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**Chairman:** Mr. Leopoldo BENITES (Ecuador).

**AGENDA ITEM 98**

**Elimination of foreign military bases in the countries  
of Asia, Africa and Latin America (continued)**  
(A/6399, A/C.1/L.369, A/C.1/L.385, A/C.1/L.386)

**GENERAL DEBATE (continued)**

1. Mr. AJAVON (Togo) submitted amendments (A/C.1/L.385) designed to strengthen the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.369) and make it acceptable to all. He felt free to do so because there had never been any foreign bases in Togo, nor were there any today.

2. Obviously, foreign military bases maintained and increased international tension, particularly if they were established against the freely expressed wishes of States. However, no State could be denied the right to exercise its full sovereignty by concluding mutual assistance agreements with other countries. To preserve its national independence and territorial integrity, a State could, under Chapter VIII of the Charter, conclude military agreements with foreign Powers which involved the establishment of military bases. Furthermore, a draft resolution on foreign military bases should be universal in order to be truly valid. The Soviet draft resolution should therefore be extended to cover all of America and Europe as well.

3. In the amendments which he proposed to that end (A/C.1/L.385) he had deliberately omitted any reference to dependent territories, since the General Assembly had already decided that question in its resolution 2105 (XX). The phrase "Subject to agreements between countries" referred to agreements already concluded and to future agreements. The text of the amendments was clear, and he asked the Committee to adopt them unanimously.

4. Mr. TOMEH (Syria) said that for Syria the elimination of foreign military bases was not only a question of historic interest; it also concerned the future and destiny of the international community.

5. It was unfortunate that some delegations had attempted to brand the Soviet draft resolution as propaganda. In reality, when seen in the light of

developments in the United Nations, the question constituted another step forward in the process of decolonization. In 1955 the participants in the Asian-African Conference at Bandung had rejected pacts and alliances which they believed would not only create artificial goals and give rise to dissension, but would lead to their subjection through the establishment of military bases that would perpetuate the dominance, influence and interests of the colonial Powers. In the final analysis, pacts for the establishment of foreign military bases were designed to facilitate the expansion of power systems by enabling them to extend their tensions to foreign regions and peoples. That historic trend had culminated in the Summit Conference of Independent African States, held at Addis Ababa in May 1963, and in the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in October 1964. The Declaration adopted at the Cairo Conference, entitled "Programme for Peace and International Co-operation", dealt in section VIII with military pacts, foreign troops and bases. The trend had also been reflected in the United Nations, and General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV), 2131 (XX) and 2105 (XX) expressed the opinion of the majority of Member States. In particular, paragraph 10 of resolution 2105 (XX) recognized the legitimacy of national liberation movements, and by paragraph 12 of the same resolution the General Assembly requested the colonial Powers to dismantle the military bases installed in colonial Territories and to refrain from establishing new ones.

6. The draft resolution before the Committee provided an opportunity to examine rationally a number of prejudiced and obdurate attitudes. Senator Fulbright, the Chairman of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, had called for such a re-examination, particularly in the case of the United States military bases in South Viet-Nam, South Korea, Cuba and other parts of the world in which, he believed, the United States was aspiring to extend the realm of its power beyond what it should be.

7. The unrest in the Middle East stemmed from the determination of the United States and the United Kingdom to perpetuate an abnormal situation by directly or indirectly maintaining military bases and centres of influence in the region. The events between 1950, or even earlier, and the present showed that the tension had been due to the efforts of the colonial Powers to bring the Middle East under their exclusive influence. Thus, the Baghdad Pact, the Middle East Defence Organization and the Eisenhower Doctrine, among other arrangements, were nothing but attempts to subjugate the Arab peoples. Dangerous and extreme tensions in the Far and Middle East had brought mankind to the brink of world war. An example was

the aggression committed against Egypt in 1956, which had been condemned by six resolutions of the General Assembly. In the last of those—resolution 1124 (XI)—the Assembly had called upon Israel to complete its withdrawal behind the armistice demarcation line without further delay. Moreover, the Security Council had quite recently condemned Israel in the most vigorous terms for a criminal attack against a Jordanian village. It was a regrettable fact that, according to The New York Times, General Dayan of Israel was currently being treated in New York as a war hero, and that Israel, an outpost of colonialism and apartheid, was still receiving military and financial support from the United States Government.

8. The situation in southern Arabia was no less dangerous. The United Kingdom Government had decided to dismantle the military base at Aden, but that decision had been taken only after the heroic struggle waged by the Arab people in spite of the terror to which they were subjected by the administering Power. At the 1464th meeting of the First Committee the United Kingdom representative had given assurances that his Government was not building bases at Bahrain. Nevertheless, official statements by the United Kingdom Government and in the Press had mentioned the building of bases at Bahrain and had even quoted figures concerning them. Thus official United Kingdom sources were confirming that the Aden base would in fact be replaced by two bases, one at Bahrain and one at Sharjah.

9. The Tanzanian representative had made one of the most telling comments on the subject of military bases at the 445th meeting of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, on 14 June 1966 (see A/6300/Rev.1, chap. VI, paras. 260-261). He had said, in essence, that the Tanzanian delegation had supported General Assembly resolution 1949 (XVIII) which called, among other things, for the removal of the military base in Aden. Its support had been motivated by the basic principle that, in the world of today, the installation of military bases on foreign soil created a danger for the people of the territory concerned, and for neighbouring States. The Tanzanian representative had welcomed the United Kingdom's decision to dismantle the military base at Aden, but had expressed dismay over the fact that the base would simply be moved to another part of the Arab world within the region of south Arabia.

10. The question now before the First Committee involved real colonial problems. Foreign military bases imposed against the will of the people were contrary to the Charter and particularly to the principle of collective security embodied in the Charter. The United Nations had not been established for the purpose of constituting a political or military alliance to perpetuate the interests of one group of nations against another. It had been established, among other things, to prevent recourse to war as a means of settling international disputes. Foreign military bases were remnants of colonial wars and starting-points for new wars of aggression. The Soviet draft resolution raised the most important issue, and its contents were fully in accord with developments both

inside and outside the United Nations. The Syrian delegation would give equal attention and respect to the amendments in documents A/C.1/L.385 and A/C.1/L.386.

11. Mr. CAVALLETTI (Italy) regretted that the Committee should have to discuss a draft resolution that was neither realistic nor in keeping with the norms of international law or the fundamental principles of any disarmament agreement. As matters stood, agreements for defensive military co-operation were lawful, even if they entailed the use of a particular part of another State's territory.

12. It had been maintained in some quarters that the existence of military bases was an obsolete consequence of the Second World War. However, despite the improvement in international relations, and particularly in the economic and cultural spheres, the present situation was not entirely free from danger. The massive armaments deployed in the East were still a threat to Western Europe. The smaller Powers were sometimes a prey to subversion, and an aggressive and nationalist ideology was developing in Asia. Disarmament agreements should be concluded as soon as possible to counter that situation; however, to ensure success, negotiations to that end should be directed towards realistic goals and informed by the principles laid down by the United Nations.

13. The Soviet draft resolution failed to take account of the principle of a balanced disarmament process and it appeared to overlook the importance of the geographical element in military equilibrium. On the Eastern side, military installations were deployed over a vast area which extended without a break from the centre of Europe to Vladivostok. On the Western side, the military installations were scattered over far-flung territories separated by sea, and special forms of defensive co-operation had therefore had to be devised. The balance between the two systems would be upset by immediate and uncompensated removal of foreign bases. A void would be created that would endanger the security of one side or would have to be filled by new armaments. Instead of the results the USSR supposedly sought, the result would be the opposite if the elimination of bases provoked an acceleration of the armaments race and created new threats to peace. The elimination of bases could therefore not be viewed in isolation, but must be part of an all-encompassing disarmament process.

14. Disarmament could be approached only by working seriously and constructively on the elaboration of practical and gradual measures, discarding all proposals that were unattainable and calculated solely to arouse controversy. It was therefore to be hoped that the Soviet delegation would reconsider its draft resolution and thereby confirm its intention of contributing actively to the Committee's work.

15. Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines) observed that the precarious peace which had reigned since the end of the Second World War had been said to be largely the fortuitous result of the near parity in military strength of the two rival blocs of the East and the West. That peace, however fragile, had bought time for the United Nations to build a rudimentary machinery for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Unfortunately, however, efforts to organize a system of collective security in accordance with the provisions of the Charter had met with little success. There was no time to lose. The present *détente*, which was essentially based on the balance of terror, could not last long in view of the rapid progress in the techniques of nuclear weaponry, the erosion of ideological blocs and the dissolution of military alliances. During the existing period of uncertainty it could be assumed that the main objective of those responsible for national security, in both the East and the West, was the maintenance of the military equilibrium, which would be possible only if the United States and the Soviet Union were willing to forgo the attempt to achieve strategic and military predominance over each other. The Cuban crisis in 1962 had taught the world a lesson and it would not soon forget the dire consequences that could result from such rivalry. It was in that spirit that the Philippine delegation viewed the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/L.369), the main purpose of which was to propose the elimination of foreign military bases in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

16. The representatives of the Western Powers had reminded the Committee that they could not fulfil their commitments to their allies under treaties for common defence without deploying men and materials in various parts of the world, since geographical realities compelled them to operate on long external lines of communication. On the other hand, the members of the Eastern military bloc, occupying a contiguous land mass, did not need to disperse their military contingents for purposes of defence and security, since they operated on short, interior lines of communication. It was quite clear that the effects of the draft resolution would be wholly to the advantage of its sponsors and of those who supported it, if account was taken of the comparative efficacy of the alliances concluded respectively by Poland, for example, which had armed forces to defend it on the other side of its frontier, and the Philippines, whose allies were on the other side of the Pacific Ocean. Adoption of the draft resolution in present circumstances could seriously disturb the equilibrium of military forces and precipitate a conflict instead of helping to maintain peace. That was sufficient reason for his delegation to vote against it.

17. There were, however, other objections to the draft resolution. For one thing, it was discriminatory. In introducing it, the representative of the Soviet Union had stated categorically that his country was capable of defending itself against the threats posed by the foreign bases of some members of the Western military blocs. The import of that statement was quite clear, but unfortunately few countries in the world could boast of occupying such a privileged position. The Soviet representative's statement should therefore be supplemented by the corollary that, despite the strength and size of its army and the sophistication and plenitude of its nuclear arsenal, the Soviet Government had seen fit, for reasons of national security, to conclude a military alliance with several socialist States of Eastern Europe for purposes of common defence, and that consequently the Soviet army had deployed part of its forces in the terri-

tories of its allies for tactical reasons. If the Soviet Union and the members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization considered their regional security arrangements to be entirely within their rights as independent States and perfectly compatible with the United Nations Charter, it was hard to see why they should object so violently when the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America exercised the same rights. Sinister motives were ascribed to the Western allies when they merely sought, like the Warsaw Treaty countries, to secure their political independence, their territorial integrity and the safety of the economic and social institutions of their own free choice.

18. The principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of States was a cardinal rule in international relations that the Philippines intended to observe fully. His Government did not question the right of other States to devise the best means of guaranteeing their security and demanded that they, in turn, should respect its right to do the same. It was patently discriminatory that the presence of foreign bases in Europe was not mentioned in the draft resolution, although the danger of direct nuclear confrontation was greatest in Europe, not in the other continents. European imperialism and militarism had spawned two world wars in one generation, and it was in Europe today that the forces of the two major military blocs confronted each other. It was also from Europe that tension and conflict had spread to the other continents. The mounting rivalry between the two blocs in Europe had engendered the alliance system with its panoply of foreign military bases. Military bases would disappear once tension, mistrust and the struggle for power and prestige were abolished.

19. His Government deplored the fact that the extremely important subject of foreign bases had been introduced in a false light in the First Committee's deliberations. The polemical nature of the proposal before the Committee prevented an objective and judicious examination in the proper context of general and complete disarmament. Several representatives had made inaccurate statements in the course of the debate. For example, at the 1464th meeting, the Byelorussian representative had said that foreign bases in the Philippines were being constantly improved. There were actually few foreign military bases left in the Philippines, and they were constantly being reduced as to number, size and the length of time they were to remain on Philippine soil. It was common knowledge that the system of alliances, which entailed the establishment of foreign bases for common defence, imposed a heavy financial burden on the States involved, particularly on the United States and the Soviet Union. Foreign bases had caused friction between the Governments and the peoples concerned and, in some instances, had been used to repress national liberation movements. Nevertheless, his delegation wished to reiterate that it was willing to pay that price as surety against the risk of subversion and aggression. Common defence was the sole purpose of the establishment of foreign bases in the Philippines. They had been set up under agreements arrived at through the free will and consent of the Philippine people and Government and would be dismantled as soon as they were no longer necessary.

20. The Philippines Government hoped, however, that the collective efforts of the United Nations would one day provide the guarantees zealously sought by small nations for the maintenance of their economic and political independence and their territorial integrity.

21. Mr. IDZUMBUIR (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that the question under discussion was not of special interest to his country inasmuch as there were no foreign bases there. The former metropolitan bases of Kitona, Banana and Kamina had become the property of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and thus formed part of its defence system. Nevertheless, the discussion had shown how many of the fundamental principles of the United Nations were at stake.

22. The first comment that came to mind was that the question of foreign military bases arose also in Europe. It might perhaps be objected that they were not foreign bases properly so called, since they had been set up under agreements to which the host countries had subscribed. It was therefore necessary to distinguish between foreign bases established under bilateral or multilateral agreements and others.

23. Bases established as a result of agreements which every State had the sovereign right freely to conclude might be a type of military assistance to the State receiving them. It would be open interference to forbid States to conclude such agreements. There could be danger, however, if the bases were used for illegal operations in a territory other than the one which had accepted them. States should therefore be made aware of the import of agreements they might conclude in that matter.

24. Bases set up by force or as a result of agreements which had become undesirable to one of the parties were a violation of the sovereignty of an independent State.

25. The existence of foreign military bases in dependent territories should be considered in terms of the recognition or non-recognition of their right to independence. The presence of a metropolitan base might be justified by the need to maintain order in the territory and to ensure that it attained independence in an atmosphere of peace and calm. The defence needs of a new State with expansionist neighbours might lead it to seek special aid from the former metropolitan country.

26. What the United Nations had to ensure was that, when the dependent territory became independent, it would be free to accept or reject a permanent metropolitan military base on its soil. The United Nations should also make sure that the administering Power did not use its bases to prevent free expression of the population's basic aspirations. The adminis-

tering Powers should therefore be requested not to establish bigger bases than were called for by the ordinary defence requirements of the territory where they were set up. But it was dangerous to insist on the withdrawal of metropolitan bases from colonial territories without distinction. The United Nations might find itself in a paradoxical position if it opposed today what the people of a territory might claim tomorrow in exercise of their sovereign rights.

27. Mr. RAFAEL (Israel), exercising the right of reply, noted that, unlike the mines planted in Israel by Syrian-based terrorists, the Syrian representative's attack on his country had missed its mark. The Syrian representative had referred to recent Security Council debates on the prevailing tensions on the Israel-Syrian border. The Council had dealt at length with the dangerous situation created by terrorist incursions into Israel mounted from neighbouring countries with the aid, encouragement and support of the Syrian Government. The Council had taken a clear and unequivocal stand on that intolerable situation, and ten of its members had supported a resolution clearly implicating Syria. For nineteen years, Israel had had to defend itself against neighbours which openly challenged its right to existence.

28. Mr. TOMEH (Syria) replied that he would not have touched on the issue had the Committee not been discussing the question of foreign military bases. For a million Arabs, Israel was a foreign military base, as was in fact clear from the definition which Herzl, its founder, had given of the mission of the State of Israel. As for the Security Council, it had in no way implicated Syria in the acts of terrorism; it had found that the complaint brought against Syria had been completely fabricated for very obvious purposes, at a time when Syria was a candidate for membership of the Security Council. Not one of the three reports submitted by the Secretary-General to the Council had incriminated Syria, whereas Security Council resolution 228 (1966), adopted on 25 November, had condemned Israel's reprisal action. Israel's recent attitude fully conformed to its mission as envisaged by the country's founder: a citadel of imperialism against what he had called "barbarism", that is, the Arab people.

29. Mr. RAFAEL (Israel) said he had nothing to add if the Syrian representative interpreted the initial letters of the words "general and complete disarmament" to read "general and complete distortion".

30. Mr. TOMEH (Syria) replied that if the word "distortion" referred to the words of the founder of Israel and of Zionism and to a solemn resolution of the Security Council, then dictionaries would have to find a new meaning for it.

*The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.*