



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 140 (continued)

QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA (A/C.1/38/L.80 and L.84; A/38/193 and Corr.1, A/38/439 and Rev.1, A/38/495)

Mr. BEAUGE (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The question of Antarctica has very special importance for my country. Argentina has close ties with that continent, based on sovereignty, geography and history. Our active presence in the area may be seen in our many scientific stations there. As early as 1904 Argentina had set up an astronomic and scientific observatory in the South Orkney Islands. Subsequently this continuing activity was intensified, and many generations of Argentines have already participated in successive Antarctic campaigns designed to ensure the peaceful development and ecological conservation of the region.

In the early stages of international awareness and general interest in the preservation of the Antarctic continent, Argentina was one of the countries that urged and signed the Antarctic Treaty in 1959. Since that time our activities in the area have taken place within the framework of the Treaty, and it is thus that we can bear witness in this debate to the importance and effectiveness of the system flowing from this legal instrument. The main point of this statement will be to outline the characteristics of that system, which must be maintained and strengthened.

The sponsors of the debate on this item in the United Nations, in support of the inscription of the item on our agenda, have referred to the need for the international community to have fuller information on Antarctica. The characteristics of the Antarctic Treaty system have already been eloquently explained by the Permanent Representative of Australia, on behalf of the Consultative Parties to the Treaty, and have been summarized in document A/38/439/Rev.1, which contains the statement by the Parties addressed to the Secretary-General. We believe that it would be useful to stress the practical advantages which have derived directly from the Treaty, and we hope that this debate will lead to a greater knowledge of the Antarctic system.

(Mr. Beauge, Argentina)

In its preamble, the Treaty recognizes that it is in the interest of all mankind that Antarctica shall continue to be used for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord. A body like this Committee, dedicated above all to disarmament and international security, must be aware of the value of these provisions, which have kept the arms race out of Antarctica through the prohibition of all military measures, such as the establishment of military bases and fortifications, the carrying out of military manoeuvres, as well as the testing of any type of weapons, including nuclear weapons.

The Treaty has proved to be the best instrument for the promotion of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Antarctica is the only area which is free of tension and conflict. It is hard to imagine that in the present international situation there could be a more perfect example of co-operation among States. As to scientific co-operation, it is promoted and facilitated for the benefit of all States. The Treaty also encourages co-operative working relations with specialized agencies of the United Nations and other international organizations with a scientific or technological interest in Antarctica.

A matter of special concern is the protection of the environment. Since 1982 the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources has been in force. It established an international régime for that purpose, and it is open to all States, even if they are not Parties to the Treaty.

Previously, the Agreed Measures for the Conservation of Antarctic Fauna and Flora had been adopted in 1964, and the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals was agreed upon in 1972.

Regarding mineral resources, in 1977 the Consultative Parties agreed that these would not be explored for or exploited until the establishment of a régime in keeping with the protection of the ecology and with the purposes and principles of the Treaty. Subsequently, the Eleventh Consultative Meeting, held at Buenos Aires in 1981, approved a recommendation setting forth the principles to which such a régime would have to conform. Among those principles are the protection of the environment and the interests of all mankind.

We should also stress the constructive role of the Treaty regarding existing territorial claims. Article IV of the Treaty states that

(Mr. Beauge, Argentina)

"No acts or activities taking place while the present Treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica or create any rights of sovereignty in Antarctica." (United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 402, No. 5778, p. 71)

Another matter of great importance which needs to be reiterated here is the open nature of the Treaty. All State Members of the United Nations may accede to it without restrictions. States which are not Members of the United Nations may do so with the agreement of the Parties. The Treaty assigns the role of Consultative Party to States which carry out scientific activities in the area. In addition to the original signatories, Consultative Party status was accorded to Poland in 1977, to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1981, and, more recently, to Brazil and India. Member countries which are not Consultative Parties participated as observers at the last consultative meeting and, as has already been stated here, they are generally invited to participate in the expeditions or scientific work of the Consultative Parties.

In this debate an effort has been made to compare Antarctica with the sea-bed or with outer space. My delegation feels that this parallel is quite wrong. In Antarctica there is already an effective legal system that is open to all States; there is no legal vacuum. Nor is Antarctica a res nullius; on the contrary, there are various territorial claims to it. To try to extend to Antarctica principles that have been applied to completely different situations is a legal aberration and a denial of the facts.

Finally, my delegation wishes to refer briefly to the draft resolution now before the Committee in document A/C.1/38/L.80.

My delegation is confident that this draft resolution will lead to real knowledge of Antarctica and to a real appreciation of the characteristics of the Antarctic Treaty system. The study requested of the Secretary-General in paragraph 1 must take special account of those characteristics and, as the text says, it must be comprehensive, factual and objective. We also believe that the members of the Antarctic Treaty, through the experience they have acquired in their scientific research, will be in the best position to advise the Secretary-General in his study. We also consider that it is essential that there be no undue politicization of the question, for that would only weaken the existing international co-operation.

(Mr. Beauge, Argentina)

I should like to conclude with the words of the Foreign Minister of my country, Argentina, an Antarctic country, when he addressed the General Assembly on 26 September and referred to Antarctica.

"Bearing in mind the substantial contribution of the Treaty to the international community, my country firmly believes that any initiative by this Organization must lead to the consolidation of its provisions and the maintenance of a system that has proved effective." (A/38/PV.6, p.41)

Mr. KUNDA (Zambia): My delegation is grateful for this opportunity to participate in this important debate on the question of Antarctica.

Allow me to begin by welcoming to the First Committee once again Mr. Ustinov, the Under-Secretary-General responsible, among other things, for Antarctica. His presence in the Committee is an indication of the manifest interest that the United Nations takes in this particular issue.

I should also like to pay a fitting tribute to the delegations of Malaysia and Antigua and Barbuda for taking the initiative to have the issue of Antarctica discussed by the United Nations as an item on its own merits.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, at both the New Delhi summit meeting in March 1983 and the Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York last October, endorsed the proposal for consideration of the matter by the General Assembly. The objective is clearly that the General Assembly should undertake a comprehensive study on Antarctica, taking into account all relevant factors, including the Antarctic Treaty, with a view to widening international co-operation in the area. This is obviously important and necessary.

Furthermore, my delegation wishes to subscribe to the view that in the interest of all mankind, Antarctica should continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and that it should not become the scene or object of international discord. This should be accomplished by banning introduction of the arms race there.

We also believe that the exploitation of resources in Antarctica falls within the purview of international concern. It therefore requires the participation of all States in determining the type of régime which should be charged with the decision-making mechanism relative to Antarctica's growing importance in world affairs and above all in removing the inequalities within and without the present régime.

(Mr. Kunda, Zambia)

The mechanism that comes to mind is that posited by the United Nations. Antarctica's administration should come under the unfettered jurisdiction and control of the United Nations, since it is the only international Organization whose membership approximates total universality.

The current régime in Antarctica was established at a time when Antarctica was primarily of interest as a laboratory for scientific research and commercial and environmental concerns were merely matters of speculation. Today, however, interest in the barren and cold continent of Antarctica is no longer exclusively scientific. If anything, it is multifaceted. It relates to food, oil and natural gas. It also relates to such minerals as copper, coal, iron, lead, zinc, uranium, cobalt, tin, gold, silver and so on.

Today, in contrast with 1959, we live in a radically expanded world community characterized by economic interdependence and need, and by environmental deterioration, as well as strengthened institutions for international decision-making. The world political community has changed radically since territorial rights were first claimed in Antarctica - claims that to date have been denied universal recognition. Scores of newly independent States have joined the international community and are playing a role without precedent in history. To be sure, we live in a world in which many colonial empires have receded into history, as a result of the irresistible onslaught of decolonization.

One of the most important concepts to evolve out of the demise of the colonial empires relates to the obligation of equitable sharing of wealth and resources, especially of such an uninhabited continent as Antarctica. Since the resources of the Antarctic have from the historical perspective not been the subject of individual state appropriation and will remain that way, and since the colonial premise on which most of the third world was appropriated has now been rejected, it is only logical that the Antarctic resources should now come under "common heritage" governance.

In advocating the application of a "common heritage" régime to the Antarctic, my delegation draws inspiration and example from the 1967 Treaty on outer space, in which the international community agreed that the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of scientific development. Consequently, outer space was designated "the province of mankind". In pursuance of the "common heritage"

(Mr. Kunda, Zambia)

enterprise, the international community did evolve in 1979 yet another system in which the moon and its natural resources were declared "the common heritage of mankind". The principle of "common heritage" has also been successfully adapted or applied to the law of the sea régime by recognizing that areas beyond national jurisdiction belong to "the common heritage of mankind".

In all these examples, the underlying rationale was the retention of these environments for peaceful purposes for the common good of the human race. In all these cases, the banishment of the arms race from these environments is fundamental. The same elements are being advocated in respect of the "common heritage" application to Antarctica.

Furthermore, my delegation agrees with other delegations that find it repugnant that racist South Africa has been allowed to continue as a consultative party in the Antarctic régime when that State has been suspended from participation in the United Nations General Assembly. South Africa has been ostracized in the international community because it practises the system of apartheid which has been designated a crime against humanity. Continued unchallenged participation of South Africa in the Antarctic régime is a sign that the parties to the Antarctic régime can tolerate South Africa's obnoxious form of government, unlike the United Nations and other forums, which cannot tolerate South Africa's apartheid system. Zambia supports the view that South Africa must be excluded from the 1959 Treaty because it is a disgrace to human dignity and because it represents the political system of apartheid which is a crime against the human race.

Finally, my delegation also believes that - if the study envisaged in this exercise is not conducted, or if in other words the world is not given an opportunity to examine Antarctica closely; if there is, therefore, no end to the secret meetings of the Consultative Parties relative to the mineral régime and if this effort to be open about the development of Antarctica is frustrated - then conditions for discord and conflict will be created, placing the survival of all of us on the brink of unmitigated danger. This is what we should all strive to guard against by supporting the move for a comprehensive study on Antarctica by the General Assembly.

Mr. WASIUDDIN (Bangladesh): The Bangladesh delegation takes pleasure in participating in the debate on Antarctica, an item inscribed on the agenda of the General Assembly for the first time this year. We greatly appreciate that

(Mr. Wasiuddin, Bangladesh)

Malaysia, a close and friendly neighbour of Bangladesh, and Antigua and Barbuda, a fellow member of the Commonwealth, have come forward to introduce this very important subject for the consideration of the General Assembly.

Antarctica is separated from Bangladesh by a vast single stretch of water. It covers over six million square miles of territory and has considerable geophysical significance for the entire world. We share the view that Antarctica is a vast untapped continent which has considerable economic, environmental, climatic, geographical and scientific importance for the world at large.

We also find that a few fortunate and privileged nations having financial, scientific and technological capability have been exploring and carrying out scientific studies of this so far unknown region, under the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty, signed in 1959 by 12 nations and joined by 16 others when it came into force in 1961 and by some others subsequently.

We appreciate and acknowledge the pioneering spirit which inspired them to undertake exploration of this "unknown continent". That countries like Bangladesh, under colonial subjugation then, could not participate in the initial pioneering exploration and find it difficult to do so even now is a significant fact. It is also pertinent to mention that after gaining our independence, we found ourselves left far behind in the economic, scientific and technological development attained by the colonial Powers and others who were fortunate not to have been subjugated. There can be no doubt that it will take us quite a few years to attain the financial resources and scientific and technological know-how to carry out explorations ourselves.

It is this sense of non-participation in the important activities now taking place in the Antarctic by a privileged few - thereby making us completely dependent on them for the benefits to mankind that may come of it - which has prompted us to have the Antarctic, the common heritage of mankind, discussed in the United Nations, the highest international forum. It is for these reasons that Bangladesh has decided to co-sponsor draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.80, which was so eloquently and elaborately introduced by the representative of Antigua and Barbuda.

Let me here and now make it quite clear that our intention is definitely not to attack the Antarctic Treaty and its signatories or, for the moment, to demand a new treaty. We are of the opinion that the time has come to assert the interest of



(Mr. Wasiuddin, Bangladesh)

the developing countries in Antarctica, and we believe that, as a start, the United Nations should carry out a study of the situation now prevailing under the Antarctic Treaty and examine how its membership can be expanded.

We are perplexed by the concern shown by the Treaty countries over the move to have this matter of Antarctica discussed in the United Nations. Surely the best way to avoid confrontation on any issue which concerns the international community as a whole is to have a free and frank discussion here.

Bangladesh fully acknowledges that the Antarctic Treaty recognizes that, as a matter of principle,

"it is in the interests of all mankind that Antarctica shall continue for ever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord".

This is a most noble aim, which we fully support, and we can assure the Treaty countries that when we participate we shall maintain this aim. If the membership of South Africa, whose practice of the obnoxious system of apartheid, which is a crime to humanity, can be acceptable, it is for us a matter of gross humiliation and insult when it is implied that our participation could jeopardize the noble aim of the Treaty.

We fully appreciate what was done by the Parties to the Treaty in setting up a régime which is an outstanding example of international co-operation and amity, and we commend those countries for it. The Antarctic is a truly nuclear-free zone and completely demilitarized. That the two super-Powers have been working together in harmony and close co-operation is a matter of great satisfaction. How will it mar this excellent atmosphere if we become a member? We have no nuclear capability and have no desire to acquire one. Neither are we an armament-exporting country, and we have no aggressive designs to use Antarctica for the development of armaments.

We have been told that accession to the Treaty is open to all Members of the United Nations, and even to countries which are not Members. However, membership of the Consultative Council of the Treaty is restricted to those which can set up a scientific research station or send an exploratory expedition. This condition excludes the vast majority of the Members of the United Nations which genuinely and sincerely desire to participate in exploration and scientific research. This reminds one of the situation in India under British rule, when membership of social

(Mr. Wasiuddin, Bangladesh)

clubs was open to Indians, but they could not get in because of the electoral procedure of black-balling. It is this kind of condition that we seek to have examined, for it will be many years before Bangladesh is in a position to qualify. Our scientists and technicians will be left in the dark and deprived of the great scientific and technological knowledge that they could have gained by active participation.

We suggest that, instead of single-country membership, participation by a recognized and established regional or sub-regional group might also be considered. We also suggest that, as an immediate measure, affiliation of a developing country with one or more countries of the Treaty should be adopted.

There are many ways in which the participation of countries such as ours can be ensured. It is, therefore, with a sincere and genuine desire to have these problems examined that we have suggested a study by the United Nations on Antarctica. We assure all concerned that it is not our desire to meddle with the Treaty, or to destroy the peace and harmony prevailing in Antarctica under it. Our sentiments and spirit are as noble as those of the nations that founded the Treaty and the régime.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/38/L.80.

We also have before us, in document A/C.1/38/L.84, an amendment to the draft resolution, which has been distributed in blue and which is before all delegations. The amendment was submitted by the delegation of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group.

I am sure that all members of the Committee have taken due note of the strong views expressed by members of the African Group and others about South Africa's continuing to be a Party to the Treaty and about its participation in any future co-operative efforts regarding Antarctica. However, I appeal to the delegation of Sierra Leone and, through Ambassador Koroma, to all members of the African Group not to pursue the amendment at this time.

In this connection I stress that the draft resolution limits itself to requesting

"the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive, factual and objective study on all aspects of Antarctica, taking fully into account the Antarctic Treaty system and other relevant factors".

(The Chairman)

Furthermore, I draw attention to the fourth preambular paragraph, which states that account should be taken of the debate on this item. I also draw attention to the fact that Member States will have an opportunity to submit their views on various aspects of the question of Antarctica to the Secretary-General, since operative paragraph 2 requests him "to seek the views of all Member States in the preparation of the study". It is my understanding that the Secretary-General will be expected to take into account in the preparation of his report the stand of the African Group and others.

If the delegation of Sierra Leone, on behalf of the African Group, is generous enough to accede to my appeal, I understand that the Committee will be able to adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/38/L.80 without a vote.

Mr. ZAINAL ABIDIN (Malaysia): My delegation associates itself completely with your statement and your appeal, Mr. Chairman. In preparing the study, the Secretary-General should take seriously the views of a significant number of delegations put forward during this debate regarding South Africa's participation in the Antarctic Treaty system. The draft resolution clearly provides in the preamble that the debate on this item should be taken into account by the Secretary-General. He is also requested in an operative paragraph to seek the views of all Member States in the preparation of the study.

I wish to add that my delegation shares completely the concern of our colleagues about South African participation. I wish to reaffirm the position of my Government in this regard.

Mr. WOOLCOTT (Australia): The draft resolution before us in document A/C.1/38/L.80 was the product of a long and very delicate series of negotiations between its sponsors, on the one hand, and the members of the Antarctic Treaty, on the other, in which I, as Chairman of the Group, was closely involved. It has been the hope of all delegations which participated in those negotiations that this draft resolution could be carried by consensus.

I therefore associate my delegation with the views that you have outlined, Mr. Chairman, and those of my Malaysian colleague. I would also join in appealing to the representative of Sierra Leone to withdraw the amendment contained in document A/C.1/38/L.84 which he has co-sponsored on behalf of the African Group, and I would appeal to him in these circumstances not to proceed with their proposed amendment.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

I should like to add that my delegation understands fully the abhorrence with which apartheid is viewed and we have taken full note of the views which have been expressed in the proposed amendment on behalf of the African Group. It is clear that the draft resolution before us does require the Secretary-General to take into account the debate on this item, and also to seek the views of all Member States. I believe these two provisions will enable the views outlined in the proposed amendment to be fully reflected.

Mr. KOROMA (Sierra Leone): The African Group of the First Committee, in line with its objective of extending the frontiers of peace and economic development, supported both the inscription and consideration of the question of Antarctica.

Furthermore, although the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 involves only a limited group of States, we have nevertheless supported the purposes and objectives of the convention. We support the objective of maintaining Antarctica exclusively for peaceful uses as a nuclear-free zone and the prohibition of all activities of a military character.

On the other hand, it is a matter of regret and concern to the African Group, and evidently to many other delegations present here in this Committee, that one of the parties to the Treaty, namely, the apartheid régime of South Africa, which does not share the aims and objectives of the Treaty, should remain a party to that Treaty. The African Group believes that it will be in the interest of the international community to exclude South Africa from the Treaty and not to allow it to participate in any future co-operative effort on Antarctica.

As we all know, not only is the South African régime not trustworthy, but it cannot be relied upon to uphold the purposes and objectives of the present Treaty - or any future treaty, for that matter, that will emerge.

It is for this and similar reasons, and because of the unrepresentative character of that régime, that South Africa was excluded from the recently concluded Conference on the Law of the Sea. Be that as it may, and in the light of the appeals made by you, Mr. Chairman, and our friends from Malaysia and Australia, the African Group will not at this stage press its amendment to a vote. We nevertheless expect the Secretary-General to take into account the expressed views of the African States in implementing the draft resolution which is about to be adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Koroma for his generous co-operation and would ask him to convey my gratitude to the other members of the African Group. I now call on the Secretary of the Committee to respond to a question by Malaysia.

Mr. RATHORE (Secretary of the Committee): I have been instructed to assure the representative of Malaysia that the Secretariat will endeavour to comply fully with the mandate of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/38/L.80.

The CHAIRMAN: We will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.80.

May I consider that those delegations, if any, that wish to explain their vote will do so after we have taken action on the draft resolution?

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: Draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.80 was introduced by the representative of Malaysia at the 43rd meeting of the First Committee on 29 November 1983. It is co-sponsored by the following countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey and Uganda.

The sponsors of this draft resolution have expressed their wish that the draft resolution be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, may I take it that the Committee wishes to adopt draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.80 without a vote?

Draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.80 was adopted.

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

Mr. ZEGERS (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Chile did not object to the consensus that has emerged in the Committee because of the following matters on which there is an understanding: the study of the Secretary-General will be strictly factual. It must be based on the realities of Antarctica, on the Treaty and on the system that governs it legally. The Secretary-General should in particular consult with the countries which are carrying out scientific research in Antarctica, that is with the active Parties to the Treaty.

As regards paragraph 3, which authorizes the Secretary-General to request additional assistance, that must depend in all cases on those consulted "having scientific or technical information on Antarctica" of an objective nature.

(Mr. Zegers, Chile)

Finally, the understanding is that the future treatment of this item will respect the existing legal system in Antarctica.

Mr. GUMUCIO GRANIER (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): Bolivia joined the consensus in supporting the draft resolution because we wished to support the idea of the Secretary-General's carrying out a broad factual study of all aspects of Antarctica. We think that this will be the first step towards a humanist approach to the continent, for the benefit of all mankind in the twenty-first century.

Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria): The delegation of Nigeria joined in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.80 on the explicit understanding which was reached in this Committee a little while ago that the Secretary-General, in carrying out the study which has been entrusted to him in this draft resolution, will refrain from dealing directly with South Africa in relation to the study.

The CHAIRMAN: If no other delegation wishes to speak on this subject, the Committee has concluded its consideration of agenda item 140, Question of Antarctica.

AGENDA ITEMS 56 AND 63 (g)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.54/Rev.2

WORLD DISARMAMENT CAMPAIGN: draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.61/Rev.1 and amendments (A/C.1/38/L.73, L.78, L.81 and L.82)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now turn to draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.54/Rev.2.

This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of France at the thirty-third meeting of the First Committee, on 17 November, and is sponsored by France, Ivory Coast, Mali and Zaire.

If there are no comments, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution L.54/Rev.2

The sponsors of this draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection I shall take it that the Committee wishes to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.54/Rev.2 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those delegations that wish to speak in explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The position of the Soviet delegation on this draft resolution devoted to the relationship between disarmament and development takes into account the improvements made to the original text in the course of consultations. We have also taken into account the appeal made to us by the sponsors of the draft resolution and by a large number of non-aligned countries.

The Soviet Union cannot fail to share the profound concern of the overwhelming majority of countries of the world at the fact that imperialist circles are heating up the arms race, pouring in even more billions of dollars - at a time when a considerable part of the population of the world does not have enough to eat, suffers from disease and cannot obtain elementary education, medical assistance and so on. As was stressed recently by President Yuri Andropov:

"Humanity has too many tasks which are not being accomplished because of the vast material, intellectual and other resources being diverted from this purpose. From that standpoint the achievement of agreement on the radical reduction in the quantity of nuclear and other weapons would be of benefit for all peoples."

We are profoundly convinced that the prevention of a nuclear war and the achievement of real progress in disarmament are the basic premises for the liberation of supplementary funds for purposes of development, particularly the development of the developing countries.

In paragraph 1 of the resolution it is correctly pointed out that precisely the resources released as a result of a reduction of expenditures on weapons could serve to promote growth and stability of the world economy. The Soviet Union does not object to an examination of possible organizational measures in connection with the transfer of funds released as a result of a disarmament programme which would be of particular assistance to the developing countries. We also assume that the distribution of such funds would proceed on a just basis, taking into account the most urgent needs and requirements of the recipient countries, and without any discrimination. At the same time, the delegation of the Soviet Union is decisively opposed to the idea of creating a fund known as disarmament for development, which is quite removed from the reduction of military budgets or the implementation of disarmament measures, for example by means of a tax on military expenditures.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

This position of principle will govern our attitude to the question of the conference which is mentioned in the draft resolution. We thought it necessary to discuss these matters in detail, inasmuch as certain provisions of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.54/Rev.2, in particular paragraph 2, are not only insufficiently balanced but even ambiguous. In this regard, we note that, overall, paragraph 2 is procedural in character and does not predetermine any decisions on the matters covered.

Taking into account these various circumstances, and regardless of certain inadequacies of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.54/Rev.2, the Soviet delegation found it possible not to object to its adoption without a vote. This position, however, should not be interpreted as some sort of change in our attitude towards resolution 37/84, which is referred to in this draft resolution.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): My delegation is pleased to have been able to give its approval to draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.54/Rev.2 in order to testify to its conviction of the significance of the subject.

I should, however, like to point out that the reservations made by my delegation in earlier phases of discussion of the subject, and, indeed, our general approach to it, remain entirely valid. I should particularly like to draw attention to the contribution of an expert from my country to the United Nations study on the relationship between disarmament and development, and the views he brought forth on that occasion, as well as various explanations of vote made at the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh sessions of the General Assembly.

In our view, one of the prerequisites for a successful implementation of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.54/Rev.2 would be that participating Member States communicating their views and proposals to the Secretary-General, agree on the crucial significance of transparency and on comparability of defence expenditures of States of different regions and different budgetary systems for the attainment of a reduction of military expenditures. When dealing with the subject matter of ways and means for the further promotion of the objective of the draft resolution, States should carefully consider the problems of the various possibilities of bringing about any institutional relationships between disarmament and development. In this context, I should like to refer in particular to the explanation of vote of the Federal Republic of Germany at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly with respect to resolution 37/84.



(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic  
of Germany)

In the view of my delegation, care would also be advised in entrusting new assignments to the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at too early a juncture. The present agenda of the UNDC is already quite complete and it would certainly be wise for the members of the Commission to see to it that tasks already in hand, in an operational sense, be brought to a good end before additional work is considered.

The CHAIRMAN: That completes the Committee's action on draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.54/Rev.2.

The Committee will now take up draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.61/Rev.1, with amendments L.73, L.78, L.81 and L.82. The Committee should also be informed that the Chair received additional amendments a short while ago.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): Several weeks ago my delegation had the honour to introduce on behalf of a number of States a draft resolution on the relationship of peace and disarmament movements to the World Disarmament Campaign. We were prompted to undertake that initiative by our conviction that a free and unfettered discussion of disarmament issues throughout the world would build international trust and confidence and thereby contribute to the development of real and effective arms control agreements. Lack of communication is frequently the true enemy of peaceful relations amongst States and, therefore, a proper target for the World Disarmament Campaign. We believe that the absence of open communication breeds mistrust and misunderstanding and creates forces whose power is protected and nurtured by secrecy and censorship. Our goal in putting forward this draft resolution was to focus on this problem and encourage a free flow of information in implementation of the World Disarmament Campaign.

We have worked with our co-sponsors and other interested delegations in an effort to find consensus language which would reflect our original intention. Regrettably, we have failed in this seemingly modest but by no means unimportant task. In fact, it is now apparent that the amendments to A/C.1/38/L.61 that are now before the Committee would, if adopted, result in a significant change in the focus and intent of the draft resolution. These proposed amendments seek to redirect the draft resolution to such an extent that they pervert its basic objective. Given the customary voting patterns in this Committee, I regret to say

(Mr. Fields, United States)

there is little doubt that these amendments, despite their destructive character, will be adopted. It is, therefore, with the greatest regret and reluctance that we have decided not to pursue draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.61.

At this moment, I cannot help but observe that the amendments to our initiative have been submitted by some of the most vociferous supporters of the World Disarmament Campaign, who also evidently have the most to fear from a genuinely universal and balanced campaign.

Before concluding, I should like to take this opportunity to thank our co-sponsors and those other delegations which have worked with us in an effort to secure a meaningful resolution. Further, let me assure you that the United States determination to pursue the goal of this draft resolution is not diminished by this regrettable situation, and we will seek in every way and in every appropriate forum ways to press this important issue. It shall not go away, with the consent and abetting of the United States of America.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I wish to speak to draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.61/Rev.1, which deals with the very important subject of the role of peace and disarmament movements. We have just heard the representative of the United States say that he has decided to ask that that draft resolution not be put to the vote, but I would remind all delegations that according to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly a draft resolution which has been the subject of amendments or sub-amendments is no longer the property of the original sponsors, but becomes the property of the sponsors of the amendments.

The Soviet delegation is not a sponsor of any of the amendments to this draft resolution, so it is up to the sponsors themselves to decide whether they agree not to put the draft resolution to the vote, but I should like to make some remarks about the substance of the draft resolution, which is, on the whole, a good one.

The present size and scope of the anti-military movement bring to mind the words spoken by the great French scientist, Frederic Joliot-Curie, at the first world peace conference, held at Paris in 1949. He said at that time:

"We are met here not to beg for peace, but to compel the authors of war to abandon their evil plans."

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In my delegation's view, the theme of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.61/Rev.1 is exceptionally timely, as is paragraph 3. That paragraph expresses regret that some citizens and peace groups have met with difficulties in engaging in activities promoting peace and disarmament. Yes indeed: we need only leaf through the newspapers of any country in the world, or turn on our televisions or radios, to learn of the disturbing actions taken by the authorities in certain Western countries against demonstrators in favour of halting the arms race and preventing nuclear war. Recently, the Washington Post reported the arrest of 189 pro-nuclear freeze demonstrators in Nebraska, and, with a great sense of indignation, we have seen participants in anti-war demonstrations beaten in the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany and other countries.

That is why we consider that resolutions in connection with agenda item 63 (g) are very important. We found the amendments submitted to draft resolution L.61/Rev.1 acceptable. We cannot understand why the sponsors of the draft resolution had problems with them, particularly the Bulgarian amendment, which actually reflects the spirit of last year's consensus resolution. It would not have been a bad idea to have an additional draft resolution on the World Disarmament Campaign to inspire the defenders of peace, the opponents of the arms race and those in favour of preventing nuclear war, and to encourage the anti-war movement, which has now spread to all parts of the world.

Having taken note of the United States statement, I believe that the Committee should now resolve, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the question of its next actions.

The CHAIRMAN: In reply to the procedural point raised by the representative of the Soviet Union, I wish to make it clear that a draft resolution remains the property of its sponsors until it has actually been amended. Rule 122 of the Assembly's rules of procedure states that

"A motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the motion has not been amended. A motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any member."

(The Chairman)

Thus the draft resolution remains the property of the United States and the other sponsors and, as the Committee heard, the United States has decided, in consultation with the other sponsors, not to pursue the draft resolution at this session. The United States delegation has every right to do that.

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation was not among the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.61/Rev.1, but we would have been inclined to vote in favour of it. We feel that it would have been genuinely useful and that it deals with a problem of unquestionable importance.

My delegation wishes, however, to say that the amendments put forward would certainly have altered that hypothetical vote -

The CHAIRMAN: It seems to me that the representative of France is in the process of explaining his vote on a draft resolution which is actually no longer before us. The delegation of the United States has stated that this matter is not to be pursued, and I would ask all representatives not to proceed to explain their votes on draft resolutions or amendments which are no longer before us.

I might also recall that - as I trust no one has forgotten - delegations had the opportunity in our four weeks of general debate to express their views on this and other matters, and that members of the Committee are by now rather well acquainted with the views of the various delegations.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): I do not intend to comment on the somewhat curious - if not enigmatic - statement by the representative of the Soviet Union. I think the overwhelming number of delegations in this Committee know which countries are free and where information and speech are free and they know those where any expression of political thought is penalized or punished or castigated or followed up by deprivation of status in many forms. I will not belabour the point.

I should like to speak as a sponsor of the draft resolution which has now, unfortunately, been withdrawn and voice my regret. I make a point of -

The CHAIRMAN: I ask for co-operation, Ambassador Wegener. First of all, I have said that there should be no explanations of vote and, of course, you say that you are not explaining your vote - which you could not have done anyhow since you are a sponsor. You are actually doubly wrong: you are a sponsor of a draft resolution which is no longer before us. That means to me, logically, that you should preferably not proceed to make a statement. I appeal to you also to assist me in not opening up a big debate on this issue here.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): I should like to make a statement of principle, which has only marginally to do with the subject matter of the draft resolution. I should like to voice my regret that the draft resolution was intentionally studded with amendments which were there not to amplify it but to destroy it, and that I think is a bad process from which we should not learn lessons. I think it would have been fair for the delegation which had submitted this draft resolution to have had its say and to have had the opportunity to put its own draft resolution to a vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the delegation of Mongolia on a point of order.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, I apologize for interrupting the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany. On behalf of the Mongolian delegation I request that you proceed as you have, Sir, in respect of the rules of procedure.

The CHAIRMAN: I intend to do so. With these remarks I intend to close the consideration of this issue.

We have thus concluded action on all the disarmament items, except the question of the Indian Ocean, which I expect we shall take up on Friday.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.