragraph by paragraph and read out the suggested amendments that have been made. As I hear no objection, I shall proceed accordingly.

The first paragraph was adopted.

The second paragraph was adopted.

The third paragraph was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We come now to the fourth paragraph, which is the first substantive paragraph of the draft letter. It will read now as follows:

"In view of its primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security, the United Nations must continue to play its central role and actively contribute to arms limitation and disarmament efforts. The United Nations is a valuable forum for all Member States to contribute collectively to the harmonization of views, to the process of the consideration and negotiation of multilateral disarmament measures of global scope. It is, therefore, essential that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should continue to provide to Member States adequate assistance, including all relevant Secretariat services, in their efforts to advance arms limitation and disarmament efforts contributing to the strengthening of international peace and security."

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): As I indicated in my previous statement, Sir, my delegation accepts the paper as you presented it. My delegation is not in a position to accept the amendments that have been proposed to this paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN: I therefore put the question: May I request the adoption of this paragraph without any amendments?

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): As I indicated earlier, the differences of view on this paragraph reflect the differences of view that have been persistent in other bodies on a range of questions relating to the role of the United Nations in disarmament matters. The subject, as I said earlier, has been discussed and will be on our agenda for some time to come. I made my proposal in a spirit of compromise. I do not think anybody will lose anything if the first

(Mr. Akalovsky, United States)

paragraph is dropped, especially in view of the fact, as I said earlier, that we do have an introductory sentence in the following paragraph which refers to the high priority the Organization must continue to accord to the work of its disarmament organs.

The CHAIRMAN: The specific suggestion is to eliminate the paragraph we are now considering.

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): In connection with the proposal just made, I should like to make an additional proposal. Perhaps there would be some merit not in eliminating the entire first paragraph but in retaining the clause, as follows: "In view of its primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security" - then go to the third sentence of the paragraph, which reads, "It is essential that ...". Thus we would delete those expressions that are causing difficulty and maintain the major meaning of the paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of the Byelorussian SSR suggests that the paragraph read as follows:

"In view of its primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security, it is essential that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should continue to provide ...".

Do members agree to that proposal?

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): Yes, sir.

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): I think the representative of the United States has pointed to something very important that has emerged clearly from this discussion. In the discussion of this paragraph a substantive issue is involved: the difference as to existing approaches to the role to be played by the United Nations in the sphere of disarmament. It is clear that this difference has come to light on various occasions, most recently at the third special session devoted to disarmament. Consequently I believe that it is difficult to find a solution to that substantive question through the changes that are being proposed. As has been said, the First Committee has been requested to express its opinion on those substantive aspects of the medium-term plan. The fundamental question we are addressing in this paragraph concerns the priority that will be given to disarmament matters at the United Nations.

The paragraph that follows in this document is important, as has been said, but it merely follows from the first. The first paragraph highlights the priority to be given, and the second indicates how it will be implemented. Thus, if we were to delete or further modify the first paragraph, the document would completely lose its meaning, and my delegation would not be in a position to accept that.

Mr. NUÑEZ MOSQUERA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I think what has been said by the representative of Venezuela is very important. The two paragraphs in quotation marks have always been taken together in the four versions of the document you have put before us. If we cannot adopt the first paragraph as you have drafted it, it might be better to leave it pending and move on to the second, so as to see what remains of the letter the First Committee would be sending to the Fifth Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Cuba. As I have found on previous occasions, we are of like mind on many issues. That was exactly what I was about to propose: that we set aside the first paragraph for the moment and

(The Chairman)

move to the second. Therefore I shall do so and proceed to read out the second paragraph, with the amendments that have been proposed. The second paragraph will read:

"In his draft Introduction to the next medium-term plan (A/43/329) the Secretary-General indicates that 'the Organization must also continue to accord high priority to the work of its disarmament organs.' In order to reflect this priority and to carry out its increased workload, every effort should be made to enhance and strengthen the effectiveness of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, one of the smallest units of the Secretariat, and the resources accorded to the Department should be commensurate with the requirements of its mandated tasks within the existing resources of the Secretariat and in accordance with resolution 41/213. In this respect, the Committee noted the recommendation contained in paragraph 37 of the report of the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination on the work of its twenty-eighth session (A/43/16). Considering the universality of interest in disarmament, widespread geographical representation, as well as the paramount consideration referred to in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, should be fully reflected. Without prejudice to these principles, the employment of women at all levels should be encouraged."

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): Mr. Chairman, my delegation is quite prepared to

continue to be a Friend because we wish to see the work accomplished, but this is a fundamental issue. We refer to the phrase "widespread geographical representation". While my delegation might be compelled to obtain an interpretation from the Secretariat of what "widespread geographical representation" implies, we shall restrain ourselves if we can agree on some appropriate language.

(Mr. Etuket, Uganda)

It is our view that the word "widespread" does not take into the account the fundamental issue. What we are talking about is a question of principle, and the principle is equitable geographical representation at all levels. It could remain imbalanced and still be widespread. It is our view that any language that does not adequately articulate that position will not be acceptable to my delegation. Therefore we shall not go along with the text as it stands.

The CHAIRMAN: I would ask the representative of Uganda the precise wording that he would seek in the sentence he has referred to.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): Perhaps it could be worded along these lines:

"Considering the universality of interest in disarmament, the principle of equitable geographical representation at all levels, particularly at the senior levels, should be fully reflected".

The rest can remain as it is, that is, the part referring to Article 101 of the Charter.

The CHAIRMAN: Uganda is proposing that the sentence should read:

"Considering the universality of interest in disarmament, the principle of equitable geographical representation at all levels, particularly at the senior levels, should be fully reflected".

May I take it that there is agreement on that sentence?

Ms. TAYLOR (United Kingdom): I take the floor again, having spoken earlier on Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, because this is the source of the principles we should be applying. This does provide language on this particular point, which does not reflect the language put forward by the representative of Uganda. I am afraid that, for that reason, that would not be acceptable to my delegation. We do believe that the phrase we have here already, "widespread geographical representation", while not exactly that of the Charter, is a fair paraphrase and would be acceptable, but we cannot go further than that.

The CHAIRMAN: The comments that have been made on this subject so far have not surprised the Chair. After all, that was why we have had so many discussions in the Group of Friends of the Chair, to which so many representatives have made valuable contributions, and that is why the text was prepared in the way it was. It is a compromise text. It appears to the Chair that the amendments put forward most recently are not acceptable. I shall try once more. I would suggest that we insert the paragraph break before the sentence beginning "Considering". We shall then be considering three paragraphs in the substantive part of our letter. In the paragraph beginning "Considering the universality ...", it appears to the Chair that there is no agreement in the Committee in respect of the words put forward in the amendment. I ask whether there is agreement that the text as it stands, without amendment, should go forward.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): The issue we are discussing is fundamental. My delegation feels obliged to seek an explanation from the Secretariat whether the word "widespread" takes into account the element of equitable geographical representation. I reserve the right to take the floor again after hearing the explanation.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall give a brief answer: yes, it does take into account equitable geographical representation. However, if it would be helpful to the Committee, I shall ask the Under-Secretary-General to make a brief comment on that question.

Mr. AKASHI (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): I would appreciate it if the delegate of Uganda would repeat his question.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): Would the Secretariat give an opinion as to whether "widespread geographical distribution" means "equitable geographical distribution"?

The CHAIRMAN: While this question is before us, let me turn briefly to the final, wrap-up, paragraph. I have noted no amendments or objections to that paragraph and I take it that it is acceptable. However, I shall not yet put it formally; I shall go back and deal with the text paragraph by paragraph.

We are now left with three substantive paragraphs. The first begins, "In view of ...", and there is no agreement on it. The second begins, "In his draft introduction ...", and ends with, "(A/43/16)". I take it that there is acceptance of the text as amended. The third paragraph begins, "Considering the universality of interest ...". We are still discussing this paragraph.

I have reviewed this because it seems to the Chair that we are continuing to make good progress towards consensus on the heart of the matter. There are two questions that remain before us. The first is the link between the first and second paragraphs. Some feel that we can live without the paragraph because there has not yet been total agreement. Some feel that it is an integral part of the overall message to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee. The second question that remains is that of "widespread geographical representation". I intend to take the second question first and to turn our attention once more to the paragraph beginning, "Considering the universality ...", recognizing that in the resolution of the two remaining problems before us we are very close to our goal.

I call upon the Under-Secretary-General.

Mr. AKASHI (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): As a former representative, for five years, in the Fifth Committee, I know how complex the issue involved in the question of "equitable geographical distribution" is in the context of Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter. Discussions have taken place in this Organization for the last 43 years as to the precise balance between the various considerations contained in that paragraph. My opinion on the specific

(Mr. Akashi)

question of the representative of Uganda in the context of the formulation we have before us is that what is meant by "widespread geographical distribution" is "equitable geographical distribution". He is absolutely right that the formulation used by the Secretary-General in his annual reports on the composition of the Secretariat is "equitable geographical distribution". I think what is meant here is the same thing as is meant by that term.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Under-Secretary-General for that clarification. I now put the question to the representative of Uganda whether that satisfies the problem that he raised.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): My delegation is very grateful for the response that has been made. It is therefore the understanding of my delegation that if "widespread geographical distribution" is the same as "equitable geographical distribution", for the sake of consensus the term "equitable geographical representation" should be used in this letter. My delegation formally proposes that, if that is not acceptable, we should put the whole paragraph in brackets.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think that we want to have a bracketed paragraph here. I wonder if it would be acceptable merely to change the word "widespread" into "equitable".

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): To answer your question first, my delegation would not be prepared to accept that change.

Secondly, as the Under-Secretary-General indicated, this question of the interpretation of Article 101 with respect to geographical representation has been debated for 43 years and is still being debated.

(Mr. Akalovsky, United States)

Obviously, different delegations have different interpretations of that Article. My delegation reserves its right to interpret the phrase "widespread geographical distribution" in its own way and would not be prepared to accept any interpretation that is advanced by others.

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of the United States has explained that there is an interpretation which his delegation is willing to put on these words in considering that they would be acceptable in going forward. That is a spirit of compromise, and I wonder if I might ask the representative of Uganda if he would also be prepared to accept the words as they are in the original text, with the notation that he has his own reservation and comment, a comment which can be affixed to this letter as he transmits the views of his delegation to me: his views would be affixed to the letter and would go forward.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): Briefly, my delegation would not support maintenance of the word "widespread" in the text.

The CHAIRMAN: Therefore I now put to the Committee a proposal to eliminate the paragraph beginning "Considering the universality".

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): My delegation would support the elimination of the whole paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, what is being proposed is the elimination of the whole paragraph beginning "Considering the universality".

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): My delegation supports the elimination of the whole text, from "In his draft Introduction".

The CHAIRMAN: I have already indicated that I have divided the text into three paragraphs. At this stage we are considering the paragraph beginning "Considering the universality". It is my proposal as a compromise, recognizing that there are views, which of course I respect, on all sides of the Committee, that the paragraph beginning "Considering the universality" be eliminated.

Mr. MORRISON (Canada): Mr. Chairman, all the members of my delegation have great admiration for the manner in which you have conducted these consultations and negotiations. It would appear that before we can take definite decisions on the elimination of the newly created paragraph there are other decisions that really should be taken beforehand.

For my delegation the views contained in this newly created paragraph are of great and vital importance. Bearing in mind the status of our consultations and deliberations with regard to the paragraphs which come before the newly arranged third paragraph, we are not sure that we are prepared at this time to support the deletion of that paragraph.

Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta): I should like to try to offer a way out.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair would certainly welcome that.

Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta): I confirm that there is no acceptable definition of the difficult words with which we are dealing, and I would not venture to go into this question. Perhaps a way out would be to use both the concepts which are being discussed, so that one would say "an equitable representation on as wide a geographical basis as possible".

The CHAIRMAN: The words "an equitable representation on as wide a geographical basis as possible" have been suggested by the representative of Malta. The Chair senses that that might be an acceptable formulation. As the representative of Uganda knows, every possible effort is being made to have this letter go forward as a consensus text carrying the main thrust of the ideas which this Committee wants to convey to the Fifth Committee. I am very encouraged by the fact that we are continuing to operate in a spirit of endeavour to reach a consensus statement on this important matter.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): It is not the intention of this delegation to make your work difficult, Mr. Chairman, but this is a question of principle and there is little that this delegation can do about it. We saw a lot of wisdom in your proposal, which in essence was a request to us, in a spirit of compromise, not to use the word "principle" and simply to say "equitable". We were prepared to compromise on that. It is unclear to my delegation what is the essence of the amendment which has just been proposed but my delegation would be prepared to continue to look at it on the grounds that you, Sir, personally proposed.

I wish to reaffirm that the issue we are discussing is directly linked with all the other issues in the whole paragraph, from the words, "In his draft Introduction", so we are not prepared to consider only this aspect of the matter, that is whether or not we should delete it. If we have to delete it, we shall have to delete the whole paragraph. That is the view of my delegation. If we have to compromise, which we are prepared to do, we are seriously looking at your proposal, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Uganda for helping the Chair resolve this question, but I need more clarification. Did I understand correctly that the representative of Uganda is prepared to accept the text as presented by the Chairman?

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): I regret that I was not very clear. My delegation is prepared to accept the text as recently amended by the Chair, replacing "widespread" by "equitable", with the rest remaining as it is.

The CHAIRMAN: But the representative of Uganda knows that that did not meet with full acceptance, and at that point the representative of Malta proposed an amendment which I sensed was generally acceptable. I thought that the proposal made by the representative of Malta was worthy of our support because it took due account of the point made by the representative of Uganda.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): While I appreciate the efforts of the representative of Malta, this delegation is still confused as to the meaning of his amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I will ask the representative of Malta to read the words which he proposed, and to follow that with one or two sentences in explanation of his amendment.

Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta): I will read out the paragraph as it would read with the inclusion of the change I propose:

"Considering the universality of interest in disarmament, an equitable representation on as wide a geographical basis as possible, in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations should be fully reflected."

(Mr. Borg Olivier, Malta)

I began my suggestion by saying it is almost impossible to arrive at a universally acceptable definition of "equitable geographical representation". After 43 years of practice, there is always an argument whenever this question comes up. In all my years at the United Nations I know of no attempt to define those words that gained full acceptance. I tried to get around this by meeting the concerns of the delegation of Uganda, for which it is important that there be a reference to equitable representation; my suggestion would give them that reference. At the same time I also took into account that during broad consultations the Chairman had arrived at acceptance of words such as "wide geographical representation". I tried to wed those two concepts in my suggestion.

The CHAIRMAN: It seems to me that the amendment proposed by the representative of Malta is as close as we might expect to a resolution of this very thorny problem that has beset the United Nations in many areas for a long time. In the final moments available to us today I do not think we can do any better.

It is the Chairman's view that the position the representative of Uganda has been espousing is protected in the amended language suggested by the representative of Malta, and I appeal to the representative of Uganda to accept the Maltese amendment and allow us to proceed.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): We have looked very closely at the amendment proposed by Malta, which is a very useful contribution. While we are still considering that amendment, it is our view that, inasmuch as we want to achieve consensus on this paragraph - which we are prepared to do - we should look at the paragraph in its entirety. The proposal made by the representative of Malta retains reference to Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter; we are not prepared to go along with this. We therefore propose amendment of the text proposed by the representative of Malta to delete reference to a specific Article of the Charter and simply say "in accordance with the Charter".

The CHAIRMAN: I would now ask the Secretary to read out, at dictation speed, the amendment proposed by Malta, as further amended by Uganda.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): The text of the amendment would read as follows:

"Considering the universality of interest in disarmament, an equitable representation on as wide a geographical basis as possible, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, should be fully reflected."

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): It is our view that the words "in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations" should follow the phrase "should be fully reflected".

The CHAIRMAN: I take it, then, that the representative of Uganda is prepared to have us proceed on the Malta amendment.

Mr. ETUKET (Uganda): As amended, yes. That brings us back to the only outstanding problem, which concerns paragraph 1. It is clear that there are differences of view concerning this paragraph. Let me therefore suggest some amended language that I think gets around the problem that existed, while retaining the essence of paragraph 1. I believe this language meets the concerns of those who have taken the view that paragraph 1 ought to be reflected in this letter. The paragraph would read as follows:

"In view of the central role of the United Nations in consideration and negotiation of multilateral disarmament measures of a global scope and in contributing to arms limitation and disarmament efforts, it is essential that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should continue to provide to Member States adequate assistance, including all relevant Secretariat services, in their efforts to advance arms limitation and disarmament efforts contributing to the strengthening of international peace and security."

Is there agreed on that text?

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): Since I was the first to have problems with this paragraph, perhaps I should respond first.

I find the proposal made by the representative of the Byelorussian SSR to be frankly much more attractive to my delegation than the text the Chairman has just read out, in particular because it maintains what we regard as a very important point, namely that the primary purpose of the Charter is to maintain international peace and security. That aspect is, of course, missing from the Chairman's text. There are other problems in the Chairman's text that I will not get into now.

(Mr. Akalovsky, United States)

I would appeal to my colleagues to consider seriously what I think was a very constructive proposal by the representative of the Byelorussian SSR.

May I just mention another thing, and I think that my colleague from Venezuela agreed with me, that this paragraph raises issues which have not been resolved elsewhere. At the same time, it seems to me at least, he was insisting on language that would prejudge a solution of this problem. It seems to me that the proposal made by the representative of the Byelorussian SSR is a very good one and should meet everybody's concern.

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of the United States has pointed in specific terms to the amendment suggested earlier by the representative of the Byelorussian SSR. I am going to ask him, in the light of what appears to be a gathering of support, if not total support, for the amendment suggested by the representative of the Byelorussian SSR, to be kind enough to repeat it.

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Aware of all the deadlines which are pressing us, I will once again repeat my proposal. I shall read it out slowly.

(spoke in English)

"In view of the primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security, it is essential that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should continue to provide to Member States adequate assistance, including all relevant Secretariat services in their effort to advance arms limitation and disarmament efforts, contributing to the strengthening of international peace and security."

The CHAIRMAN: I sense that there is agreement in the room to that phrasing.

(The Chairman)

We have now completed our discussion of all the points and we are ready to put to the Committee the adoption of the letter as a whole - but first we hear from the representative of Algeria.

Mr. BENYAMINA (Algeria) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I should be the last one to try to raise a last difficulty at a time when you believe there is general agreement. I think you should interpret my silence as an effort to help you in the best way possible, that is, in achieving agreement. However, in reading and re-reading the proposal made by the representative of the Byelorussian SSR, I see certain problems in it. There is a problem of consistency because, when we say "In view of its primary purpose under the Charter", the word "its" is referring to the United Nations. Therefore, if the whole part that refers to the United Nations is deleted, we shall be saying "In view of its primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security, it is essential that the Secretary-General". Then would "the primary purpose to maintain international peace and security" apply to the Secretary-General or to the Member States? The idea here was to reflect the role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security. Here I think there is more than a problem of language. It is not just the word "its" that is the problem. I think the substantive problem, as raised by the representative of Venezuela, is the role of the United Nations.

Now, Sir, I do not want to try to raise a major objection to this last proposal, but I think that we must genuinely take this concern into account. For that reason, at one point I had thought of the possibility of achieving agreement round your text. I do not know how we can resolve this small difficulty. I simply submit this to you for your consideration, recalling once again that I do not wish to raise a last-minute objection here, but I think there is an objective difficulty.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Algeria for his important intervention. I think he is quite correct that a certain linguistic deficiency has occurred as a result of the telescoping of language as proposed by the representative of the Byelorussian SSR. The point of what he is trying to do is acceptable. I do not hear any objection to it. It is only that in the English formulation something needs to be done with this sentence. It may be that it should read:

"In view of a primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security, it is essential that the Secretary-General" -

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): Mr. Chairman, like you, I am grateful to the representative of Algeria for pointing out what is an important but merely linguistic difficulty. May I make a proposal for the solution of it, and that is that the paragraph should read:

"In view of the United Nations' primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security ..."

I think that could correct the problem.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Australia. He certainly has corrected the linguistic problem. He has proposed the wording:

"In view of the United Nations' primary purpose under the Charter to maintain international peace and security, it is essential that the Secretary-General ..."

I sense now that we have completed our work. I sense that there is agreement on the first three paragraphs.

I shall now put to the Committee the paragraph beginning: "In view of the United Nations' ...", as amended, and ask whether there is agreement on that paragraph.

The paragraph was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now put to the Committee the paragraph beginning: "In his draft Introduction ..." and ending with "A/43/16".

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): My delegation can accept this paragraph. I just wanted to make clear that in accepting the language suggested by the representative of Cameroon, we are not interpreting it as indicating any intention to suggest the enhancement and strengthening of the effectiveness of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. Its effectiveness is already very high in our estimation. We do not question it. In fact it has maximum effectiveness, it seems to us, in the circumstances - but its enhancement should not be at the expense of any other department of the United Nations Secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN: I note the comment made by the representative of the United States.

I will put to the Committee once again the second paragraph of the draft agreed text, beginning: "In his draft Introduction ...". Is there agreement on this paragraph?

The paragraph was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now put to the Committee the paragraph beginning: "Considering the universality of interest ...". -

Ms. TAYLOR (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Mr. Chairman, I am sorry - as I am sure you are - that I must ask to speak once again but, as I understand it, the language that we are now looking at has changed in three respects from the language that we were previously considering in what is now the third paragraph, in that we have a reference to "equitable distribution". We do not have a reference to Article 101 of the Charter, and the amendment proposed by the United Kingdom has disappeared. If that is correct, I will continue.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, the text as amended in what came to be known as the Malta amendment, which was a very important contribution in resolving serious difficulties, was read a moment ago and I will have the whole paragraph read now, centring on the Malta amendment. I will ask the Secretary to read the paragraph.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): The text would then read as follows:

"Considering the universality of interest in disarmament, an equitable representation on as wide a geographical basis as possible, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, should be fully reflected."

That is the amendment I read out earlier.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom): In that case my supposition was correct. I could make three points about those three changes, but I will make only one, in the interest of time. It is that we purport to look to the Charter for the principles that should govern us in this respect but the language used in so doing, speaking of "equitable distribution", is not contained in the Charter nor is it contained in the relevant Article, Article 101, paragraph 3. For that principal reason my delegation cannot accept this language.

The CHAIRMAN: We are quite close to the completion of our work. The central problem that was discussed here at some length has been resolved and if we refer to "Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter", I think that ought to satisfy the diverse concerns.

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): The position of my delegation on the paragraph as read out by the Secretary of the Committee is exactly the same as that of the United Kingdom.

The CHAIRMAN: Then let me put this question. Is the language as read out by the Secretary of the Committee, which does emphasize the Charter, acceptable?

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom): No, Sir.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): I find it completely unsatisfactory for positions to be taken without our being told why. May I, through you, Sir, ask the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States, either or both, but

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

perhaps the United Kingdom, who referred obliquely to the absence of, or inaccuracy with respect to, some language of the Charter, precisely what she has in mind? My recollection is that the word "equitable" does occur in Article 101 of the Charter, but I think we would all benefit from an explanation.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall of course ask the representative of the United Kingdom to reply. However, the Chair has to say that we are 99.9 per cent at our goal and I thought that this particular point had been resolved satisfactorily in our consultations and that the further amendments proposed this morning by the representative of Malta further refined the text in a way that is acceptable.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom): I have very little to add. I am sorry that my meaning was not clear to the representative of Australia earlier. What I was trying to say, and I will try to say it more slowly and more clearly, is that as far as we are concerned the relevant Article of the Charter is Article 101, paragraph 3, and this contains a notion other than that of "equitable distribution". Other representatives have already explained earlier today that there is a debate about the meaning of that term and until we have an agreed definition of it, it is not one that my delegation wishes to see used.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): My delegation does not need to be spoken to slowly.

I would appeal to the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States of America to view the Maltese proposal in the following way. Because it refers to the Charter as a whole, it surely must be the case that all or any part of the Charter can be taken as being encompassed in what is being proposed. I am well aware that Article 101, paragraph 3, begins with the words "The paramount consideration" and goes on to describe integrity, competence, efficiency of staff recruited to the Secretariat. Surely, if it is these concepts to which the two

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

delegations are particularly attached, they might be able to accommodate that attachment by recognizing that the Charter as a whole is being referred to in this context. If they were to do that I believe we would have agreement.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair shares that thought.

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): As I understood the amendment that was proposed by the representative of Malta, it did not include a reference to the Charter itself but included a reference to Article 101, paragraph 3. The proposal to delete the reference to the Article and replace it by a reference to the Charter was made by the representative of Uganda. Since I believe this is the case, perhaps the representative of Uganda would explain to us why he wishes to delete reference to Article 101 and replace it by a reference to the Charter.

The CHAIRMAN: I am going to ask the representative of Malta, who had such success in steering the Committee, if he would kindly read again the paragraph beginning "Considering the universality", which incorporates his own amendment.

Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta): The paragraph as I understand it takes into account the request made by the delegation of Uganda, which I thought had been accepted, and reads as follows:

"Considering the universality of interest in disarmament, an equitable representation on as wide a geographical basis as possible, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, should be fully reflected."

I believe there is also a final sentence. However, when it was read out earlier we did not get that sentence and I do not think there was a decision to delete it so I am not clear whether it remains or not.

The CHAIRMAN: The sentence remains.

Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta): Since it remains, the paragraph should continue "Without prejudice to these principles, the employment of women at all levels should be encouraged."

The CHAIRMAN: I appeal to the Committee to accept the Maltese amendments as read and to allow us to proceed with the adoption of this paragraph.

The paragraph, as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: The last paragraph of the draft agreed text begins "Concerns have been expressed". Is that paragraph acceptable to the Committee?

The paragraph was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I now put the draft letter as a whole before you for your consideration. Is it acceptable?

The draft letter as a whole was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: As noted in the last paragraph of the letter, I will transmit any views that I may receive in writing. Although I had announced earlier that the deadline for this purpose would be today at 12 noon, I believe I am now in a position to extend that deadline until Monday, 7 November. In addition, I believe the Committee would agree that I also transmit to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee the relevant parts of the verbatim records of this meeting pertaining to this subject matter.

The meeting rose at 2 p.m.