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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway)

later: Mr. ELFAKI (Sudan)

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ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 43 to 63, 139, 141, 143 and 144 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now begin taking decisions on all the draft resolutions under cluster 3. Then, as I announced yesterday, we shall proceed to those in clusters 5, 6, 7 and 8 and then revert to those listed under cluster 4. When we have finished with those clusters we shall proceed with clusters 9, 10 and so on as they are listed in the clusters document which, I trust, all representatives have.

As I indicated yesterday - and the Committee approved my suggestion - we shall start by hearing those delegations wishing to speak on the draft resolutions listed in all the clusters I have just mentioned, relating to nuclear issues - that is, statements of a more general character on the draft resolutions listed under those clusters. We shall then take up the draft resolutions cluster by cluster, and I shall call on those delegations wishing to explain their votes before we take action on the draft resolutions listed under each cluster. After having taken action on the draft resolutions listed in each cluster, I shall call on those delegations wishing to explain their votes after the voting. We shall then repeat the same procedure for each cluster.

I now call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. RATHORE (Secretary of the Committee): I should like to inform the Committee that the following countries have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: A/C.1/38/L.19, Congo; L.26/Rev.1, Congo and Upper Volta; L.27, Congo and Upper Volta; L.33/Rev.1, Mozambique; L.36, Ireland; L.37, Uruguay; L.41, Belgium and Ireland; L.48, Indonesia; L.49, Uruguay; L.50, Canada and Nigeria; L.51, Djibouti, Kuwait and Mauritania; L.52, Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom; L.54, Ivory Coast; L.55, Viet Nam; and L.56/Rev.1, Costa Rica.

Mr. WOOLCOTT (Australia): This session of the First Committee provides the first opportunity for Australia to cast its votes on the critical issues of disarmament and arms control since the election of a new Australian Government in March this year. We therefore deem it appropriate that, in translating our new disarmament policies into voting on draft resolutions, we should explain the decisions we have made and the factors we have taken into account. This applies particularly to the range of nuclear issues before us today.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

Australia has looked carefully at each draft resolution this year with fresh eyes and from a new vantage point. We have, where possible, taken them on their merits. It will be noted that we have voted on a number of issues in a different way from previous years. On others we have continued with our previous voting pattern, in some instances for different reasons. Where we abstain in the vote or cast a negative vote, we do so regretfully.

As an example of where our voting is changing, Australia will this year be moving from a negative vote to an abstention on draft resolutions on a nuclear-weapon freeze. We have made this move in response to the growing public concern over the dangers of nuclear war and the need for urgent preventive action. However, none of the draft resolutions on a freeze that are currently before us - and we deeply regret this - provides the balance and verifiability crucial to maintaining stability and confidence. Without that confidence, the world will not be a safer place. We would urge that next year the sponsors of these draft resolutions look seriously to securing consensus support by adding the essential ingredient of strict and effective verification. One of the most important criteria we have used is, therefore, whether a particular initiative would ultimately lead us towards viable, balanced disarmament measures, protective of every State's national security.

Another criterion by which we have examined this year's draft resolutions - one which obviously reflects our concern for viability and balance - is the extent to which such draft resolutions attempt to score points, promote propagandistic aims or sow discord rather than improve the atmosphere for negotiations. Draft resolutions of the First Committee rely heavily on moral force: draft resolutions which must be dismissed as mere words debase the currency of the General Assembly and reduce the potential for good, positive action for disarmament. Australia has a firm distaste for such draft resolutions and, other considerations being equal, we shall vote against them. In this respect I wish to mention draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.1, L.10 and L.13.

A most important criterion for Australia is the question of consensus. We believe it is only through agreement by all parties concerned that any real progress can be made in the field of disarmament. Measures which negatively affect the national security interests of any State or group of States are not likely to enhance international peace and security or provide the climate for real arms reduction and eventual disarmament.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

Australia is pleased at the number of consensus draft resolutions emerging this year. We have in our consultations attempted to convince others of the merits of consensus. In some cases there has been a good outcome.

We note in particular the item on the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and hope that this draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

On the other hand, we regret to note that consensus has not been possible on an issue of decisive importance at this time. I speak of the emergence of three draft resolutions on bilateral arms negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Australia attempted to impress on the initial sponsors of the draft resolution concerning intermediate-range nuclear forces, the delegation of Romania, that we would support and indeed co-sponsor a draft resolution that attracted consensus. This was a principled stand: we judged that all nations had a right to express, in a General Assembly resolution, their interest in seeing a successful conclusion of the negotiations in Geneva.

We regret deeply that, despite our efforts, draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, as finally presented, has moved further away from achieving consensus. This has resulted in a proliferation of texts, including one from the socialist group and one from the West. We would have much preferred for there to have been one consensus text. As a result, Australia will vote against draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2 and A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1, which we regard as unbalanced and not likely to enhance the prospect of success. We shall vote for draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63, which is the draft resolution we judge least prejudicial to the success of the intermediate-range nuclear forces negotiations. These negotiations are at a crucial juncture. Australia believes this Committee has a responsibility both to encourage and to avoid jeopardizing in any way the successful outcome we all seek. In our view only a consensus can achieve that end.

Australia will, of course, be voting for those draft resolutions which fulfil the important criteria I have spoken of: that is draft resolutions which hold out real hope for forward movement in disarmament. I would draw attention, particularly in this regard, to draft resolutions in the area of outer space, chemical weapons, the World Disarmament Campaign and nuclear test-ban treaty negotiations.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): I should also like to give the general views of my Government on the nuclear issues which we shall be dealing with in the next two days of voting. I speak within this general opportunity to express views, although in my statement I shall address a number of clusters and draft resolutions in particular, specifically voting clusters 4 and 6, which are interrelated. I can already announce, at this juncture, that my delegation will cast a negative vote, among others, on draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.1, L.10, L.55, L.2, L.34 and L.43.

In stating the fundamental reasons for this position, I shall more specifically again address draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.1/Rev.1 and L.2, both submitted by the delegation of the Soviet Union.

My delegation has dealt with the issues inherent in these two draft resolutions on many occasions, both in the Assembly and in the Committee on Disarmament. It has also offered a comprehensive critique of the views expounded in these draft resolutions in its contribution to the general debate of the First Committee on 21 October. I should like to recall the salient features of our views, starting with some general observations.

The draft resolutions I have just referred to are generally considered under the heading "Prevention of nuclear war". My delegation agrees that the prevention of nuclear war is one of the most acute and pressing tasks of our time. We affirm categorically that nuclear war is unacceptable but then, all wars are unacceptable. No Government represented in this room would ever consider the launching of a nuclear conflict. By the same token, any imputation of such intentions to any Government is irresponsible and has no basis in fact. Any process of intention of this kind should be banned from our debates, least of all should such horrifying intentions be attributed to the member countries of the Atlantic Alliance, which have made it clear beyond any ambiguity that they reject any nuclear warfare scenario or doctrine and that their defensive alliance is rigorously and solely based on the principle of prevention of war. We should, therefore, all agree that the real purpose of our work, in the First Committee as elsewhere, is not recrimination but the serious search for the most effective method of accomplishing the objective of preventing war, including nuclear conflict.

Agreement that nuclear war must be condemned is so self-evident that no special resolution is needed to confirm that shared belief. Neither do we need a

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Republic of Germany)

further dramatization of nuclear war and relevant scenarios, nor do we need to generate nuclear fears. Nuclear war is not imminent, and a nuclear war proper will not be fought if the international community takes realistic and responsible measures for the prevention of war. If the Soviet Union continues to dramatize the situation and to complain of a war hysteria, it should be told that this is a self-inflicted evil. The Soviet Union has started the arousal of this fear, stirring it up anew day by day. But our task is not to contribute to the deliberate incitement of a war psychosis; it is to create conditions for a joint effort to prevent all armed conflicts.

The prevention of nuclear war is not accomplished by individual, arbitrarily selected and ill-balanced measures. A comprehensive strategy is needed.

Such a strategy must start from the Charter of the United Nations and its prohibition of the threat and use of force. The United Nations Charter bans all wars and does not single out any mode of warfare, starting from the realistic assumption that if there is no war, there will be no nuclear war. In order to make this pivotal command of the United Nations Charter effective and concrete, we need an interrelated set of policies addressed to the reduction of crises and tension, a sensible crisis management, the observation of international law in all its manifestations, the exercise of restraint on the part of all countries, including the nuclear-weapon States. We need to maximize international co-operation and the enhancement of available procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes, wider use of regional security arrangements, an improved régime of non-proliferation and many other appropriate measures.

With regard to security and disarmament proper, the key concept for the prevention of nuclear war and all armed conflict is a balance of forces at the lowest possible level. International efforts have to aim at the attainment of lower points of equilibrium of force relationships and, thereby, at the substantial reduction of weapons under the circumstances of undiminished security and adequate international verification. The most solid guarantee for the preservation of peace and the prevention of nuclear war is a balance of forces at the lowest possible level of armaments, a stable equilibrium on global, regional and sub-regional levels. There is now a tremendous opportunity for the reduction of nuclear weapons and the attainment of such equilibrium points at substantially lower levels.

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Republic of Germany)

Let me translate these basic tenets into the views of my delegation on the draft resolutions most prominently in view.

First, draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.1/Rev.1, on the condemnation of nuclear war. It deals with that question only on the surface. This self-evident and non-controversial objective is in reality misused as a vehicle for a different message. In effect, the Soviet draft resolution constitutes only the current version of the perennial Soviet draft resolutions on the proposal of nuclear non-first-use. Whenever commenting in the past on resolutions of this type, my delegation has underlined that the concept of non-first-use must be judged by whether it meets the overriding commands of the United Nations Charter and whether it prevents nuclear war effectively.

The Charter does not condemn nuclear war alone; it condemns all wars. A non-first-use concept limited to one weapon system, as contained in the Soviet draft resolution, substantially weakens the interdiction of force as contained in the Charter. It beclouds the necessity of preventing wars of all kinds. The fact that the Soviet draft resolution does not mention conventional wars of the kind currently being fought in various parts of the world is not a chance omission. In singling out one particular mode of warfare, one implicitly condones other modes of waging war and they would appear less stigmatized or even moderately acceptable. Anyone who undertakes not to make first use of a specific type of weapon obviously intends to reserve the right to use other weapons. That is the attitude of a Power which feels it has superiority in these weapons. Nobody can expect the inferior side to applaud such a position.

I should again like to recall in this context that the Federal Republic of Germany, upon acquiring sovereignty, signed an agreement renouncing nuclear weapons altogether. By virtue of this renunciation we insist on the right not to be threatened by such weapons and if that threat persists to secure the protection of an ally. That is why the Soviet proposal is not acceptable to my country, whose security, given the overwhelming nuclear and conventional threat hanging over it, ultimately depends on the nuclear shield of the United States.

By reinforcing existing imbalances, the nuclear non-first-use concept makes the outbreak of war more probable and negates the inherent dangers of escalation as much as the devastating effect of conventional weapons of our day. If deterrence proper cannot operate, wars in Europe would again become feasible and possible.

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Republic of Germany)

In addition, the nuclear non-first-use concept, like the freeze, to which I shall refer shortly, has no lever to deal with existing nuclear arsenals. They and the threatening effects that emanate from them would remain for ever with us. No incentive would be evident to propel us towards their eventual elimination.

I shall now deal briefly with the question of a freeze, and specifically draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.2. As in the case of previous statements on this issue, the Committee will understand my assessing this proposal against the background of the military situation with which my country, in particular, and also a number of non-European countries see themselves confronted. It is a situation in which the Soviet Union, in addition to its expanding conventional capabilities, has in recent years rapidly and continuously increased its nuclear potential. In a short while my delegation will speak separately on the issue of intermediate-range nuclear forces and bring out this point forcefully.

Again, our arguments against the freeze are well known. I should first like to point to the inherent contradiction between the words and the deeds of the Soviet Union. If a nuclear freeze is so important to the Soviet Union, why are the appeals for it so recent in date and so pressing now? Why was the freeze not accepted when the United States proposed it in the framework of the Baruch Plan, coupled with a total renunciation of national possession of nuclear weapons? Why does the Soviet Union not stop building nuclear weapons and not stop building new SS-20 missiles week after week, year after year? Is the freeze, in their eyes, only an instrument to sanction and eternalize military predominance and a one-sided potential for political blackmail? Why has the Soviet Union since 1977 uninterruptedly produced and deployed the SS-20 weapon systems - which, I emphasize, are directed not at the United States but against the Soviet Union's European and Asian neighbours - in spite of the fact that there are no comparable weapons in those countries and, therefore, no comparable threat to the Soviet Union? It is the view of my delegation that freeze proposals coming from the Soviet Union at this time remain a doubtful proposition as long as these questions do not find their reply.

It results from my query, I am sure, that a freeze can be justified only if the participants in a freeze decision fully enjoy and preserve their right to security; in other words, if there is a genuine balance both in the global context and at relevant sub-global levels. Every advocate of the freeze concept must

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Republic of Germany)

therefore realize that, at this juncture, a freeze proposal is tantamount to expecting the European countries to acquiesce in a codification of Soviet superiority and to live with that threat for an indefinite period, unable to resort to adequate countermeasures.

One of the psychological flaws of the freeze is, in addition, that it destroys the incentive for deep cuts and genuine reduction of nuclear weapons, by separating arbitrarily the two components of the concept of halting and reversing the arms race. In the East-west context, which depends on a balanced nuclear relationship between the two major Powers, the mere continued existence of such vastly superior arsenals in one region produces negative psychological results, instilling fear and mistrust and deeply affecting the general political atmosphere.

My delegation has often referred to the necessity that any freeze, should it come about in a balanced situation and thus be acceptable, needs adequate verification embodied in firm contractual commitments. I acknowledge that the call for appropriate verification is also contained in draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.2. It should, however, be noted that an agreement on a verified freeze could hardly be reached more rapidly than a much more effective and much more urgently needed agreement on arms reduction.

While my country is deeply convinced of the necessity to prevent nuclear war, it must also insist that, under the United Nations Charter, this objective must be firmly embedded in the prevention of all armed conflict. What we need is not an arbitrarily singling out of individual measures, measures which give unilateral advantages to one group of States and diminish the security of others, but a comprehensive strategy for the prevention of war and nuclear war. This strategy must start from the Charter and its interdiction of the threat or use of force. One important task in our endeavours must be to give more substance to the prohibition of the threat or use of force in the practice of mutual relations among States. In this connection I should like to recall several initiatives taken by my delegation both in this Assembly and in the Committee on Disarmament.

We stand ready to join in any venture which in our view could make a more forceful and effective contribution to the prevention of nuclear war and other forms of armed conflict. We have a broad range of possibilities to deal with that subject even below the level of the controversial strategic doctrines. We must be

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more imaginative in devising ways by mutual agreement to make the outbreak of nuclear war, and war in general, by accident or miscalculation impossible. We could do more to regulate the behaviour of States in the pre-war stage with a view to preventing or better managing crises on a global or regional level. Confidence-building measures, among others, are an essential ingredient of such a comprehensive political strategy aimed at the prevention of nuclear war and armed conflict. In the view of my delegation, it would be an important step to continue to develop an interrelated set of tools for the prevention of war in the form of appropriate and practical negotiable measures. We look forward to an intensive, substantive debate on these issues in the Conference on Disarmament, where the subject of the prevention of war, including all related matters, is now on the agenda and should be tackled as a priority in an appropriate work format. An earnest process of identifying such suitable comprehensive measures should urgently take the place of certain arbitrarily chosen one-sided measures of limited effectiveness, such as are proposed in draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.1/Rev.1 and A/C.1/38/L.2.

Mr. GAUCI (Malta): Over the past decade or so, a counter-productive tendency has crept into the procedures of this Committee. Each year progressively, we have been overwhelmed by a steadily-growing avalanche of draft resolutions presented for decision at the end of the general debate on disarmament items, in particular on nuclear disarmament. Concurrently, additional "items" on disarmament or on its various components have kept piling up at a conservative average of at least two a year. What is even more disquieting is that this inundation apparently stands little chance or at least shows no sign of drying up.

In these circumstances we are once more being called upon to take decisions which places many of us, perhaps most of us, in an awkward situation, since overlapping and even repetition among the draft resolutions is rife.

I intend to make one statement to cover all draft resolutions before us, in particular those falling under clusters 3, 4 and 5. Most draft resolutions set desirable objectives. It is the way in which these objective are sought that causes the difficulties.

New ideas on disarmament are admittedly very hard to come by, but we should at least refrain from drowning the few precious ones we have in a flood of impractical resolutions. They have now become a repetitive litany: tall on good intentions,

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short on practical application. More ominously, they stand in marked contrast to what some of the proponents of the same draft resolutions actually decree as national policy outside these halls.

Resolutions have as a result become a fairy tale: in Shakespeare's words, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing". But surely, we should not be seeking the drums of propaganda, but rather a measured, practical approach towards attaining concrete results.

One disturbing fact about this situation is that we might be deluding ourselves, perhaps even inducing outside observers into believing, that the First Committee is doing useful and abundant work. The unfortunate truth, of course, is that we are merely substituting an accumulation of paper to replace the far more elusive, far more demanding but much more rewarding agreement necessary for substantive, implementable ideas that can truly be said, and demonstrably proved, to contribute usefully to the cherished cause of disarmament.

For a number of years now my delegation has had to content itself with forcefully drawing attention to this fact - one which last year, for instance, we referred to as a proliferation of resolutions. In the relatively more leisurely and less dangerous past, this unfortunate tendency was perhaps only irritating and its adverse repercussions could be contained. But now that the military confrontation has reached the peak of danger, we have to call a halt and take a firm stand.

Let us briefly look at the evidence. The agenda for the First Committee in today's Journal, if anyone has even glanced at it, looks like a jungle of hieroglyphics. It stands in marked contrast to the agenda items both in the plenary Assembly and in the other Committees. I have also made a quick calculation. The 68 draft resolutions now before the First Committee total around 90 pages, on average approaching 500 words to a page, thus constituting a grand total of 45,000 words. Do we or does the world really need 45,000 words to describe the failure of the disarmament process and the danger we face? If we ourselves find this indigestible, I leave it to the imagination of each one of us to gauge the acute appendicitis, not to mention the disbelieving bewilderment and dissatisfaction, of the ordinary man in the street, for whose theoretical ultimate benefit the application of these resolutions is intended. Do we indeed have to convey by our divided votes only the lamentable chasm between East and West? Could we not at least convey an evaluation of some areas of convergence and of a determination to recognize division and work for its reduction?

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Permit me one more calculation. Even if we assume, generously, that we will manage to maintain the number of resolutions this year at 60, and with an even more generous calculation of only 10 operative paragraphs for each resolution, we would then have 600 annual recommendations demanding priority attention in the disarmament bodies. How these bodies can be expected to agree on priority among these 600 recommendations allocated to them defies the imagination and has proved in reality to be impossible, even if the Committee on Disarmament were completely objective - which, of course, it is not. I have deliberately left out the preambular paragraphs in my calculations, because I suspect that, if I were to include them, even a mechanical calculator would have a rejectionist fit. What my delegation finds even more disturbing is that, while we wallow in the confusion of our own creation, technology marches inexorably forward, leaving diplomacy far behind.

There is therefore a definite need for determined action to remedy this sorry state of affairs. Surely we can all agree on that. In fact, we should have done it long ago and acted accordingly. It is never too late to make a start.

This year, therefore, to begin with, my delegation proposes that we should resolutely cut down on the number of repetitious draft resolutions. It does not take long for any one of us to see that a good number of draft resolutions with some effort could have been eliminated if only they were combined with others of similar intent. It is aggravating that during the fairly leisurely debate on disarmament year in and year out, when time at least does not seem to be a scarce commodity, draft resolutions which have much common ground cannot not be merged into one even before they are officially tabled. If this effort fails, we could consider other approaches, such a contained statement by the Chairman of this Committee when draft resolutions presented are widely considered as not yet being ripe for a decision.

We have no doubt that, with determined effort and a genuine and mutual spirit of accommodation in the general interest, this could have been done. Yesterday the representative of Brazil responded positively to our plea. I hope others will follow his good example. My delegation has urged this several times in the past and we shall not repeat our pleas this year. We still hope it can be done but, if it is not, and since we only weaken the strength of resolutions by adopting too

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many competing ones, my delegation simply will not participate in the voting on those drafts we consider repetitious and will give its sole preference to other largely similar draft resolutions whose sponsorship indicates more common ground across the political spectrum - an essential element to encourage generous voting support and reasonable prospects for compliance.

Aside from those general considerations, to which we attach great importance, there are a few draft resolutions to which I wish to refer specifically.

In the first draft resolution submitted - in document A/C.1/38/L.1 - we were originally called upon in its operative paragraph 2 to declare

"... to be criminal acts the formulation, propounding, dissemination and propaganda" - which, I suppose, is meant to be "propagation" - "of political and military doctrines and concepts intended to provide 'legitimacy' for the first use of nuclear weapons and in general to justify the 'admissibility' of unleashing nuclear war."

We are pleased to note that the paragraph in question has been revised.

My delegation finds the general objective of the declaration attractive - and the Maltese people and Government are among the unspecified billions of people on earth who, according to the Soviet text, aspire to "the prevention of nuclear catastrophe". In our case, we do this, of course, not only in words but also by not possessing any weapons or military installations.

However, we realize that in practice the main operative paragraph, even as revised, is seriously flawed for reasons which should have been quite evident in the first place. There is no power on earth that can prevent man from thinking. That being so, and since it is only through writing or speaking that man can give expression to his thoughts, it is likewise impossible to prevent such ideas from being propounded - irrespective of whether they are condemned or considered "criminal acts". In fact, it might be dangerous to attempt to do so, for then matters could only become worse. To declare those ideas as "criminal acts", or even to condemn them, is trying not only to stem an impossible tide but also to censure in the most repressive manner imaginable and, what is much worse, to channel those ideas into secret, underground activities. Instead of encouraging honest and open discussion, we would be inviting secrecy on matters of tremendous concern to the world at large.

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If we were to adopt such a posture we would only be publicly admitting that the United Nations has not learnt the lessons of history which teach us that repressing ideas is not eliminating those ideas but simply driving them underground, from where they can - and sometimes do - emerge in a more sinister form than even their original propounders anticipated.

Of course one can - indeed, one should - forcefully disagree with those writings and speeches. What we should be proposing instead, therefore, is the dissemination of positive, well-argued and thoroughly researched stances that would stand up to - indeed demolish - those doctrines and concepts that, against man's natural instincts, would have us believe in the justification of nuclear war.

In Malta's view, suppression only worsens an already bad situation. Confounding such insidious doctrines should not be beyond our honest intellectual capability. That duty is shared by many specialists. The special responsibility of scientists in this regard was recently forthrightly pointed out by His Holiness the Pope who, when addressing the plenary session of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences on 12 November 1983 called on scientists to shun "laboratories and factories of death".

That meeting, at which scientists of the highest calibre were present, debated some of the major concerns afflicting humanity at the present time, particularly those relating to the aftermath of a nuclear attack. An eminent scientist present, recalling one paper on the environmental consequences of nuclear war, called it "one of the most impressive papers I have seen in the last 43 years". The final decisions on these matters depend on national leaders, as well as their advisers and representatives - which means us.

I have spoken so far in negative terms; but there are several positive proposals before us. My delegation has joined in sponsoring a few, carefully selected draft resolutions which, despite some reservations as to the linguistic style of some paragraphs, we feel are fully responsive to present needs and designed to promote positive areas for concentrated attention. We would have preferred, for instance, to replace the phrase "function towards peace, security and survival" in the fourth preambular paragraph of A/C.1/38/L.56/Rev.1 with "in promoting peace and security, and ensuring survival". Similarly, we would have preferred the words "timely reminder" instead of "warning" in the last preambular

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paragraph. But those were only minor suggestions, in view of the tremendous importance of that particular draft resolution.

In addition, there are a few draft resolutions among those that we have supported or will support which I particularly wish to mention. Draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.23 on the prohibition of the development, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons was particularly welcome to my delegation in view of the fact that Malta took a pioneering stand on this matter a number of years ago.

To our regret, another item also originally proposed by Malta has not advanced far enough in this Committee's deliberations. The development of laser technology and its applicability to weapons systems is a reality which we should have faced many years ago. The article in The New York Times of 15 November 1983 - the latest of a large number on the subject of laser weapons - shows quite clearly the serious consideration actually in vogue to develop and to deploy those uncontrollable potential weapons.

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/38/L.57, requesting the Secretary-General to carry out a study on naval forces and naval armaments, is another we will support, as we consider it a valuable initiative to tackle a problem which is increasingly becoming more threatening. Unfortunately, the draft resolution, as it now stands, contains a serious omission in that it fails to give equal importance to the possible implications of these forces and their armaments for the security of coastal States. We have suggested to the delegation of Sweden a short addition to operative paragraph 1 which would take care of our concerns and we still hope that it will be found possible to include it. In that event, my delegation would join in sponsoring that draft resolution.

Yesterday, we supported the draft resolutions contained in documents A/C.1/38/L.5 and L.62 on confidence-building measures and regional disarmament. I merely wish to remind the Committee that Malta has agreed to the concluding document of the 1980 Madrid Meeting, held on the basis of the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act relating to the follow-up of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. However, I would stress that that agreement was reached on the understanding, expressed by the Chairman on that particular day, to the effect that the participating States had duly taken note of the proposals concerning questions relating to security in the Mediterranean as embodied in the Helsinki

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Final Act. This particular aspect will of course be taken up separately in our debate at a later stage. I shall therefore refer to the question of the Mediterranean in a subsequent statement.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take up the draft resolutions listed in voting cluster 3, namely, draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, L.42, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1.

I now call upon the representative of Romania, who has asked to speak in order to submit an oral amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2.

Mr. CHEBELEU (Romania): I should like to refer to the draft resolution submitted by Romania, in document A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2. A number of friendly delegations approached us this morning asking us to consider some further revisions of our draft resolution which, in their opinion, would make our text clearer as a message to be conveyed by the General Assembly. In a spirit of goodwill we are ready to make those suggested modifications because it is our impression that they do not alter the message the General Assembly would convey through this draft resolution.

We are, therefore, submitting a further revision to operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, on page 2 of the English text. In the fourth line, we are deleting the word "new" before the words "medium-range missiles" and the words "of any kind" before the words "are deployed". The text, as amended, would read as follows:

"Urges the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Government of the United States of America to make every effort to reach an agreement at their bilateral negotiations in Geneva, or at least to agree on a provisional basis that no medium-range missiles are deployed and the number of the existing ones is reduced, while the negotiations would continue in order to achieve positive results in conformity with the security interests of all States".

I hope the Secretariat has taken careful note of our amendment, and I should like once again to express our deep gratitude to those delegations that approached us this morning. We wish also to say we fully appreciate the reasons underlying their suggestions.

The CHAIRMAN: The Secretariat has taken due note of the changes just read out by the representative of Romania to draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2.

(The Chairman)

I now call upon representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting on the draft resolutions contained in voting cluster 3.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): I regret that I must inflict another statement upon the Committee in the same meeting, but as members are aware one cannot very well anticipate how the speakers list will look on any given day. I have to speak because of the great importance to my country of the subject of negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF). At the very moment I began to read out my statement, the freely elected representatives of my country were assembled in the German Bundestag to give earnest consideration to this issue, and it is safe to predict that they will by a very large majority decide to look to their important security concerns in the appropriate way.

My delegation wishes to explain its intended vote on the draft resolutions contained in voting cluster 3, dealing with bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations. As the representative of a country co-sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63, I am of course precluded from restating my views on that particular draft resolution.

My delegation intends to cast a negative vote on draft resolutions L.3/Rev.2 and L.65/Rev.1. The changes just introduced by the Romanian delegation to its draft resolution are, in our view, insignificant. They do not change the political thrust of the draft resolution and therefore do not influence our vote.

My delegation will abstain in the voting on draft resolution L.42. All delegations in this room share the conviction that the negotiations on land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe are of the highest significance for the disarmament process and that their successful conclusion could create a forceful and most beneficial momentum for further disarmament measures, for the strengthening of international peace and security and for the reduction of the risk of war. Conversely, there is shared concern that the failure of these negotiations would seriously impede efforts to strengthen peace and security. Most delegations among us are profoundly alarmed that these negotiations have not come to fruition so far and that even their continuation is, at this juncture, not assured.

In the view of my delegation it is therefore vital and legitimate that the General Assembly, as the highest representative body of the world community, address these negotiations, providing encouragement for their further course and expressing the desire of all States to see these negotiations come to a good end.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic  
of Germany)

The concerns of my country in this respect are evident. Although a number of other countries of the Atlantic Alliance are equally involved in the crucial negotiations carried on by the United States and the Soviet Union, no country has a greater stake in their outcome in terms of national security.

While action by the General Assembly on the INF problem is welcome, my delegation voices its regret that there are several conflicting draft resolutions on the subject. This need not have been the case. When the delegation of Romania first embarked on the process of consultations on a possible draft resolution, we were clearly told that they were looking for a broad consensus of the international community commensurate with the significance of the issue. My delegation, along with others, welcomed this intention and closely consulted with the delegation of Romania on a possible text, emphasizing that such a text would have to reflect the urgency of the subject matter but avoid taking sides in the ongoing negotiations, lest the effort be seen as a partisan contribution to the negotiating stance of only one side. I recall that several weeks ago agreement on such a broadly acceptable text was near and that the submission and adoption of a cogently worded consensus draft resolution could confidently be expected.

While my delegation and others repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to continue consultations and to bridge the last few remaining gaps in wording, the delegation of Romania, regrettably, broke off the consultation process and reverted to a text which failed to meet the standards of evenhandedness. Parts of draft resolution A/C.138/L.3/Rev.2, as we now have it before us, still bear the imprint of the earlier consensus effort. Much of the preambular language, and even the recommendations contained in the operative part, are balanced and susceptible of broad support.

In the essential operative paragraph, however, paragraph 3, an unwelcome change has occurred. In contrast to the appeal contained in the preamble to the effect that the intermediate-range nuclear forces negotiations should be conducted under the principle of undiminished security aiming at the lowest possible level of armament and military forces, that paragraph now unequivocally adopts the Soviet Union's view that the United States should unilaterally refrain from the deployment of any new medium-range missiles in Europe - at the moment it has none - while the Soviet Union could retain the essential bulk of its excessive prior armament in

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic  
of Germany)

this field. This proposal would imply that negotiations could go on for an indefinite time, with any incentive for the Soviet Union to make further positive strides removed from the negotiating context.

Every reasonable option for the Western alliance to look after its security needs in the light of current or future threats would be permanently foreclosed, while the Soviet Union could carry on its policies unencumbered.

In the view of my delegation, such a resolution would help to confirm the Soviet monopoly in land-based medium-range missiles in Europe and elsewhere and eliminate every reasonable prospect for a balanced negotiation result. In effect, the Romanian draft resolution would thus sanction the relentless nuclear arms build-up by the Soviet Union - the Soviet Union which has almost tripled its potential of SS-20 missiles while negotiations were prepared and under way and while the West continued to exercise rigorous restraint.

That restraint by the West is demonstrated by the deferral of any new deployment over a period of four years, pending intensive negotiating efforts; by the modesty of present contingency plans for additional deployment, should it become necessary; by the declared intention to scrap any newly deployed weapons as soon as a balanced agreement with the Soviet Union is reached; and by the recent North Atlantic Treaty Organization decision to retire unilaterally another 1,400 nuclear weapons. That significant measure of nuclear disarmament, incidentally, was taken almost on the same day when the East - in addition to its ongoing production and stationing in Asia of SS-20 missiles - announced the deployment of a new wave of nuclear weapons of various types in several Warsaw Pact countries.

It is a significant coincidence that draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1, submitted by Bulgaria, for all practical purposes contains the same demand, with the Romanian proposal even going beyond the appeal formulated in operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2.

It is regrettable to find that the delegation of Romania, abandoning its consensus effort, has thus reverted to the orthodox position of the Warsaw Pact, of which it is a member. Resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2 and A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1 are birds of a feather, both reflecting the views of the Soviet Union in the purest form.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic  
of Germany)

It is important for all delegations to realize this coincidence clearly, and for them not to succumb to misinterpretation of the Romanian stance. After the delegation of Romania abandoned its promised consensus effort, it would have been a fair and decent procedure to withdraw its draft resolution. In that case, the group of Western countries would also have abstained from submitting their proposal in draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63. And even now it would still be possible for the Romanian delegation to withdraw its draft resolution, thus enabling the other two relevant draft resolutions to be withdrawn as well. Romania has not chosen to follow that course. Its present draft resolution should be seen for what it is: an effort to lend a helping hand to the Soviet Union, its alliance partner, by proposing a draft resolution which is detrimental to the security interests of a large number of States, including, most particularly, my own.

My delegation has often given expression to its gratification concerning the development of the Non-Aligned Movement, at its growing participation in the multilateral disarmament process and at the articulateness and independence of its views. It appears particularly important at this juncture that the members of the Non-Aligned Group analyse the draft resolutions before us carefully and look to the merits of each one on this important issue, lest it imperil the principles of the Non-Aligned Movement and make mockery of its crucial role in world affairs. Non-aligned countries should refuse to allow themselves to be drawn into the East-west conflict as helpers of one side and thus become instruments for Soviet ends.

While my delegation will cast negative votes on the two draft resolutions emanating from the Warsaw Pact - A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2 and A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1, it takes a different view of the draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42, introduced by Mexico. We note with considerable satisfaction that this draft resolution, sponsored by a number of non-aligned delegations, does not attempt to meddle with the substantive issues of the current bilateral arms negotiations but, rather, proposes important structural changes for the future conduct of negotiations between the two leading world Powers.

My delegation does not wish to take issue with these recommendations from the viewpoint of principle, although it feels the technical arrangements for the

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic  
of Germany)

negotiations on various aspects of nuclear disarmament, bearing in mind that they are closely interrelated, should be determined by the two negotiators themselves. My delegation wishes to reflect this view by abstaining in the vote on it.

Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas): In my delegation's explanation of its votes on draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, L.42, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1, I simply wish to emphasize the quantitative and qualitative aspects of these texts, particularly as they pertain to the acquisition of the goal of general and complete disarmament through bilateral negotiations. The views presented by the sponsors, while timely, enlightening and progressive, are not encouraging if we are to achieve the common goal on matters regarding nuclear disarmament.

Specifically, a qualitative analysis of all texts shows that the sponsors have the same purpose and aim: that there should be continued bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. All of the draft resolutions before us contain elements that are indispensable for contributing towards positive results.

They all emphasize the need to implement the decisions of the Final Document and of the United Nations Charter regarding collective security and what follows as a result.

In draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2 the sponsor rightly assumes that collective security implies the co-operation of all States and that flexibility in approach should lead to mutual agreement.

Draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42 signals the need for presentation of both reports with which so far only the Soviet Union has complied, and requests continuation of negotiations bearing in mind national as well as international interests.

In its operative part, draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63 calls for flexibility without preconditions and calls for the enhancement of mutual trust that could create a more conducive atmosphere for negotiations.

The sponsors of A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1, while conscious of the need for progress, urge negotiations but maintain the status quo.

It seems to my delegation that failure to incorporate all of the above crucial and important qualitative elements in one text calls into serious doubt the commitment of Member States regarding the question at hand.

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

Consequently, what are the results? There is no winner and all are guilty of not promoting the implementation of the Final Document and the United Nations Charter.

Believing that the Committee is eager to streamline its work, my delegation singled out the common point mentioned as a reformulation that could help produce one text acceptable to the great majority of, if not all, States. This does not seem to be the case.

Let me hasten to say, none the less, that my delegation is in full agreement with the main thrust extracted from the several texts and therefore could not, in good conscience, vote against such a necessary appeal. In fact, the sponsors are to be commended for their efforts. On the other hand, as actions seem to belie what the draft resolutions state, it would be deceptive for my delegation to vote in favour of the many contradictory ideas that intersperse the main principles outlined in the several draft resolutions.

Consequently, my delegation's abstention in the votes on all these draft resolutions is rather out of frustration and disappointment in my colleagues, who seem to have allowed personal conviction to blind them to the success that could be gained from a collective effort to produce a comprehensive, balanced and unpolarized text.

Mr. KORHONEN (Finland): The unequivocal position of principle of the Finnish Government is that of being against all use of nuclear weapons. In Europe, the most heavily armed continent of all, it is particularly true that security cannot be enhanced by introducing new weapons and new, increasingly destructive weapon systems. Security in Europe can only be increased through negotiated reductions of all weapons, particularly nuclear weapons.

The Finnish Government has repeatedly expressed deep concern over the consequences for European security of a failure in the Geneva negotiations concerning intermediate-range nuclear forces. Such a failure would only lead to an accelerated arms race and thus adversely affect the security not only of the negotiating partners but also of all countries, particularly European countries.

Finland, a country which pursues a policy of neutrality and seeks security outside military alliances, has the right to expect that all avenues are explored in order to facilitate a successful outcome of the negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces. Consequently, we support the main thrust of

(Mr. Korhonen, Finland)

draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, as just amended, L.42, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1. They all urge the Governments concerned to pursue their bilateral negotiations in Geneva in the interests of all nations. Accordingly, the Finnish delegation shall vote in favour of those draft resolutions. In doing so, and in accordance with its policy of neutrality, Finland is not taking a stand with respect to the specific issues discussed between the participants in the Geneva negotiations.

Mr. DEPASSE (Belgium) (interpretation from French): Our Committee is called upon to take decisions on four draft resolutions dealing with the Geneva negotiations between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on intermediate-range nuclear forces. This profusion of texts reveals dismayingly confusion, for it reflects our Organization's inability to play a serious role on a question of capital importance.

The role of the United Nations should be, above all, one of sending a dual message to the negotiators: first, our profound desire to see the negotiations crowned with positive results, in conformity with the security interests of all States and the universal desire for progress in the path towards disarmament and, secondly, the affirmation that only negotiations free of threat, including that of breaking off the negotiations will enable the achievement of these results. We should be able to come to an understanding on what is basic. Such a simple message relating to what I have just mentioned, one which would not go into the complexities of the Geneva negotiations, should not express either the specific concerns of my country, an ally of the United States, or anything, for that matter, hostile to the positions of the Soviet Union. That kind of message - which would in fact be one of unity - would also be in keeping with the role of all States at the United Nations: to promote conciliation, and not to take part in an ongoing negotiating process.

We should have liked to reach a consensus; this was our sole objective. We were told that that was also the goal of the Romanian delegation. After the criticism of the long process of preparation of the Romanian draft resolution just made by Ambassador Wegener of the Federal Republic of Germany, we are of the view that the desire of the Romanian delegation for consensus is not credible. Indeed, the Romanian draft resolution which has just been amended for the third time, calls upon the Geneva negotiations to reach a provisional understanding on the

(Mr. Depasse, Belgium)

non-deployment of intermediate-range missiles and on a reduction of existing missiles. This is entirely unacceptable to my Government, which cannot at all acquiesce in the Soviet Union having a monopoly of medium-range missiles in Europe, even if their number were to be reduced.

Equally, there was also no attempt at reaching a consensus on the part of the Head of the Bulgarian delegation, who maintains the principle of Soviet monopoly over these intermediate-range missiles, albeit providing for Draconian reductions in the size of that monopoly. Hence we must firmly vote against the Bulgarian and the Romanian draft resolutions.

Our position on draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42 is much more flexible. Of course, Belgium fully supports paragraph 114 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to the effect that the General Assembly should be kept duly informed of all disarmament measures. But we must avoid that the procedure for informing the Assembly does not prejudice progress in the negotiations. That is the risk involved in paragraph 3, as it implies distinct reports from each of the participants in bilateral negotiations. We believe only a joint report drawn up at the opportune moment would allow the negotiations to be conducted freely, while recognizing the legitimate interests of the United Nations. Furthermore, the request to the United States and the USSR to consider procedural solutions to break the impasse in their negotiations shows the kind of political imagination we must commend. But, after a more in-depth study of the matter, we feel that the idea of combining the START and the intermediate-range nuclear forces negotiations is no doubt inopportune and redundant - redundant because the United States and the USSR certainly must have had good reasons for making a distinction between the START and the INF aspects of nuclear disarmament and inopportune for the time being because the General Assembly should not give preference to one particular method to expedite progress in negotiations which are certainly very difficult but which, we feel, remain quite capable of success.

Their happy outcome will, I believe, be enhanced in the near future, when the Soviet side loses all hope of obtaining the West's renunciation of counter-measures the SS-20s require us to take. In this connection I am pleased to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that, the debate in the Belgian Parliament has shown the unity of the parliamentary majority in its support of the Belgian Government's point of view. Those are the circumstances in which the Belgian

(Mr. Depasse, Belgium)

delegation will firmly reject the Romanian and Bulgarian draft resolutions and will abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42.

Mr. SAID (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): My delegation would like to explain its votes on the draft resolutions in cluster 3. In its statement in the general debate in the First Committee, on 21 October last, the delegation of Tunisia expressed its great concern over progress in the Geneva bilateral negotiations on nuclear weapons. We said the following:

"With the deadline set for these negotiations just a few weeks away and taking into account the turn they seem to have taken, the Tunisian delegation wonders whether the United Nations General Assembly should not consider, since it is in session, making a solemn and urgent appeal to the Geneva negotiators to reach agreement, for such agreement would undoubtedly respond to the interests of all the peoples of the world." (A/C.1/38/PV.10, p. 27)

Notwithstanding the interest that idea aroused in the First Committee, unfortunately, it proved impossible to have it acted upon, for, in my delegation's opinion, it was essential that such an initiative should be supported in a general consensus.

Today, we have before us three different draft resolutions on the same subject, if I exclude one - draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42 - which causes us no problem. The three draft resolutions in documents A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1 present analyses and positions which in all likelihood are irreconcilable. Of course, draft resolution L.3/Rev.2 did attempt, with some success, to narrow the gap between opposing views, but it does not seem to have succeeded in obtaining everyone's support.

We detect in these three texts the desire for goodwill and a willingness to negotiate and reach agreements. That goodwill should be stressed and reaffirmed by the General Assembly forefully, for, as we have always said, agreement on this subject would "respond to the interests of all the peoples of the world". It is in this spirit that my delegation decided to support the three draft resolutions before us, regarding the basic differences they contained, which only negotiations can overcome.

In adopting this position, Tunisia, while recalling the central role of the United Nations in disarmament matters believes that the Organization should bring the

(Mr. Said, Tunisia)

necessary pressure to bear to see to it that the global negotiations - especially since they are of such importance - will succeed without further delay. Similarly, it wishes to recall that it is the duty of all the parties concerned not to shirk their obligations and also their duty to respond to the wishes expressed by the international community.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): At one stage in our discussions Egypt was inclined to abstain in the votes on the draft resolutions submitted in the First Committee relating to intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe - A/C.1/38/L.63, L.65/Rev.1 and L.3/Rev.2 - because in our opinion, they do not reflect a global approach to this vital question but rather, state the well-known positions of the parties to the negotiations, raising the problem without proposing a solution, especially L.63 and L.65.

But the Egyptian delegation has reconsidered its position and now proposes to vote for these three draft resolutions, not because Egypt agrees with their content but because we think one is a basis for negotiations and the other two are a way of raising the problem. We shall vote in favour of these draft resolutions in order to indicate how urgent the situation in Europe is, especially since all three emphasize the importance of negotiations in order to reach agreements on intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe.

What is important for us is the general principle: first, the importance of the situation in Europe and its effects on international security and hence the need for guaranteeing security and stability in this region to be based on safeguarding the security interest of all parties; secondly, the necessity for just and equitable negotiations based on the goodwill of all the parties and for the continuation of these negotiations in a serious way, in conformity with the inherent dangers of the situation; thirdly, the need for the parties to the negotiations to commit themselves not to adopt measures hindering the course of negotiations and thus the achievement of their objective; fourthly, the need to establish a timetable for an agreement in order that the negotiations not become the pretext for one party to benefit from the negotiations at the expense of the other and preventing one party from acquiring other weapons in the process; and, fifthly, the need to reach agreement on verification measures and to implement the agreements once they are reached as a result of the negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Consequently, while Egypt will vote for the three draft resolutions, that does not signify that it supports the position contained in them but that its intentions is simply to encourage all parties to present their positions and negotiate in a certain framework and according to a certain timetable. At the same time, we believe that one party should not hold the threat of nuclear weapons over the other and that it is also necessary to take confidence-building measures.

Finally, I should like to thank the delegation of Romania for submitting a draft resolution which sets forth before the General Assembly one of the more serious threats to world security today - namely the situation in Europe - and the European disarmament efforts, and also for having introduced a last-minute amendment although we should have preferred the final text to be more balanced.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy): The ongoing bilateral negotiations on longer-range INF missiles are of vital importance for the security interests of my country. Their successful conclusion remains the highest priority of the Italian Government in the field of arms control and disarmament. It is our conviction that those negotiations should be carried on in good faith, without preconditions and for as long as is necessary for their completion. We do not consider them to be subject to any artificially imposed deadline. These sentiments are clearly reflected in draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63, which Italy has sponsored.

It is, therefore, a matter of great concern to my delegation to note that draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1, introduced by the delegation of Bulgaria and others, simply incorporates what has so far been the main thrust of the Soviet negotiating position in the talks on intermediate-range nuclear forces, namely, to prevent any deployment of United States missiles in Europe, while maintaining a very sizeable force of SS-20 missiles.

For that reason, draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1, which also seems aimed at prejudging the outcome of the bilateral negotiations and at a moratorium on the Western deployment, deserves the negative vote of my delegation.

The concept of a moratorium is also present in operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, sponsored by the delegation of Romania. It remains present even after the modification that has just been announced by that delegation. We believe that, in the prevailing circumstances, to advocate a moratorium is tantamount to rewarding the fait accompli of the Soviet nuclear build-up. Calls for a moratorium are misguided, since they serve the interests of

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

one side, not the progress of the negotiations. They ignore the use that Moscow has made of the nearly four years it has had to halt its own deployment and reach an equitable agreement.

In fact, the Soviet Union, while recognizing that there was a balance in Europe during the 1970s, and while claiming its willingness to respect the principle of undiminished security, initiated a deployment of new long-range nuclear weapons, the SS-20s, as long ago as 1977, thus creating a new threat for the peaceful States of Western Europe. We think that deployment has destabilizing implications, which cause great concern to my country. In fact there are now 1,300 Soviet nuclear warheads, of which 729 are aimed at Western Europe, while there are none on our side aimed at Eastern Europe.

It appears to us paradoxical that threats should be made to break off the Geneva negotiations in the face of an initial Western deployment while the Soviet side has been deploying missiles in Europe and elsewhere for the last four years and even deployed nine in the month of November without the Western countries placing any conditions on the continuation of negotiations.

The Western side has exercised the utmost restraint and even recently has given new proof of its willingness to de-escalate the tension, announcing a reduction of 1,400 short-range warheads in Western Europe, at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) meeting at Montebello in Canada, just after the Soviet side had announced new deployments of such weapons in Eastern Europe.

Italy is convinced that a state of balance in the area of intermediate nuclear forces between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries is essential to security and stability in Europe. We believe that equilibrium and stability should be redressed. On our side we are ready to forgo any deployment or to consider reductions of it, if the SS-20s deployed by the Soviet side are respectively withdrawn and destroyed or reduced. But we do not think the exercise of self-restraint and flexibility should be unilateral.

For those reasons, my delegation will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2.

Mr. DJOKIC (Yugoslavia): Yugoslavia has on several occasions stated its position concerning the bilateral nuclear arms negotiations. We have endorsed such negotiations, deeply convinced that it is necessary to undertake most urgently measures aimed at halting the further build-up of nuclear arms in Europe and at

(Mr. Djokic, Yugoslavia)

preventing the beginning of a qualitatively new phase of the arms race in that region. We have resolutely demanded an immediate agreement on the reduction of existing level of armaments, particularly nuclear, in Europe, since it is obvious that the constant deployment of new systems of nuclear weapons in that region, fraught with the greatest concentration of means of destruction and killing in history, most directly endangers peace and security in that part as well as in all other parts of the world. We have been in favour, as we are now, of persistent and patient negotiations between the two Powers on these issues, since negotiations are the basic precondition for achieving concrete results.

Yugoslavia considers that the failure of the Geneva talks would lead to further exacerbation and to the deepening of the existing mistrust and that it would impede negotiations. In our view, a dialogue is the only alternative in a situation where the level of armaments has reached the present immense proportions. Resistance has been growing in the world to a policy supported by the force of arms, and the peoples throughout the world are demanding substantive results in all ongoing negotiations on disarmament, particularly in the Geneva negotiations between the USSR and the United States as the first step towards establishment of the necessary trust and co-operation with the object of reducing tensions in the world. We consider it indispensable to make additional efforts in the search for new bases and forms of negotiation which would provide immediate solutions in the interests of all the parties concerned.

Two of the draft resolutions on which we are to vote - A/C.1/38/L.63 and L.65/Rev.1 - contain the individual approaches of the two parties with regard to the reduction of intermediate nuclear missiles in Europe and the resumption of negotiations. Regrettably, they do not offer a basis which would be acceptable to both parties and which would enable the search for a solution to be carried on with ever greater determination.

However, in spite of that fact, Yugoslavia will vote in favour of both draft resolutions. We shall do so primarily because we want once again to underline the indispensability of negotiations on the reduction of nuclear weapons in general, and on this kind of weapon on which bilateral negotiations between the USSR and the United States are being held, in particular, as well as the need to invest new efforts towards achieving such solutions as would be in the interest of strengthening peace and security for all countries.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): My delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63.

As regards the medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe, we advocate the achievement of an agreement that prevents the deployment of new medium-range missiles and brings about a drastic reduction of existing nuclear-weapon systems of that range. That is the main thrust of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.65, of which my country is a co-sponsor. There is no doubt that the stationing of new medium-range missiles is tantamount to a new round in the nuclear-arms race. It is an attack on the nuclear balance and international security, and instead of considerably bringing nuclear armaments to a considerably lower level the United States is attempting to achieve superiority, in order to hold the European countries hostage for the sake of its hegemonistic policy. The countries of deployment shall have no right whatsoever to decide about the use of those weapons; in spite of that, the respective Governments are ready to make their territories available as launching pads for United States first-strike weapons and, as we heard this morning, to defend at the same time what they call very forcefully the "first-strike option", being against all proposals that are directed against first-use and non-use in general.

From the very outset, the attitude of the United States towards the negotiations held on medium-range weapons was marked by efforts to misuse those negotiations to veil its intent to carry out deployment and thus a deadline was fixed unilaterally in the form of an ultimatum. Half of that fixed period was, however, taken to avoid negotiations in order allegedly "to define its own position". The remainder of the period was used by the same negotiating party to reject any reasonable proposal made by the other side. During the last stage prior to the fixed date of deployment, it became very obvious that the negotiations held in Geneva were undertaken only as an alibi by the United States and the other advocates of deployment.

Now, when just this side demands in draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63 to continue the negotiations "without preconditions", the wording should read instead "continuation of the policy of ultimatum and fait accompli".

In reality that draft resolution is an attempt to give the deployment of new medium-range weapons the appearance of legitimacy. It is unacceptable to our delegation and we shall vote against it.

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): The French delegation considers that it is highly desirable and natural for the General Assembly to express its interest in current negotiations and to encourage the countries involved in them. But, in our opinion, it is not up to the General Assembly to take a stand on the positions assumed by the various States. The recommendations of the General Assembly must remain completely objective.

Of the four draft resolutions before us, two take a stand on the positions of one of the parties and, therefore, against the positions of the other side. That is true of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2. In paragraph 1, the General Assembly urges the parties to make every effort to reach an agreement or at least to agree on a provisional basis that no new medium-range missiles of any kind are deployed and the number of the existing ones is reduced, while the negotiations would continue. This is also the case with respect of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1. In paragraph 2, the General Assembly calls upon the States parties to the bilateral talks to achieve as soon as possible equitable agreement which would provide for the non-deployment of new medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe and for a drastic reduction in the existing nuclear systems of such range.

If either draft is adopted, it would mean that the General Assembly would be supporting the position of the Soviet Union regarding the conditions and objectives of the negotiations. It would mean that the General Assembly was in favour of a monopoly benefiting that Power, which possesses weapons in the category being considered.

On the other hand, draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63 makes an urgent appeal for the negotiations to continue without taking a stand on the conditions for those negotiations or on the positions of the States parties to them.

As regards draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42, the sponsors have refrained from taking a stand on medium-range weapons. But the recommendation set forth in paragraph 1 concerns an area that falls within the jurisdiction solely of the States parties to the negotiations. It is up to them and them alone to determine in what framework their negotiations should take place.

For those reasons, the French delegation will vote against draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2 and L.65/Rev.1 and in favour of L.63. It will abstain in the vote on draft resolution L.42.

Mr. JAYAKODDY (Sri Lanka): My delegation, too, would like to explain its intended vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1.

Sri Lanka has in this Committee and in the Committee on Disarmament consistently expressed views that are very supportive of the bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations in Geneva and we have called for an uninterrupted continuation of these negotiations so that positive results could be reached.

We have always emphasized the importance and urgency of these negotiations continuing without interruption and with the utmost seriousness. We have done so because we believe the negotiations could contribute towards inching the world to the goal of halting and reversing the nuclear arms race, a goal shared by us all. We had hoped therefore that we would have a single consensus draft resolution on this issue in this Committee.

It is therefore a matter of great regret to us that we are faced with the difficult task of dealing with three draft resolutions on the subject of bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations. We would certainly have preferred a single consensus draft resolution in the light of the critical nature of the problem, the urgency attached to it and the immense concern of peoples and Governments involved in the issue; but that has not taken place.

Despite our deep disappointment, my delegation intends to cast affirmative votes in favour of draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1. We shall do so, not because we identify ourselves with all the language and conflicting elements of those draft resolutions; we stay clear of such identification. Rather, we see in those three draft resolutions a triple opportunity, not of our own making, for us to reiterate our support for the bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations to be conducted seriously and without interruption. Our affirmative votes will be in favour of those negotiations being continued and not an endorsement of the views set forth by the sponsors of those draft resolutions.

The situation we face in this Committee on the issue of bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations arises out of the uninterrupted nuclear arms race. What we need to do is strive boldly and determinedly towards the goal of halting and reversing the nuclear arms race, and the bilateral negotiations can, in our view, contribute positively to the achievement of that goal.

Mr. NUNES (Portugal) (interpretation from French): As a European country member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Portugal is directly concerned with draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1, which relate to the negotiations between the United States and the USSR on medium-range missiles in Europe, by virtue of the profound implications that they will have on its own security and on that of the whole continent.

My Government believes the security of Europe would be better preserved if that category of weapons did not exist there. Thus, it supports the proposal submitted by the United States known as the "zero option". That solution having been rejected by the USSR - which wants to maintain the unilateral military advantage inherent in its present monopoly of such weapons - it is necessary that an interim solution be found to minimize the destabilizing effects on the relationship of forces in Europe caused by the USSR deployment of SS-20 missiles, each of which have three nuclear warheads. Therefore, my delegation fully supports the continuation of negotiations between the United States and the USSR.

However, those negotiations should not serve as a pretext for the USSR to postpone indefinitely an equitable solution respecting the principle of the right of States to undiminished security, as set forth in paragraph 29 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly; nor can these negotiations prevent the Governments of States members of NATO from taking adequate steps to counteract the threat represented by the SS-20 missiles.

With the support of other members of NATO, the United States declared its will to continue these negotiations in order to find an interim solution making it possible to reduce the number of weapons initially estimated as necessary to counteract the threat represented by the more than 1,000 Soviet nuclear missiles at present aimed at Western Europe. Regrettably, the latter country's authorities are attempting to impose as a precondition for continuing negotiations that the members of NATO renounce their sacred right to acquire the means to defend themselves against the real threat created by that same country, for the SS-20 missiles are already in place and can have no other objective than to be aimed at Western Europe. For the reasons that I have just presented, this precondition is unacceptable.

However, that precondition is set out in draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2 and L.65/Rev.1, accompanied by other considerations that are unacceptable to my country. Hence my delegation will vote against those two draft resolutions.

(Mr. Nunes, Portugal)

It will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.63, since its recommendations are in line with my Government's position and present an equitable, non-discriminatory solution by recommending the continuation of talks between the United States and the Soviet Union without preconditions.

We share the concerns of this Committee in this respect, and we hope that it will be possible at the negotiating table to find, without preconditions, a just solution, while we await the achievement of an agreement totally prohibiting any such missiles on European soil and incorporating adequate verification measures.

Mr. DE LA FUENTE (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): The deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe is a source of great concern for the international community as a whole, because it is a threat to world peace. At the same time, the reduction of such missiles to a level of real parity is necessary if negotiations in good faith are to take place between the super-Powers.

My delegation will be compelled to abstain in the vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/38/L.65/Rev.1 and L.63, because they reflect specific strategic positions that do not form a balanced approach for genuine negotiations, one which we support.

On the other hand, draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42, sponsored by a group of non-aligned countries, after recalling in a constructive spirit various commitments entered into in the sphere of disarmament, goes on to mention new institutional machinery and complementary aspects that should be considered in such negotiations in order to overcome the current stagnation. For that reason, my delegation will vote in favour of that draft resolution.

Similarly, draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, in its present amended version, contains language that makes it possible for my delegation to vote in favour of it. We should like to praise the efforts made by the delegation of Romania to present a more balanced text, one that is now acceptable to a group of non-aligned Andean countries that includes my own.

Mr. CHEBELEU (Romania): My delegation will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42, in the letter and spirit of which we fully share. The other two draft resolutions, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1, are unacceptable to my delegation because of their unilateral approaches, each attempting to gain the approval of the General Assembly for their rigid stance.

(Mr. Chebeleu, Romania)

If we feel impelled to explain our vote before the voting it is because of some of the statements we have heard, and in particular the statement - I might even say the electoral statement - of the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, whose comments are not only unfair to my delegation but also contain a series of assertions that are, to say the least, untrue, as well as various insinuations, most of which are not even worth refuting, and all with the obvious intent of casting a distorted image of the persistent and genuine efforts of my delegation, beginning as early as the first week of October, to make possible an appeal from the General Assembly of the United Nations to the negotiating parties in Geneva on the issue of intermediate-range missiles with a view to urging them to do everything possible to reach an agreement in accordance with the security interests of all States.

I believe it only fair that the members of the First Committee, before proceeding to a vote, be informed as to the correct evolution of events relating to the various draft resolutions before us today. We have had an extremely sad experience in the consultations we initiated, one that we want to place on record. Extensive negotiations were conducted with my delegation in bad faith. Our firm impression today, looking back upon what has happened, is that the sole purpose of those so-called negotiations with us was to make us lose time or discourage us from pursuing the issue or, if that were not possible, at least to make our proposal look as meaningless as possible. Naturally we were not aware of those real intentions of our partners in the negotiations at that time. We found that out only when, in spite of our prolonged efforts, the negotiations or consultations were seen to be without result. The fact is that at one particular moment we became aware of what was actually going on and decided to submit a clear-cut proposal to the General Assembly, a proposal which we subsequently revised in order to take into account.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to remind the representative of Romania that he is not entitled to explain the vote of his delegation on its own draft resolution. The rules of procedure provide that delegations should limit comments in explanation of vote to draft resolutions other than those they have themselves submitted. I draw the attention of the delegation of Romania to that fact.

Mr. CHEBELEU (Romania): Mr. Chairman. I agree with you. I am not explaining the vote of my delegation on its own draft resolution. I was merely correcting some erroneous statements made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany at the beginning of today's meeting.

Many things have been said today about the position of various countries with regard to the Geneva negotiations. We, of course, are not familiar with the substance of the negotiations or with the juggling of figures that has been mentioned so often in the press and even today in explanations of vote. We would invite delegations to read all of the draft resolutions and see what they say. What we do know is that, ignoring public opinion and the efforts of many Governments, preparation for deployment of United States medium-range missiles in Europe has begun and, as a counter-measure, preparation for deployment of similar new Soviet missiles has also begun. This we know for sure from the official statements of the two sides.

Quite simply, what we are witnessing is a great hurry and eagerness in the deployment of new medium-range missiles in Europe. This is a proliferation of nuclear weapons by those very parties that preach to us, session after session, about the importance of non-proliferation. Why is there such hurry and eagerness? We cannot help but ask the legitimate question: Why not the same hurry and eagerness to reach an agreement at the Geneva negotiations? That would serve the interests of peace and disarmament - the interests of all peoples.

Having said that, I think that the position we hold on draft resolution L.63 should be quite obvious. The mere appeal, as it is called, would vitiate its meaning and would express in reality the position of one side imposing first the condition of deployment and, secondly, that of negotiation. Those are the reasons for which my delegation will cast a clear-cut vote against draft resolution L.63.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation's position on the bilateral negotiations that have been taking place in Geneva is well known. Perhaps the very heart of that position is set forth in operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42, which my delegation has sponsored along with four other delegations. Indeed, it was my delegation which introduced it.

In that operative paragraph, the Assembly would reiterate its request to the two negotiating parties that they bear constantly in mind that not only their national interests but also the vital interests of all the peoples of the world are at stake in this question.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

That is why we would have liked in the three other draft resolutions before the Committee to have arrived at a consensus in the Committee and the General Assembly by means of fruitful negotiations. However, in the light of the statements we have just heard, it now seems clear that there are some delegations whose interest in the outcome of these negotiations or in any aspect of these negotiations is probably not as sincere as we would have wished. Today we have heard that even our modest draft resolution, which is eminently procedural in nature, cannot be adopted by consensus and that there will be a number of abstentions when it is put to the vote. It is therefore not surprising that in connection with the others, which deal with substance, there will be some negative votes.

For the aforementioned reasons, which bear upon what we consider to be the substance of this question, my delegation will vote in favour of three draft resolutions: A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, L.63 and L.65/Rev.1.

Our votes should not be taken as total approval of each and every word, comma and period in these draft resolutions. We wish our votes to be taken as a sign of the importance we attach to this subject and the fact that in these three draft resolutions there are a number of ideas and thoughts with which we completely agree. Allow me to give several examples.

We fully agree with the second and third preambular paragraphs of draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, where the General Assembly would state:

"Profoundly alarmed that the bilateral negotiations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America commenced in Geneva on 30 November 1981 have not so far reached results to meet the expectations of peoples"

and

"Deeply concerned that the failure of these negotiations could lead to a new significant escalation in the spiralling arms competition in Europe and in the world, gravely endangering thereby international peace and security".

The same is true of various paragraphs of draft resolution L.63. I shall quote only two. We fully agree with the fourth preambular paragraph, where the General Assembly would state:

"Convinced that, through negotiations pursued in a spirit of flexibility and responsibility for the security interests of all States, it is possible to reach an agreement"

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

and with operative paragraph 2, in which the General Assembly would call upon

"the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Government of the United States of America to spare no effort in seeking the attainment of the final objective of the negotiations".

The same is true with regard to draft resolution L.65/Rev.1, which, in its operative paragraph 1, basically agrees with what I have just said was our fundamental concern, as follows:

"Reiterates the conviction that all peoples of the world are vitally interested in the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and, accordingly, in the progress and the successful conclusion of these negotiations"

and with regard to the second and third preambular paragraphs, where the Assembly would express the following:

"Taking note of the profound alarm expressed in this context by the general public all over the world over the possibility of a new and dangerous intensification of the nuclear-arms race, in particular, in Europe"

and

"Convinced that mutually acceptable agreement in the Geneva negotiations is possible on the basis of the principle of equality and equal security".

Hence, to revert to what I said at the outset of my statement, our affirmative votes for these three draft resolutions should be understood as a reiteration of our appeal to the two negotiating parties that they constantly bear in mind that not only their national interests but also the vital interests of all the peoples of the world are at stake in this question and that, therefore, it is their unshirkable duty to succeed in these negotiations.

Mr. MOUSSAOUI (Algeria) (interpretation from French): The delegation of Algeria has always worked towards the achievement of disarmament and, in so doing, called for concrete measures which could be elaborated and implemented within a global consistent framework, to achieve the major objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control in which the United Nations should play a central role. While expressing certain doubts with regard to partial measures, we have on frequent occasions stressed the importance of such an overall approach, because we are profoundly convinced that a world-wide threat needs a world response.

(Mr. Moussaoui, Algeria)

In stating this position once again this year, the Algerian delegation clearly stated its awareness that the critical situation of the world today makes it imperative to adopt urgent decisions to prevent an even greater deterioration of the international climate, which is already fraught with danger.

In this respect we have declared that

"It is today vital that the Geneva bilateral negotiations succeed without delay in order not only to reduce present levels of nuclear arsenals but also to spare Europe, which is already replete with weapons from a new particularly dangerous arms escalation."

It is from that standpoint that my delegation has considered the draft resolutions on bilateral negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe. Draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2, as amended orally today, seems to us in essence, to respond precisely to the desires expressed by nearly all delegations at the present session to see the Geneva bilateral negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces rapidly lead to an agreement satisfactory to both sides and thereby to the more immediate interests of Europe and of the entire world.

Draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.42 also satisfies the desire to see these negotiations lead to success, by suggesting a practical formula for enabling a new step to be taken - which is not necessarily in contradiction with the previous one - which, by taking into account a large number of elements, might enable the achievement of a global agreement. This idea, which has already been put forward by various sources, could indeed constitute a way to overcome the present impasse by offering another path which is, a priori, more promising. For those reasons, the Algerian delegation will vote in favour of the two draft resolutions, A/C.1/38/L.3/Rev.2 and L.42.

The Committee has two other draft resolutions before it on the same question, namely, A/C.1/38/L.63 and L.65/Rev.1. Like many other delegations, in particular from the non-aligned, my delegation would certainly have preferred the First Committee to consider only one draft resolution on a particular aspect of the question before us. However, since the other two draft resolutions will be put to the vote, my delegation must also vote in favour of these two draft resolutions. In taking this approach, we are fully aware that these two draft resolutions are clearly different and based on divergent and well-known theses. However, through

(Mr. Moussaoui, Algeria)

our vote we wish to express our concern at the dangerous developments which Europe and the world may see if a rapid agreement is not forthcoming and, at the same time through a non-negative attitude show our collective interest in seeing the implementation of such an agreement. We sincerely believe these two draft resolutions reflect an awareness of these two elements and it is precisely that awareness we wish to strengthen today by our vote.

However, by its positive vote the Algerian delegation wishes to make it clear that it does not necessarily support one or the other formulation, or the positions that may be reflected in them. Our support is based on the specific language in the draft resolutions and the ideas it implies, and in this sense, it should be seen as an appeal to the two negotiators to reach an urgent agreement in the higher interests of all peoples.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.