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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 14 November 1989, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GARBA (Nigeria)

later: Mr. NAVAJAS MOGRO (Bolivia)
(Vice-President)

- Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic [33]
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (b) Draft resolution
- Special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs, with a view to expanding the scope and increasing the effectiveness of such co-operation [157] (continued)
 - (a) Draft decision
 - (b) Report of the Fifth Committee

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- Achievements of the International Year of Peace [21] (continued)

(a) Report of the Secretary-General

(b) Draft resolution

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 33

ZONE OF PEACE AND CO-OPERATION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/536)
- (b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/44/L.24)

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/44/L.24.

Mr. NOGUEIRA-BATISTA (Brazil): Since the last session of the General Assembly we have witnessed appreciable political improvements in the South Atlantic region.

We welcome developments in southern Africa, which gave birth to the long-awaited implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia. The recently concluded elections in that Territory are a most significant step in this process. Brazil joins the other States of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic in hoping to receive Namibia very soon as a full member of our regional community.

In this process, the United Nations has played and is still playing a very important role, especially through the work of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG). In the same context, the role of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) has also been significant.

General Assembly resolution 41/11 declared the South Atlantic a zone of peace and co-operation. By recognizing the specific identity of the region and the legitimacy of the concerns and aspirations of the riparian countries, the international community supported the common determination of the States of the

(Mr. Nogueira-Batista, Brazil)

zone to contribute in an effective manner to international peace and security, as well as to promoting the economic and social development of the South Atlantic community.

The Final Document of the first meeting of the States of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic, held in Rio de Janeiro from 25 to 29 July 1988, contains an important body of conclusions and recommendations, confirming that identity and reaffirming the endeavours of the member States to co-operate with each other.

(Mr. Nogueira-Batista, Brazil)

In the implementation of those recommendations, the terms and conditions for a technical programme to review the developments in and implementation of the legal régime established by the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea were laid down with the assistance of the Office for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. This programme is to be developed in two seminars, to be held in the Congo in 1990 and in Uruguay in 1991. It also aims at providing an additional opportunity to evaluate possibilities of co-operation between participating States on certain aspects of the law of the sea of common interest to the States of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic.

The declaration of the zone of peace and co-operation is a constructive initiative. Our intention remains to promote progress for the peoples in South America and Africa, with, it is our hope, the increasing support of the international community.

Bearing that in mind, I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of Angola, Argentina, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uruguay, Zaire and Brazil - the 22 States members of the zone - the draft resolution contained in document A/44/L.24, which, like its predecessors, is the result of a joint drafting effort by the countries concerned.

The draft is simple and straightforward in building upon the Declaration adopted under resolution 41/11. Under its preambular part, the Assembly would affirm that co-operation among all States, in particular those of the region, towards achieving peace and development is essential to promote the objectives of the zone; the Assembly would indicate that the States of the region are fully aware of the importance of preserving its environment, acknowledge the threat posed to it

(Mr. Nogueira-Batista, Brazil)

by pollution from any source, and note the efforts of States of the zone towards fulfilling the goals of the Declaration.

Under operative paragraph 1, the Assembly would take note of the report (A/44/536) submitted by the Secretary-General, which the sponsors gratefully acknowledge. In paragraph 2, it would call upon all States not only to co-operate in the promotion of the objectives of the region, but also to refrain from any action inconsistent with those objectives, particularly actions which might create or aggravate situations of tension and potential conflict in the region. In paragraph 3, it would welcome the beginning of the implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia and express the hope that Namibia would be received very soon as a full member of the South Atlantic community. Under paragraph 4, the Assembly would emphasize the imperative need to preserve the environment of the region and urge all States to take all measures necessary to protect it from environmental damage. In this context, in operative paragraph 5, the Assembly would urge all States to abstain from transferring hazardous, toxic and nuclear wastes into the region and disposing of them within the region. Operative paragraph 6 reflects the positive results of the consultations which will make possible the holding of the seminars, with both the assistance of the Office for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and the financial support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

In submitting draft resolution A/44/L.24 to the General Assembly for its consideration, we most sincerely hope that, understanding our motives, the Assembly will once again, be supportive of the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the South Atlantic region.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the first speaker in the debate on this item, the representative of Nepal.

Mr. JOSSE (Nepal): In once again speaking on the agenda item entitled "Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic", my delegation is naturally aware that Nepal is situated at a great physical distance from the South Atlantic. My delegation is, however, conscious of another reality - the close affinity between the initiative for the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic and its own modest proposal to declare Nepal a zone of peace. It is, indeed, that conceptual similarity that motivated my delegation to co-sponsor the historic General Assembly resolution 41/11 of 27 October 1986.

In this context, may I recall that Nepal had supported the 1971 General Assembly Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and the 1976 proposal for the establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia. Similarly, my country has endorsed proposals for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in South Asia, in the Mediterranean, and covering the African continent. It has supported the Tlatelolco Treaty of 1967 as well as the Rarotonga Treaty of 1985, representing as they do effective regional approaches to non-proliferation in Latin America and the South Pacific. Nepal has also welcomed a particular aspect of the Antarctic Treaty of 1959: that continent's demilitarization and denuclearization.

Allow me to touch briefly upon His Majesty King Birendra's 1975 proposal to declare Nepal a zone of peace - a proposal, I may add, that has received the valuable support of 113 States Members of this Organization, support for which I reiterate our grateful appreciation. It is a natural corollary of Nepal's policy of strict adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Non-Aligned Movement. In this age of new political thinking, we believe it could be a useful addition to the existing body of confidence-building measures related to disarmament and security.

(Mr. Josse, Nepal)

We hold that it represents one practical means for small geo-strategically located States to enhance their security even while securing their socio-economic development. In today's improving but all-too-fluid and unpredictable international situation, we believe it is important for all States, and not only the militarily powerful ones, to feel and be secure.

(Mr. Josse, Nepal)

Coming back to our agenda item, allow me to express my delegation's congratulations to the Government of Brazil on its active role as co-ordinator in promoting intensive exchanges among high-ranking authorities from South Atlantic countries, as set out in the Final Document of the first meeting of the States of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic.

As detailed in the Secretary-General's report (A/44/536), such exchanges have resulted in tangible agreements relating to political, economic, financial, commercial and technical co-operation.

My delegation is more than ever convinced that scrupulous adherence to the Declaration of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic would make a significant contribution to the maintenance of peace and security over that vast ocean expanse. We reiterate our belief that strict compliance with the terms of that Declaration would greatly assist in the prevention of not only a geographical proliferation of nuclear weapons but also of threats to regional and international security stemming from commitments to the non-introduction of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and rivalries and conflicts that are foreign to the region.

My delegation has noted some recent, promising developments on the international scene that have a bearing on the South Atlantic. Among them is the holding of elections in Namibia last week, under the supervision and control of the United Nations, preparatory to its full independence in April 1990.

My delegation welcomes the announcement a few hours ago of the results of those elections and their certification by the Secretary-General's Special Representative. We wish to offer our most sincere congratulations to the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) on its well-deserved electoral victory. It is our hope that by this time next year Namibia will have not only joined this

(Mr. Josse, Nepal)

world body but also become fully integrated into the community of South Atlantic States committed to the Declaration of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic. We share the goal of the Argentine Government, as expressed in document A/44/536,

"to see the South Atlantic become a true zone of peace and co-operation, free from nuclear weapons, protected from any form of arms race and from any aspiration to hegemony." (A/44/536, p. 4, para. 2)

We hold that an essential condition for the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic is the complete dismantling of the apparatus and policy of apartheid by the racist Pretoria régime, the adherence of Pretoria to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, the placing of all its nuclear activities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) supervision, and the guaranteeing of a truly nuclear-free status for the zone.

My delegation shares the view expressed by some Governments that, in light of the existing agreements concerning nuclear-free zones in Latin America and the South Pacific, and the process of establishing a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean and a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic, the idea of considering the declaration of the whole southern hemisphere a nuclear-free zone deserves serious attention.

We wish to record our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report. We also wish to express our appreciation to the States of the South Atlantic region that have undertaken steps to implement the terms of historic General Assembly resolution 41/11. We urge them to continue their laudable and, in many ways, exemplary endeavours in meaningful regional co-operation. My delegation is therefore honoured to support draft resolution A/44/L.24, just introduced by the representative of Brazil. We hope it will be endorsed by consensus by the Assembly.

Mr. ADJOYI (Togo) (interpretation from French): The nobility of the ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations calls for the constant mobilization of our energies and the rational combination of our initiatives for the purpose of creating the appropriate conditions for the advent of a more peaceful and prosperous world in full solidarity.

In short, we are required to convert international peace and security into a solid shield against expansionist and domineering aspirations which, as we all know, have precipitated the two deadliest conflagrations of our time.

It is significant and appropriate in this respect for the General Assembly to have adopted at its forty-first session a decision to declare a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic.

It is fitting to recall that this declaration is in keeping with paragraph 64 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That paragraph stipulates:

"The establishment of zones of peace in various regions of the world under appropriate conditions, to be clearly defined and determined freely by the States concerned in the zone, taking into account the characteristics of the zone and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and in conformity with international law, can contribute to strengthening the security of States within such zones and to international peace and security as a whole." (resolution S-10/2)

The very extensive support for the three resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the question of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic - General Assembly resolutions 41/11, 42/16 and 43/23 - confirms the commitment of the international community to work towards international peace, security and co-operation and constitutes for the States of the zone a reason to work towards the goals contained in the declaration.

(Mr. Adjoyi, Togo)

It is clear from the resolutions that implementation of the Declaration is the joint responsibility of the States concerned and of the States of all other regions, in particular the militarily significant States. Numerous efforts have been made since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 41/11, of 27 October 1986, demonstrating the determination of the coastal States of the South Atlantic to convert their region into a genuine zone of peace and co-operation.

The first meeting of the States of the zone, held at Rio de Janeiro from 25 to 29 July 1988, emphasized the particular responsibility of the States of the region with regard to the preservation of peace and security in the Zone and outlined the framework for future action to give substance to their desire to co-operate.

Brazil's remarkable work as co-ordinator of the States of the zone is clear proof of the importance of the decision taken at Rio de Janeiro to establish that post and of the catalysing role which the co-ordinator is called upon to play. It therefore appears to be both just and appropriate to welcome the active participation of Brazil in the Conference of Plenipotentiaries charged with drawing up the global convention on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes, as well as efforts of our Co-ordinator to organize two seminars on the application of the legal régime provided for in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Those two seminars are extremely important in that they are concerned essentially with the provisions of the Convention likely to have an impact on the zone. In line with its unswerving commitment to international peace and security and its strong faith in the virtues of a international co-operation of all kinds free from ideological considerations, Togo intends to contribute, to the best of its ability to the attainment of the objectives of the Declaration of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic. That commitment has already

(Mr. Adjovi, Togo)

been demonstrated by the fact that my country is a party to the Agreement on non-aggression and mutual assistance for defence concluded with the States of the West African Community and initiated the non-aggression Protocol between the 16 States members of the Economic Community of West African States.

As a founding member of the Economic Community of West African States, my country spares no effort to contribute to the success of this exemplary experiment in subregional economic integration, which is a factor for stability and peace. Moreover, the many initiatives concerning mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts on the part of the President of the Republic, His Excellency General Gnassingbe Eyadema, confirm Togo's steadfast dedication to peace.

It is not only the States of the region that should respect the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation. This pertinent requirement is implicit in General Assembly resolution 41/11, of 27 October 1986, in which the General Assembly

"Calls upon all States of all other regions, in particular the militarily significant States, scrupulously to respect the region of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation, especially through the reduction and eventual elimination of their military presence there, the non-introduction of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction and the non-extension into the region of rivalries and conflicts that are foreign to it".

(resolution 41/11)

It is appropriate to welcome the interest shown by numerous countries outside the zone in the attainment of the objectives of the Declaration.

In this respect, my delegation welcomes the Soviet Union's reaffirmation of its readiness to examine, with the United States of America and the other major naval Powers and the South Atlantic coastal States, the question of appropriate

(Mr. Adjoyi, Togo)

measures in response to the General Assembly's appeal for the reduction of the military presence in the region and the non-introduction of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. This is a most positive and constructive offer which deserves to be taken up by other major naval Powers and States of the zone for the purpose of deciding on specific action.

In fulfilling their responsibilities in the implementation of the Declaration of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic the States of other regions, in particular the militarily significant Powers, should avoid increasing existing tension or exacerbating the conflicts unleashed in the zone. Moreover, they should consider the conclusion of agreements on the reduction and progressive elimination of military activities incompatible with the requirements of peace and security of the coastal States of the South Atlantic, and co-operate closely with those States for the purpose of settling by political means conflicts in which States outside the regional are involved.

The prohibition of the transfer of radioactive and other hazardous wastes to countries of the South Atlantic must be one of the priorities of the industrial States outside the region. Such a prohibition would respond to the concern expressed by the States of the zone during the Rio de Janeiro meeting. In view of their concern to protect the environment of the South Atlantic against any risk of degradation, they unanimously condemned any transfer of hazardous wastes to the region.

My country, which was one of the first to protest at attempts at, and actual dumping of, toxic and hazardous wastes and which has recently adopted a rigorous environmental code, will support any action aimed at making the environment of the South Atlantic an unpolluted area.

(Mr. Adjoyi, Togo)

My delegation warmly welcomes the decision recently adopted by the twelve States members of the European Economic Community to prohibit the transfer by their industries of toxic wastes to the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. That decision should be an example to all the other industrialized countries that produce toxic wastes.

While it constitutes one of the strategic regions of the world and a huge market, the zone of the South Atlantic also has a significant political, economic, cultural and human dimension, because it has a diversity of States within it - peoples speaking French, English and Portuguese; Hispano-Americans, Latin-Americans and Africans; a dense population that is varied in terms of race, religion and values. The establishment of this zone - in addition to being in keeping with the essential purposes of this world Organization - is an action that reveals the will of the States concerned to draw the best possible advantage from their complementarity. In any event, the contribution of all the States Members of the United Nations to the effective implementation of the goals of the Declaration constitutes one of those roads that will inevitably lead us to the world of peace, justice and progress which all of us wish to build.

If the progressive improvement in international political relations could give a lasting impetus to the joint action by the coastal States of the South Atlantic and by the States of the other regions, we would greatly increase our chances of achieving peace and co-operation in the region and thus strengthening world equilibrium.

Mr. ARISMENDI (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): We are gathered here today because the international community is interested in discussing the new events in the South Atlantic from the perspective of peace and co-operation in the region.

(Mr. Arismendi, Colombia)

Ever since the region was declared a zone of peace and co-operation by a General Assembly resolution adopted in 1986, there have been new, positive achievements within the region as well as outside it. The climate of world-wide détente makes it possible for us to continue our search for a better future and for negotiated solutions in keeping with the principles of international law. One need only recall the first meeting of the States of the zone of peace and co-operation, which dealt with many issues with which the Assembly is familiar.

The efforts to achieve Namibia's independence are closer than ever before to realization. This has required constant follow-up action by the Security Council and agreements such as those reached in New York and Brazzaville, as well as many activities by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the international community as a whole. All this has shown the world that peace processes, although they may be complex, can move forward when there is the will to negotiate and the readiness to comply with agreements reached. We hope that this process in Namibia will continue - for the good of the Namibian people, for the reaffirmation of the principles of self-determination and territorial integrity, and for the strengthening of peace in that region.

We urge all States to promote the objectives of peace and co-operation established in the declaration of the zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic and to refrain from acts which might create or aggravate situations of tension and potential conflict in the region.

We welcome with satisfaction the implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia, which began in April this year, and we hope that very soon we shall receive Namibia as a member of the community of South Atlantic States. We have particularly in mind the news we have heard today of the successful outcome of the elections that took place in Namibia last week.

(Mr. Arismendi, Colombia)

Colombia considers that in order to achieve the objectives of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic the States of all the other regions must refrain from introducing military equipment or personnel, weapons of mass destruction or conflict situations into that region. Against that background, Colombia is a party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and we abide by the rules laid down by the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (OPANAL). Also, we recently acceded to the Antarctic Treaty, because we share the philosophy contained in that Treaty that that zone should be used exclusively for peaceful, scientific ends, and also to protect and preserve species and their habitats. By their nature, these instruments allow for the development of various forms of co-operation that reflect the true possibilities and needs of the region. By working towards that goal, we shall be working for the economic and social progress of our peoples.

We are pleased to have established diplomatic relations, in the period between 1987 to 1989, with the following coastal States of the region: Angola, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo.

We have been motivated in this by a spirit of understanding and co-operation, and by the desire to work jointly in the interests of the region and of the international community, as part of the common effort to bring about peace. Peace is possible if we all work to achieve it. The first and foremost challenge for mankind is to have a civilized life, a life of dignity.

Mrs. DIALLO (Senegal) (interpretation from French): As a coastal country of the South Atlantic, Senegal takes the opportunity offered by the consideration of agenda item 33 to reaffirm its dedication to the goals stated in the declaration establishing the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic.

(Mrs. Diallo, Senegal)

This seems to be the appropriate time and place for Senegal to proclaim once again its determination to continue to respect the ethic that is the basis of the relations between States of the zone, and its conviction that the future of the South Atlantic can be seen only in a situation of peace and harmony among the coastal States and peoples.

This commitment explains why in our relations with our neighbours - as has been recently recalled by President Abdou Diouf - we follow a policy of active good-neighbourliness based on the constant quest for ever greater solidarity. It is for this reason that Senegal associated itself from the outset with the praiseworthy initiative of Brazil and with all the consultations that resulted in the drafting of the Declaration of 27 October 1986 by which the General Assembly designated the ocean space between Africa and South America a zone of peace and co-operation.

In spite of the extent and complexity of the undertaking, in particular from the standpoint of disarmament and security, economic and social development, the safeguarding of the environment, respect for human rights and the rights of peoples, the South Atlantic States are working tirelessly to promote the spirit of the zone of peace and co-operation. Thus, in July 1989, the first meeting of the States of the region was held in Rio de Janeiro. This was an important step towards the attainment of the zone's objectives. That meeting made it possible, in particular, to emphasize the responsibility of coastal States with respect to the promotion of the aims and objectives of the zone; to censure the principle sources of conflict and tension that threaten peace and development in the zone; and to outline a comprehensive programme of transatlantic regional co-operation.

(Mrs. Diallo, Senegal)

Together with these efforts, the States of the zone are trying to benefit from the enriching experiences of other zones of peace with the same preoccupations from the contribution of specialized agencies, organs and bodies of the United Nations system.

It is thus proposed that, with the assistance of the United Nations, two seminars should be organized in 1990 and 1991, in the Congo and Uruguay, on those aspects of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea that could have a definite impact upon the zone. Similarly, African and Latin American regional organizations could make an appreciable contribution, enabling States to equip themselves with international legal instruments and the necessary means to convert the zone into an area of development, sheltered from conflicts and free from nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction. However, such an area would become a reality only with an improvement in the political climate in southern Africa once apartheid has been eliminated and South Africa's nuclear activities have been placed under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In this contribution, my delegation is extremely happy that very soon we shall be able to welcome the independent State of Namibia, after a long and painful independence process, to our midst as a member of the zone.

All these concerns, which are common to all the members of the zone, are clearly reflected in the draft resolution just submitted to the General Assembly by the delegation of Brazil. In reaffirming to Ambassador Paulo Nogueira-Batista its gratitude for the commitment and dedication with which he has carried out from the very outset his role as co-ordinator, the delegation of Senegal invites all delegations to vote in favour of draft resolution A/44/L.24.*

* Mr. Navajas Mogro (Bolivia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. BALE (Congo) (interpretation from French): On 27 October 1986 the Congo joined its voice to the voices of many other delegations that solemnly declared the South Atlantic a zone of peace and co-operation. Today, following a tradition established then and in view of the obvious interest of this question, my delegation would like to take the opportunity of this debate to reaffirm Congo's support for the Rio de Janeiro Declaration. Peace, security, development and regional co-operation - these objectives of the Declaration are extremely topical in the context of the relative relaxation of tension in international relations, in which the crucial problems of the development and economic recovery of developing countries should from now on have top priority. Thus these objectives are becoming increasingly important.

The task of translating these objectives into the reality of the life of the States, societies and individuals living in this marine area situated between Africa and South America requires, in addition to the support of the States of the zone, the support of the international community as a whole.

The commitment made in Rio de Janeiro in July 1988 by the States of the zone, particularly with regard to promoting regional co-operation in achieving economic and social development, protection of the environment and peace and security for all States in the region shows their determination to develop their relations in conditions of peace and freedom, in a climate free from tension and in conformity with the principles and rules of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

I therefore welcome the efforts being made at the level of our zone by Argentina and the United Kingdom to find solutions to the problems relating to the future of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

(Mr. Bale, Congo)

My delegation also welcomes the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), on Namibia, which we all hope to be able to welcome very soon as a Member of our Organization and a member of the zone.

The reduction of the military presence in the zone by States of other regions, in particular the militarily significant States, which should refrain from introducing weapons of mass destruction into the zone, would undoubtedly contribute to a reduction of tension and contribute to the achievement of the objectives set forth in the Rio de Janeiro Declaration.

The Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, with which the African States of the zone have solemnly associated themselves, reflects their desire to make the African continent and the Atlantic Ocean a nuclear-weapon-free zone. This declared intention, although shared by the countries of the zone, is unfortunately compromised by the confirmed nuclear capability of South Africa, which, as members are aware, has established racism as a system of Government.

(Mr. Bale, Congo)

If the relative calm that reigns in Angola and the independence process of Namibia which is under way constitute a positive development in southern Africa, apartheid remains a threat to international and regional peace and security. While reiterating its strong condemnation of apartheid, Congo calls upon all States which are helping South Africa in its nuclear and other armament efforts to cease all forms of co-operation with that régime.

We must also recognize that the so-called reforms that have been carried out in South Africa are more along the lines of an adaptation of apartheid because of the internal and external pressures, without any radical changes being made. Only unanimous and concerted action on the part of the Security Council and the international community as a whole to bring about mandatory measures, despite the selfish interests of certain countries, could lead Pretoria to eradicate apartheid. Thus the coastal States of the South Atlantic will rejoice in welcoming to their midst a democratic and multiracial South Africa freed from apartheid.

Lasting peace and security in our zone, as well as globally, can be guaranteed only when all the peoples of the world are able to determine their future in freedom, when the artificial barriers of race and all other forms of discrimination are broken down. The elimination of the economic and social instability of the States of the zone and all the developing countries as a whole is necessary in order to have genuine peace and security. This shows the great importance of the respect we must all have for the relevant United Nations resolutions on the subject.

The development of the States of the zone, the preservation of the environment from pollution and the promotion of trade undoubtedly require enormous resources which are often beyond the capabilities of our States. Although modest, the efforts which have been made so far deserve to be encouraged. Concertation between

(Mr. Bale, Congo)

the States of the zone has been enhanced often as a result of periodic visits by high-level authorities, inspiring countries to enter into agreements of co-operation in the political, economic, financial, trade and technical areas. The pursuit of these contacts will undoubtedly contribute to the achievement of the Rio de Janeiro objectives; but greater support from the members of the international community as a whole would be more helpful.

The ongoing support that the majority of the Member States of the United Nations have given to the resolutions concerning the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation shows the universal aspiration for peace and the desire to promote co-operation in the various regions of the world. We welcome the efforts of the Office for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea in the Secretariat of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme and those countries that are organizing seminars on the application of the legal régime provided for in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which are to be held in Congo and Uruguay. My country, for its part, is taking all the necessary measures to ensure the success of the Brazzaville seminar.

In conclusion, we should like to recall that, in order to strengthen peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic, it is indispensable for all the States of the international community to commit themselves to engaging in negotiations in order to settle peacefully whatever disputes may arise between them in the context of the norms governing international coexistence.

Mr. AZ IKIWE (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation views United Nations General Assembly resolution 41/11, of 27 October 1986, which solemnly declared the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic, as an important landmark in fostering regional co-operation, security and development, as well as in the promotion of international peace. The principles and objectives of that resolution

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

underline our conviction concerning the imperatives of political understanding and socio-economic collaboration among States, which constitute the pillars of genuine peace and security.

The South Atlantic is a region of particular significance to Nigeria for various reasons. Like other States of the Zone and a coastal State bordering the South Atlantic Ocean, it is vital to the security and legitimate maritime transactions of Nigeria to safeguard the South Atlantic for peaceful activities. Furthermore, as the common ocean joining the African continent with South Africa, the South Atlantic is pivotal to the co-operation of these two geographical components of the developing world whose close contacts have long been inhibited by decades of colonialism and underdevelopment. Above all, by complementing the Latin American nuclear-weapon-free zone under the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the African initiative on the denuclearization of our continent, the South Atlantic Zone manifests the desire of the States of the region to be free from outside foreign interference, military rivalry, nuclear-weapon competition and other hostile intentions.

The Final Document (A/43/512, annex) of the first high-level meeting of the States of the Zone of the South Atlantic, held in Rio de Janeiro in July 1988, established the blueprint for regional peace, co-operation and development. It illuminates the wish of the States of the zone to accord necessary priorities not only to political contacts and co-operation but also to consolidation of the security of member States and the social, economic and technical development of their peoples. In other words, the South Atlantic zone is already living up to the hopes and aspirations which guided its establishment as an instrument of peace and South-South co-operation.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

While Nigeria welcomes these positive trends and the modest achievement recorded so far by the zone, we are not unmindful of the challenges and problems ahead. Although the region of the South Atlantic ocean is one of the least militarized areas of the world today, some recent developments give cause for grave concern to my country.

First, the African continent continues to be threatened by the nuclear-weapons ambition of apartheid South Africa, a country that borders on the South Atlantic Ocean.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

In spite of 25 years of efforts by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), dating back to 1964, to make Africa nuclear free, the oppressive minority régime in Pretoria, aided and abetted technologically by outside Powers, has continued its relentless acquisition of sophisticated conventional and nuclear arms to maintain its apartheid policies. The recent disclosures of South Africa's development, with Israeli assistance, of nuclear-tipped medium-range missiles with a range of 1,700 kilometres, and of completed nuclear-testing facilities point to the increasing threat not only to the security of the neighbouring African States but also to regional and international peace.

Secondly, the strategic importance of the South Atlantic as a vital ocean lane for international shipping, maritime transactions and communications networks gives it value as one of the busiest ocean routes in our interdependent world. However, the interests of the major Powers have not always been satisfactorily confined to peaceful uses of strategic sea lanes. The threat posed by naval systems and their deployment in vast ocean areas far from their geographical origins and their sophisticated nuclear armaments, especially aboard submarines, pose a considerable security threat to seaboard security, especially that of developing coastal States, including those of the South Atlantic zone. The presence of military bases belonging to the major Powers in various islands of the South Atlantic Ocean, some in close proximity to the territories of some States of the zone, gives cause for security concern.

Thirdly, as a zone sharing frontiers with the virgin continent of Antarctica, the South Atlantic cannot be indifferent to developments in that uninhabited land mass, which, because of its potential resources, has attracted tremendous international interest in recent years. Unfortunately, instead of being preserved for purely scientific exploration and activities, Antarctica is gradually being

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

exploited for economic, mineral and touristic reasons. The consequences for the rest of the world, especially for the immediate coastal countries of the South, of upsetting Antarctica's delicate ecosystem through a sudden rise in the level of the ocean temperature are unimaginable. The increasing reports of oil spillage from ships and tankers plying Antarctica also give rise to grave concern about environmental pollution with its expected spill-over effects on the South Atlantic region.

With Antarctica thus becoming an economic El Dorado to some technologically advanced countries, military competition over and efforts to control lucrative mineral areas remains a distinct possibility, and would have a negative impact on the outlying regions.

It is for these reasons, among others, that Nigeria cannot but be concerned lest the full realization of the objectives of the zone of the South Atlantic could be frustrated by these impediments. This is why we call on the United Nations and the international community as a whole to assist the States of the zone in the bid to safeguard their legitimate interests and aspirations, as well as to guarantee freedom of navigation, peaceful maritime traffic and the security of the environment.

My delegation wishes to commend the support given by the States of the zone and by the General Assembly during the forty-third session, last year, to action on the issue of the dumping of radioactive and other hazardous wastes in Africa. The criminal practice of the illegal disposal of these wastes in the territories of some States of the zone rightly met with the strong condemnation of the international community. The vigilance of the States of the zone with regard to such criminal practices by waste merchants has since then resulted in co-ordinated efforts, which have so far prevented similar illegal dumping in any part of the

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

zone. The international community must give practical effect to its concern for the safety of the environment by tightening the existing legal framework to eliminate completely the dumping of radioactive and other hazardous wastes in the territories of other States.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (A/44/536) and commends the United Nations for its support for the aims and objectives of the zone. We also express our appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea for the assistance being rendered to the zone in attaining its objectives and implementing its relevant programmes.

It is the fervent hope of my delegation that during the next high-level meeting of the States of the zone in the second half of 1990 an independent Namibia will be welcomed into the fold as our 23rd member.

Finally, my delegation wishes to reiterate my country's unflinching commitment to the effectiveness and viability of the zone of the South Atlantic, and commends draft resolution A/44/L.24 to the General Assembly for overwhelming support.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I call on the representative of Venezuela, who wishes to explain her vote before the voting. I remind her that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. DA SILVA (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): Venezuela continues to attach special importance to the initiative covering the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic. In the statement we made when this item was considered at the forty-third session of the General

(Mrs. Da Silva, Venezuela)

Assembly we clearly stated the reasons why Venezuela was a sponsor of resolution 43/23.

We simply wish to say now that Venezuela is a coastal State of the South Atlantic, into which flows our main watercourse, the Orinoco.

We share the view that it is advisable for many reasons to establish a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic, in the interest not only of the coastal countries in that area but of the entire international community.

Consequently, the initiative concerning designation of the South Atlantic as a zone whose exclusive purpose is the promotion of co-operation between the coastal States and other interested States and co-ordination of the efforts of those countries in a common undertaking in the interest of peace, security and progress in the region is of great interest to Venezuela.

(Mrs. Da Silva, Venezuela)

The fact that this year we did not co-sponsor draft resolution A/44/L.24 should not be construed as waning or lack of interest on the part of Venezuela with respect to this issue, and as in other years, we shall vote in favour of the present draft resolution, which reiterates those objectives.

We hope that next year when the General Assembly again takes up this item we shall be able to participate actively in the preparation of the relevant draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/44/L.24.

Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution concerning the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic, it would request the Secretary-General to keep implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/11 under review and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, taking into account, inter alia, the views expressed by Member States. Provision for this activity is programmed in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991. Consequently, no programme budget implications are anticipated should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/44/L.24.

The voting process has now begun. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia

Against: United States of America

Abstaining: Canada, Japan

Draft resolution A/44/L.24 was adopted by 146 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions (resolution 44/20).*

* Subsequently the delegations of Papua New Guinea, Paraguay and Vanuatu informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Before I call on those representatives wishing to speak in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to ten minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. SALAS (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The Government of Mexico believes that the efforts made by the States of the South Atlantic to strengthen the zone of peace and co-operation deserve the enthusiastic support of the international community. Hence Mexico voted in favour of the resolutions adopted on this subject, especially resolution 41/11 whereby the General Assembly solemnly declared a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic.

The resolution we have just adopted is one more step towards the consolidation and strengthening of that zone, particularly in emphasizing the imperative need to preserve the environment of the region and ensure its protection. We are convinced that it is only by means of strengthening international co-operation that the peace objectives enshrined in the Charter of our Organization will be achieved.

In this context, my delegation welcomes the bonds of assistance that have been established between various areas of the United Nations and the States of the South Atlantic. For these reasons, the delegation of Mexico finds it difficult to understand why, this new text, when compared to the original resolution declaring the zone of peace and co-operation, does not contain any reference to the obligation of all States to respect the principles of the United Nations Charter and the resolutions of the General Assembly. We believe that a reference of this kind would make a significant contribution to the achievement of the original objectives of the States of the South Atlantic.

Mr. MACDOUGAL (United States of America): The United States has once again been compelled to vote against the draft resolution on the South Atlantic zone of peace. As we have stated in the past, our opposition is based on the view that such a resolution would be inconsistent with the generally recognized principles under international law of the freedom of navigation of the high seas and the right of innocent passage through territorial waters. The United States finds itself unable to accept such restrictions.

In addition, we believe that any attempt to establish an internationally recognized zone of peace should be made through multilateral negotiations among relevant parties rather than through a General Assembly resolution.

Mr. AMIGUES (France) (interpretation from French): Maintaining longstanding bonds of friendship and co-operation with the States of the region of the South Atlantic, and wishing to support the efforts to secure co-operation among States at the regional level, France has this year voted for the draft resolution on this item. Nevertheless, my country wishes to reiterate its concerns with respect to the idea of a zone of peace in the South Atlantic as it continues to emerge from the text before us. Those concerns relate mainly to the ambiguities and to the lack of precision with regard to the geographical limits of the zone, as well as to the exact nature of the obligations that would become incumbent upon the States concerned.

I wish also to point out that France has always attached major importance to the need for the establishment of zones of peace or denuclearized zones not to run counter in any way to the rules of international law that apply, in particular, to the use of maritime and air space.

(Mr. Amigues, France)

France ardently hopes, in a constructive spirit, that those ambiguities can be dispelled when this agenda item is considered at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. DA COSTA PEREIRA (Portugal): The delegation of Portugal was pleased to support draft resolution A/44/L.24 on the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic, as it did a similar draft resolution last year.

We recognize the important and positive trends in international relations regarding the lessening of tensions throughout the world. In this connection, the draft resolution just adopted cannot but contribute to the strengthening of international peace and co-operation and serve to promote the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Da Costa Pereira,
Portugal)

We support the inclusion of new paragraphs regarding environmental concerns.

However, we should like to express - as we did last year in connection with a similar text - reservations with respect to the deficient geographical delimitation of the area covered by the provisions of the draft resolution.

Mr. MARTIN (Canada): I wish to say a few words in explanation of my country's abstention in the vote on draft resolution A/44/L.24, since we have in the past been able to support corresponding draft resolutions.

Canada, as a general rule, supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, given the satisfaction of certain conditions, as constituting progress towards total adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and as being an element of stabilization for the regions in question. We have traditionally viewed the draft resolutions on the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic in that light and have been pleased to support them. It was therefore with some regret that we found this year that references to extraneous issues were included in the draft resolution, references which we unfortunately could not support. In particular, I would point to operative paragraph 5, under which the Assembly

"Urges all States to abstain from transferring and disposing hazardous, toxic and nuclear wastes into the region",

as being inappropriate for a resolution of this nature.

We have, as a result, had to abstain this year.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have concluded our consideration of agenda item 33.

AGENDA ITEM 157 (continued)

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AGAINST ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SUPPLY, DEMAND, TRAFFICKING AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS, WITH A VIEW TO EXPANDING THE SCOPE AND INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUCH CO-OPERATION

- (a) DRAFT DECISION (A/44/L.37)
- (b) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/44/695)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to inform the Assembly that the sponsors of draft decision A/44/L.13 and of draft resolution A/44/L.19 have withdrawn those drafts, which had been previously submitted to the Assembly.

I now call on the representative of Yugoslavia to introduce draft decision A/44/L.37.

Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): I have the great honour to introduce, on behalf of the delegations of Algeria, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, India, Jamaica, Iceland, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Norway, Peru, Samoa, Senegal, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey and Vanuatu, and the twelve States members of the European Community - namely, France, Spain, Greece, the Federal Republic of Germany, Denmark, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Portugal, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy and Ireland - and on behalf of my own delegation, draft decision A/44/L.37, entitled "Organization of the special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs, with a view to expanding the scope and increasing the effectiveness of such co-operation".

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

The draft decision before us is the result of intensive and successful negotiations between various delegations, in which all countries demonstrated their desire to have a successful special session on the drug problem in order to enhance international co-operation in the struggle against this global evil.

In paragraph 1 of the draft decision the date of the special session is set. The session will take place, according to this proposal, from 20 to 23 February 1990 in New York, under the presidency of the President of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The decision on the establishment of a preparatory committee of the whole for the seventeenth special session is contained in paragraph 2. It is envisaged that the committee should meet for two days during the first week of December 1989 and for three days during the first week of February 1990.

According to paragraph 3, the Bureau - which is to consist of a chairman, three vice-chairmen and one rapporteur - may meet between the sessions of the preparatory committee to advance the preparatory work.

The role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in the preparation of the special session is envisaged in paragraph 4.

In paragraph 5 the Secretary-General is requested to submit to the second session of the Preparatory Committee and to the special session a report on:

"(a) Ongoing work towards the development of a United Nations system-wide plan of action on drug abuse control, taking into account the recommendations of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and existing United Nations programmes and other activities at the international and regional levels;

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

"(b) Progress towards the allocation of sufficient resources within the United Nations system to ensure that adequate priority is given to narcotic issues".

Finally, in the last paragraph the Assembly

"Invites the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and other relevant bodies of the United Nations system to transmit to the General Assembly at the special session any views on matters pertaining to the special session".

It is the sponsors' hope that this draft decision will be adopted without a vote.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to the report of the Fifth Committee in document A/44/695.

Paragraphs 3 and 4 of that report contain the programme budget implications of draft decision A/44/L.13, which has been withdrawn. I am informed that the new draft decision, in document A/44/L.37, will have the same programme budget implication as draft decision A/44/L.13 would have had. That is because the draft decision that was withdrawn and the new draft decision contain identical elements - namely, the convening of a special session from 20 to 23 February 1990, and the establishment of a preparatory committee of the whole to meet for two days during the first week of December 1989 and for three days during the first week of February 1990.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft decision A/44/L.37.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt that draft decision?

Draft decision A/44/L.37 was adopted.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have concluded our consideration of agenda item 157.

AGENDA ITEM 21 (continued)

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/615)
- (b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/44/L.16)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The General Assembly has before it draft resolution A/44/L.16, which was introduced by the representative of Costa Rica at the 37th plenary meeting. I call on the representative of Costa Rica, who has asked to make a statement in connection with the draft resolution.

Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): When we introduced our draft resolution A/44/L.16, entitled "Declaration of Human Responsibilities for Peace and Sustainable Development", we emphasized that it was recognized in the Secretary-General's report that among the important achievements of the International Year of Peace were the activities of various scientific institutions and education centres for the promotion of peace. The draft resolution is designed to emphasize one of those achievements by asking the General Assembly to take note with appreciation of the Declaration adopted by the Conference in Search of the True Meaning of Peace, which was organized by the University for Peace in Costa Rica, an institution created by the United Nations.

Our text is procedural in nature and its purpose is simply that the General Assembly take note of a Declaration which to all intents and purposes is inspired by tenets that are common to all ethics, philosophies, religions, creeds and ideologies that accept the responsibility of the human being with regard to life, and the society to which he or she belongs and, beyond that, the international community.

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

One of the paragraphs of the Declaration states that "according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable human rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." (A/44/626, p. 4)

That fundamental principle, which has been affirmed in many United Nations documents, leads us to another, which emphasizes

"the challenge posed by the growing imbalances in the dynamic relationship between population, resources and the environment". (ibid., p. 5)

We believe that we are thus emphasizing the urgent need for a greater awareness of the unity of life and of the special character of each of the expressions of life, and for a more profound human sense of responsibility and a reorientation of human thoughts, feelings and actions.

In a very important statement made before the General Assembly, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, expressed grave concern and referred to the need for concerted action with regard to this issue. This too is mentioned in the Declaration and is a view that Costa Rica shares.

We also share the views expressed by the Ambassador of Togo in his important statement on this subject on 24 October. He referred with great sensitivity to article 7 of the Declaration which is in chapter III, "The alternatives facing mankind and universal responsibility." Article 7 begins with the following statement:

"Of all living creatures, human beings have the unique capacity to decide consciously whether they are protecting or harming the quality and conditions of life on Earth" (ibid., p. 7)

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

In this connection the Ambassador said:

"If, just as we are - big or small, white or black, rich or poor - we could meditate on article 7 and become more aware of the fact that the world is a whole based primarily on love, mankind would have taken a giant step towards peace." (A/44/PV.37, p. 21)

The representative of the Philippines also referred in her interesting statement to the Declaration and mentioned one of its preambular paragraphs, which states:

"Recognizing the necessity of ensuring the full and equal participation of women and men in the decision-making processes relating to the promotion of peace and development". (A/44/626, p. 4)

That paragraph reminds us of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies as the basis for ensuring and accelerating the integration of women in the process of development and achieving the objectives of equality, development and peace.

It was for all these reasons that Costa Rica introduced the Declaration of Human Responsibilities for Peace and Sustainable Development as a valid instrument for consideration and commitment.

We are convinced that opposition to the draft resolution is not based on the text itself, in which the General Assembly would merely take note of a document which is well conceived and aimed at finding solutions to problems which affect mankind and for which no solutions have as yet been found. We find it difficult to believe that the objections of certain delegations have anything to do with the text of the Declaration. We have been told, for example, that the document is not important and that it is not necessary to adopt a resolution to take note of it. We profoundly respect the views of all delegations but we believe that the Declaration is indeed important.

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa
Rica)

In answer to those comments we have said that the Conference was organized by the University for Peace, an institution dedicated to the study of peace and established by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 35/55, of 5 December 1980. The Conference was held, in accordance with the tenets of the proclamation by the General Assembly, on 24 October 1986, of the International Year of Peace, and people of various creeds, races, political opinions and professions participated, and decided to contribute to the preparation of the Declaration.

The facts about the drafting of the Declaration, which has been distributed as an annex to document A/44/526, of 11 October 1989, are a matter of historical record. It was introduced to the Assembly by the Government of Costa Rica, whose President considered it to be a valuable and inspiring work and therefore assumed the responsibility of presenting it to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. It must also be said that not all the conferences and events in many States in connection with the proclamation of the International Year of Peace involved among their participants two winners of the Nobel Peace Prize winners, as are the President of Costa Rica and the Dalai Lama of Tibet.

As a founding Member State of the United Nations, Costa Rica has always supported the principle of the sovereign equality of States irrespective of size or power. Costa Rica, a country with little territory and lacking in military or economic might, is committed to the fundamental principles of the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant legal instruments. It believes that it has the right and the moral authority to propose to the General

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa
Rica)

Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/44/L.16, the sole objective of which is to take note of the Declaration. We do not believe that we are harming anyone with a proposal that has all the elements that have inspired the debates at this and past sessions of the General Assembly.

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

Nevertheless, a powerful State Member of the United Nations - a permanent member of the Security Council - has categorically opposed this draft resolution. That will be an obstacle to the adoption of the draft, for which we had hoped. Therefore, my Government has decided not to request that it be put to the vote or that a decision be taken on it.

I repeat that we respectfully request that no vote be taken on draft resolution A/44/L.16, "Declaration of Human Responsibilities for Peace and Sustainable Development".

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In view of the statement just made by the representative of Costa Rica, no action will be taken on draft resolution A/44/L.16.

The representative of China wishes to make a statement.

Mr. YU Mengjia (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Just now the representative of Costa Rica stated that her delegation had decided to request that no action be taken on draft resolution A/44/L.16, under agenda item 21. The Chinese delegation would like to express its appreciation for that. I believe this is a feeling shared by many delegations.

However, in her statement just now the representative of Costa Rica referred to the Dalai Lama while speaking about the Conference in Search of the True Meaning of Peace, which took place from 25 to 30 June 1989. I should like to point out that the Dalai Lama has all along engaged in activities dividing the national unity and the unity of Chinese nationals. His participation in a conference cannot be any contribution to world peace. Therefore I should like to express our regret that the organizers extended an invitation to the Dalai Lama and decided that he should be the main speaker at that Conference.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call on the representative of Costa Rica who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica, (interpretation from Spanish): One of the important aspects of democracy, in which we firmly believe, is that one can have one's own opinion and at the same time accept and respect the fact that others may not share it. Our delegation clearly expressed its opinion on our draft resolution as well as on the Declaration of Human Responsibilities for Peace and Sustainable Development.

As I said earlier - and I repeat now - we do not share the views of the representative of China, but we respect them. It was precisely for that reason that we asked that no action be taken on draft resolution A/44/L.16.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have concluded our consideration of agenda item 21.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.