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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

1. The CHAIRMAN, expressed his sympathy on behalf of the members of the Committee, to the Governments of both the United States of America and China in connection with the recent earthquakes in those countries.
2. Mr. SNOOK (United States) thanked the Chairman for his condolences and expressed his country's sympathy to the people of China in connection with the tragedy which they had undergone.
3. Mr. YU Shuning (China) thanked the Chairman and the representative of the United States for their kind words and expressed his sympathy to the people of the United States.

AGENDA ITEM 80: QUESTION OF THE MALAGASY ISLANDS OF GLORIEUSES, JUAN DE NOVA, EUROPA AND BASSAS DA INDIA

4. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A/44/409. He also announced that, following consultations with the delegations concerned, particularly those of France and Madagascar, and in view of the periodic contacts between the Governments of those countries, he had decided to request that the Committee postpone consideration of agenda item 80 until the forty-fifth session. He therefore suggested that the following draft decision be adopted: "The Special Political Committee decides to postpone consideration of the item entitled 'Question of the Malagasy Islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India' and recommends that the General Assembly include this item in the provisional agenda of its forty-fifth session".
5. The CHAIRMAN said, that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt that draft decision.
6. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 81: QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE RELEVANT ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

7. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to documents A/44/409 and A/44/463. Since no speakers had expressed a wish to address the item, he suggested that consideration should be postponed until the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.
8. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 74: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (continued) (A/SPC/44/L.3)

9. Mr. KOTÉY (Ghana) expressed his support for draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.3 and, speaking in explanation of vote, said that few subjects had generated more confusion and anxiety than commercial nuclear power. His country fully supported

(Mr. Kotey, Ghana)

the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and was conscious of the accompanying responsibility for safety. It therefore commended the efforts of the Scientific Committee to inform the general public of the harmful effects of atomic radiation.

10. In many developing countries, nuclear power was regarded as an alternative to firewood, but the related human and technological errors could unfortunately give rise to hardship, death and misery throughout the world. Accordingly, his delegation felt morally obliged to recommend that all countries interested in establishing nuclear power programmes should ensure that such power was used safely. It wished to place on record its condemnation of all nuclear tests, whether under water, under ground or in the atmosphere, because of the possibility of radiation. Atomic radiation was an important environmental issue which must be scientifically addressed by the international community. In that regard, the Scientific Committee was carrying out very useful work, which should make it possible to acquire more information on the subject, in the interests of mankind's survival.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution.

12. Draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.3 was adopted without a vote.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 74.

AGENDA ITEM 150: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (A/44/192; A/SPC/44/L.4)

14. Mr. ZAKI (Maldives) expressed, on behalf of his Government, his deep sympathy to the Governments and peoples of the United States and China in connection with the recent earthquakes in those countries.

15. The security situation of many small States Members of the United Nations was characterized by extreme vulnerability, so that even very limited attacks, whether carried out by terrorists, mercenaries or adventurers, could have a serious impact on the social and political systems of such States, and on their very survival. The frequency of such incidents in recent years had been alarming.

16. In November 1988, a terrorist group of heavily armed foreign mercenaries had attempted to invade his country, with the intention of overthrowing the democratic Government and installing a puppet régime which would provide arms and training to terrorist groups. Had the attempt been successful, it would not only have destabilized the country but also endangered the peace and security of the whole region. Thanks to the timely assistance of a neighbouring country, as requested by the Government of the Maldives, and to an excellent international response, the situation was contained, although the incident resulted in material damage and the loss of innocent human lives. The episode highlighted the need of small States to strengthen their security in times of crisis. It was, however, crucial that the

(Mr. Zaki, Maldives)

international community should recognize the particular vulnerability of small States to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs.

17. It was high time for effective action to ensure the protection and security of small States, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations, and the Organization should provide unconditional support with a view to identifying and devising ways and means to take such action. The role of the Secretary-General, under Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations, could serve as a basis for the adoption of appropriate preventive measures in cases of threat and potential threats against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of small States. His country was convinced that a firm commitment on the part of the Organization to the protection and security of small States would help to deter many of the threats confronting them. Sovereign equality and self-determination were inviolable principles of the Charter and constituted the very foundations on which several States, and particularly small States, existed as independent entities. The international community should therefore acknowledge both the importance of ensuring the survival of small States and its obligations in that regard.

18. Small States could hardly afford to buy arms. The scarce resources available to them were needed to improve standards of living, health care and popular education and to develop their national economic infrastructure. His country therefore urged the international community not to force it to choose between surrendering its sovereignty and spending its scarce resources on the acquisition of weapons.

19. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the draft resolution which he had introduced (A/SPC/44/L.4) would be adopted by consensus.

20. Mr. VERMA (Nepal) said that the scrupulous observance of the United Nations Charter would have ensured international peace and security, and prompt preventive and punitive actions by the Organization would have discouraged States from violating the principles of inter-State relations. Nevertheless, wars were raging in different parts of the world, and many nations were subjected to external interference and intimidation, a situation which gave rise to uncertainty and insecurity, particularly for the weak and small countries. Nepal therefore hoped that the Committee would adopt by consensus draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.4, which sought to give the international community a better understanding of the vulnerability of small States, in order to keep a watch on the possible threats which might endanger their integrity and security.

21. The current international situation was both delicate and dangerous. Although it was encouraging to note recent developments in international relations, particularly in relations between the two super-Powers, it was also necessary to join efforts to encourage and strengthen the process so as to ensure a better and safer life for succeeding generations. In that lengthy task, the United Nations would be required to safeguard the small States against the pressures of international politics. Those countries, which constituted a sizeable number in

(Mr. Verma, Nepal)

the membership of the United Nations, felt that their only hope lay in collective security as provided in the Charter, and wished to uphold the principles it set forth regarding inter-State relations.

22. Nepal had not only expressed its total commitment to the principles set forth in the Charter, but had also incorporated them in its Constitution as guiding principles of its foreign policy. The proposal of His Majesty King Birendra to declare Nepal a zone of peace further expressed that country's determination to give practical application to the principles of the Charter regarding inter-State relations and represented a measure for strengthening confidence in the region based on mutual respect and reciprocity and non-interference in the internal matters of other States. Nepal hoped that its initiative could serve as a model for small States which wished to live and be left in peace.

23. Mrs. CHAN (Singapore) said that it was something of a paradox that the Committee should have before it a resolution on the protection and security of small States (A/SPC/44/L.4) at a time when there was an improvement in relations between the super-Powers, while the many unsettled regional conflicts indicated that global peace was still elusive.

24. Although the United Nations Charter recognized the existence of large and small nations, all countries were equal in so far as they had an equal say in matters affecting the global community and enjoyed the right to exist peacefully.

25. Because of their small area, population and economy, small States were thought to be potentially easy victims for external aggressors, and were vulnerable to interference in their internal affairs. Not only did they have to ensure their territorial and political survival, but they had to survive more securely and more properly. In order to do so, they could apply four strategies: deterrence, defence, development and diplomacy.

26. Small States could not depend primarily on military might to ensure their security, but they could and should have a small armed defence force that would be effective in deterring and neutralizing external aggression and threats. Citizen armies or defence arrangements with trustworthy bigger nations were possible means of defence. Alternatively, they might seek unity; the small island States of the Caribbean, for example, were exploring the possibility of a regional force.

27. In addition, economic development was a prerequisite for ensuring the welfare of the population and the internal stability of small States, in order to prevent external interference and exploitation. To overcome the vulnerability that resulted from excessive dependence on a single commodity and a few markets, small States should diversify their economies so as to increase their stability and confidence in their dealings with their larger neighbours.

28. With regard to diplomacy, she stressed that in the current era of growing interdependence, no State could isolate itself, and small States in particular

(Mrs. Chan, Singapore)

needed to be fully integrated into the global system. Closed-door policies in any area undermined the security of those States, and they should therefore play an active role in international forums.

29. Singapore, a small State, had pursued a policy in its international relations of being a friend to all who sought to be its friends; it recognized the importance of global political and economic links in order to avoid disaster in times of trouble and to promote relations with friendly and neighbouring countries, thus creating a climate of mutual confidence. Co-operation was more rewarding than hostility; for example, the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in South-East Asia, to which the six members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, including Singapore, were parties, was both a conflict-resolution instrument and a confidence-building measure.

30. In the view of her delegation, the international community, and the United Nations in particular, were duty bound to call "foul" whenever a bigger State decided to interfere in the domestic affairs of a small State and to put moral and other non-violent pressure on the aggressor to indicate that its actions were unacceptable. Concerted action could ensure that an initially small problem would not deteriorate into a dangerous regional conflict that would threaten international peace and stability. A combination of self-help and international support could help small States to develop economically, ensure the well-being of their citizens and enable them to live in peace and harmony.

31. Singapore urged the Committee to adopt draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.4.

32. Mr. CURE (Mauritius) said that the problems of small States, which had been recognized by the international community and discussed in international organizations such as UNCTAD, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth, could be overcome through regional co-operation, the aim of which was to reduce the vulnerability of those States and improve their collective self-reliance.

33. Small nations, and in particular small island States, encountered considerable difficulties, through lack of resources, in building up a wider operating environment likely to overcome geographical, economic, financial or political obstacles. Stability and security were therefore essential to their development. Mauritius hoped to see those objectives achieved in its region of the world by the convening of an International Conference on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

34. Mr. YU Shuning (China) said that, despite successes in settling some conflicts, there were still factors making for tension between States, which continued to engage in the arms race, the struggle for hegemony and power politics. It could even be said that owing to violations of the norms of international law some contradictions had become sharper, with attacks on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of, for example, small countries that were more vulnerable to external aggression, including mercenary attacks. The international community should devote greater attention to the plight of small countries.

(Mr. Yu Shuning, China)

35. In discussing the question of the protection and security of States, the international community should reaffirm the principles on which international relations should be based, which were set forth in the United Nations Charter and in the norms of international law. In the mid-1950s, China and some neighbouring countries had laid down the five principles of peaceful coexistence, which had been widely endorsed by the international community. Observance of the five principles in question had served world peace and stability, while their violation had led to tension and conflicts between States.

36. Countries had different social systems and values, and it was for the people of a given country to choose their own social system, without outside interference. The international community must condemn and put an end to all such acts as attempting to change the Government and the social system of other countries by exerting pressure of various kinds or by resorting to the use of force.

37. China, which supported all efforts to seek new and effective ways of protecting the security of all States, particularly small States, believed that such efforts could begin with the strengthening of the effectiveness of existing international mechanisms. Owing to the special situation of small States, it was natural that the United Nations should play a greater role in protecting their security, relying on the relevant regional organizations in that respect. The Chinese delegation was ready to co-operate with other delegations to that end.

38. Mr. LYNCH (New Zealand) said that, as a founding "small-State" Member of the United Nations, New Zealand strongly supported all measures designed to protect and enhance the security of small States. Owing to the decolonization process, many States Members of the United Nations were small countries that had the common characteristic of vulnerability owing to their economic and military weakness. However, they were strongly committed to the principles of the non-use of force and the sovereign equality, territorial integrity and independence of nations set out in the United Nations Charter and in international law, which were the corner-stone for the security of all States.

39. The Charter could not guarantee the security of small States, but fulfilment of obligations under the Charter remained as important today as 45 years earlier. The international community had shown itself willing and able to respond with effective measures to problems that threatened security, such as international terrorism and traffic in narcotic drugs.

40. New Zealand wished to commend the Special Committee on the Charter for its very useful work, as demonstrated by the adoption the previous year of the Declaration on the Prevention and Removal of Disputes and Situations Which May Threaten International Peace and Security and on the Role of the United Nations in this Field.

41. The enhancement of the security of small States depended not only on the adoption of global measures in further elaboration of the principles of the United Nations Charter, but also on co-operation with other small States in a given region

(Mr. Lynch, New Zealand)

and on understanding among such States. The activities of the South Pacific Forum in the field of terrorism were a good example of such co-operation, but perhaps the most important manifestation of regional co-operation was the support for the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, the Treaty of Rarotonga, on which New Zealand, together with other delegations, would submit a draft resolution at the current session.

42. Such regional initiatives could make a significant contribution to the enhancement of the security of small States, whose survival also involved the maintenance of their environmental and economic security through the adoption of collective regional measures, such as those adopted under the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme Convention.

43. New Zealand wished to reaffirm its support for draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.4, of which it was a sponsor.

44. Mrs. GAZEAU-SECRET (France), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that she had studied with interest the draft resolution submitted by Maldives on the protection and security of small States. The United Nations Charter proclaimed the "equal rights of ... nations large and small", which gave States the possibility of taking a matter to the relevant United Nations organs when they believed that their security, sovereignty and territorial integrity were threatened.

45. The draft resolution did not suggest that there should be a special status for particular categories of States, but it raised the problem of defining a "small State". It also brought up the problem of mercenaries, which was being considered under item 144. It was therefore to be hoped that adoption of that new resolution would not result in an additional financial burden and that the Committee was not losing sight of the real goal, which was to reaffirm that small and large States had the same right to security and peace. However, it must be recognized that small States could be vulnerable to external threats, and the Twelve had therefore decided to support the draft resolution.

46. Mr. GARAD (Somalia) said that the initiative taken by Maldives in requesting the inclusion of the item under consideration in the agenda was both timely and necessary, since on a number of occasions small States had been the victims of outside interference and armed attempts to overthrow their Government or to violate their territorial integrity.

47. The United Nations must take resolute action to prevent such acts so that it would not be faced with situations that destabilized international relations. It was therefore important that Maldives and other small States should be provided with protection by the United Nations through the establishment of international security arrangements.

48. The measures suggested in paragraph 9 of the explanatory memorandum (A/44/192) deserved the highest consideration, since they principally represented preventative

(Mr. Garad, Somalia)

action through the "Global Watch" facility set up by the Secretary-General. Moreover, the highest priority must be accorded to finalizing and adopting the draft convention against the recruitment, use, financing and training of mercenaries.

49. The CHAIRMAN said that Guyana, Indonesia, Pakistan, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates wished to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.4.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.