

UNITED NATIONS  
**General Assembly**  
FORTY-FOURTH SESSION  
*Official Records*

FIRST COMMITTEE  
48th meeting  
held on  
Monday, 27 November 1989  
at 3 p.m.  
New York

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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 48th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. FAHMY (Egypt) (Vice-Chairman)

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Distr. GENERAL  
A/C.1/44/PV.48  
2 January 1990  
ENGLISH

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Fahmy (Egypt), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 71, 72 and 73 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON  
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Mr. TANASIE (Romania): The strengthening of international peace and security has always been the main concern of peoples all over the world, but in our times it has become more and more crucial for the fate of mankind owing to the great changes that have taken place in the last few decades and are taking place now in the world situation and the balance of forces. In that context, all activities of the United Nations aimed at strengthening peace and security in our world are welcome and demanded with great hope by the Member States and their peoples.

Indeed, certain positive steps have been taken in the past years towards disarmament and the opening of negotiations between the two military groupings - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact - and certain conflicts are in the process of being resolved by negotiation. However, we must frankly say that those steps have not brought about a radical change in the international situation and have not led to new thinking and a new policy with regard to the solution of the complex problems confronting the contemporary world.

The international climate continues to be very complex and serious. The arms race, including the nuclear-arms race, is continuing. The world economic situation is deteriorating, mainly for the developing countries, and the gap between the poor and the rich countries is deepening, thus accentuating the contradictions between them. New attempts are now being made to destabilize some countries and to endanger peaceful coexistence among countries with different social systems based

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

on respect for independence and sovereignty, non-interference in domestic affairs, and observance of each nation's right to choose its path of development without any outside interference. It has been generally recognized that all those phenomena of current international life are very serious obstacles to the strengthening of peace and security.

Romania has always taken an active part in the international community's efforts to promote international peace and security. It has consistently supported the General Assembly resolutions adopted under the agenda items now being considered by the First Committee. We commend the efforts made by the non-aligned countries for the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. We welcome and join the basic call contained in the draft resolutions devoted to those items. Indeed, my country fully subscribes to the call addressed to all States to refrain from the use or threat of the use of force, intervention, interference, aggression, foreign occupation and colonial domination, or measures of political and economic coercion that violate the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and security of other States, as well as the permanent sovereignty of peoples over their natural resources.

It is our firm belief that all States should promote a policy of peaceful coexistence, détente and co-operation, irrespective of their economic or military power, political and social systems, or size and geographical location, and that they should refrain from any action contrary to those requirements.

At the same time, there is an imperative need to respect the personality of other States and their inalienable right to choose and promote freely the system and ways of their political, social, economic and cultural development and to take part in international economic co-operation in conditions of equality and non-discrimination.

(Mr. Tănăsie, Romania)

We are fully convinced of the negative impact on international security of the maintenance and deepening of underdevelopment and economic discrepancies in their most various forms, as well as of the discriminatory practices of conditioning and differentiating in relations among States. It is therefore necessary to emphasize the obligation of all States to refrain from any act of interference, direct or indirect, for any reason whatsoever, in the internal or external affairs of other States, and from any measure of coercion in order to force other States to choose a particular way of social and economic development. Given the complexity of the international situation, greater relevance should be attributed to economic issues in a global approach to security for the future.

Nobody can ignore the fact that one of the most important problems of current international life is underdevelopment and the requirement for new relations and a new world political and economic order. There is no doubt that the nations will not tolerate the current state of affairs much longer, and that an end should be put to the neo-colonialist policy of domination by the international monopolies and international financial capital. A new policy should be promoted, a policy of equality and co-operation, of eliminating underdevelopment, and of creating conditions for the socio-economic development of all nations, primarily the developing countries. That is the only way to ensure the stability of the world's economy and the progress, well-being, freedom and independence of all nations.

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

We reaffirm our view that the democratization of international relations is today urgently necessary to enable, under conditions of independence, the full development and independence of all States, as well as the attainment of genuine security, peace and co-operation in the world, and we stress our firm belief that the United Nations offers the best framework for the attainment of those goals.

In view of the problems of our times, small and medium-sized countries, including developing and non-aligned countries, should play a markedly bigger role in finding solutions to all world problems. Complex matters, including those of nuclear disarmament, cannot be solved by two great Powers or by a few States; they can be solved only through the active participation of all countries and peoples. Today, more than ever, it is necessary to increase the role of the United Nations and other international bodies in finding solutions to these complex issues, with the equal participation of all countries. Romania is firmly determined to make its full contribution to perfecting and increasing the role of the United Nations and other international bodies.

The multilateral framework offered today by the United Nations is inseparable from efforts to build a system of international peace and security capable of harmonizing, within and through the activities of the world Organization, the actions of all members of the international community.

One cannot deal with the strengthening of international security without paying due attention to regional security, as an integral part of overall actions to achieve a genuine global system of security. In this context, it is quite natural that Romania attaches the utmost importance to European security and co-operation and to security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region.

Romania believes that co-operation, security and disarmament in Europe should be achieved on the basis of unwavering respect for the principles of complete

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

equality and respect for the social system in each country. Co-operation should lead not to the weakening of one country or another, but to the development and progress of each nation. We advocate many-sided co-operation in all areas, co-operation that should open up the prospect of a united Europe of free and independent nations. Today and in the long term, preserving and strengthening the national independence of European countries, as of all other countries, is the only realistic way towards broad co-operation and the progress of each nation. Certainly there can be various approaches to the achievement of European unity.

We believe that we should start from the need to co-operate and to bring the European peoples closer to each other, on the basis of strengthening and developing each national State and each nation. Such an approach means not isolation, but broad co-operation.

My country is in favour of firm action to attain broad co-operation in the Balkans and to turn our region into a zone free of nuclear and chemical weapons and of foreign military bases. We advocate the expansion of co-operation. Together with our neighbours and all the countries in the Balkans, and even in the Danube basin, we are ready to attain all aspects of broad co-operation, which can open up the path to the gradual elimination of all kinds of obstacles and to rapprochement and the development of co-operation between our nations.

As to disarmament matters, my delegation would emphasize that the negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic nuclear arms are indeed very important. But it is necessary to take as a point of departure the necessity to achieve an agreement on halting nuclear tests and the production of new nuclear arms and to establish the shortest term for the total elimination of those weapons. Accordingly, Romania proposes the conclusion,

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with the participation of all European countries, of a general agreement on the elimination of all nuclear arms from Europe by 1995.

Romania also believes that all States participating in the Vienna negotiations should act with a sense of responsibility to reach as soon as possible an agreement on reducing conventional weapons to the lowest level.

In a more general context, my delegation has already had the opportunity to discuss the subject in detail in the course of the consideration of the group of agenda items on disarmament. The achievement of general and complete disarmament - starting with nuclear disarmament - under strict international control would be an important element for real peace and effective international security at both the global and the regional level.

The burning, pressing question of the peaceful settlement of disputes is another matter of major concern to the international community. Deeply concerned by the persistence of numerous conflicts that seriously threaten international peace and security, Romania has consistently promoted its well-known initiatives on the peaceful settlement of disputes. Very recently a new resolution sponsored by 59 countries has been adopted on this subject. It calls upon Member States to make full use of the framework provided by the United Nations for the peaceful settlement of disputes and international problems.

Romania is also concerned about the ecological aspect of international peace and security. That is why we have continued to promote at the current session our initiative concerning the responsibility of States for the protection of the environment and for the prevention of environmental pollution resulting from the accumulation of toxic and radioactive wastes, and concerning strengthening international co-operation to resolve the problem.

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

As to humanitarian aspects linked to international security, it is Romania's firm belief that priority should be given to the realization of the fondest hopes of man and peoples regarding fundamental human rights - the right to life, the right to work, education and culture, social equality, the equitable distribution of the riches of society, participation in public leadership, the full flowering of the human personality. All problems affecting human rights and fundamental freedoms should first be solved within the national framework, this represents an essential attribute of State sovereignty. Therefore, their solution should be fully in keeping with the basic principles of international law.

Finally, my delegation would emphasize that every effort should be made further to strengthen the role and effectiveness of the United Nations, on the basis of the full and universal implementation of its Charter, with the aim of ensuring international peace and security on a global basis, covering all States and all aspects of their co-operation.

Mr. BATIDUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Strengthening international peace and security has always taken pride of place in the world arena, but the problem has become particularly grave in our day, when the prevention of a nuclear catastrophe has become a matter of life or death for all countries and peoples. Genuine realism in politics has now become imperative. We must, without any preconceptions, realistically take stock of the world situation, and particularly mankind's helplessness in the face of the creation of its own intellect - nuclear weapons.



(Mr. Batiouk, Ukrainian SSR)

A sober analysis can lead to only one sensible conclusion: no matter what, we must eliminate nuclear war, not only as a means of attaining political goals, but also as a way of thinking.

The new international realities have highlighted problems common to all States connected with ensuring the survival of mankind. The continuing arms race, economic underdevelopment and external debt, hunger and environmental degradation, terrorism and human rights violations are the negative realities of our time, and if we are to eliminate them common approaches and mutually acceptable solutions are necessary. Real security must be all-embracing, and extend into all spheres of international relations. It is extremely important to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in resolving key problems and to create the necessary conditions for implementing the goals and principles of the United Nations Charter. In order to strengthen international security, the appropriate machinery of the United Nations must be brought fully into play. This kind of approach is supported by the increasing practice of employing United Nations peace-keeping operations, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, making it possible to defuse conflicts that have become almost chronic.

On the basis of its indisputable successes in the field of regional settlements, the United Nations and its Security Council must multiply their efforts to bring about an early, just and stable political settlements in Afghanistan, in Cambodia, in Central America, in the Middle East and in other regions. Measures to ensure the transition of Namibia to independence and support for efforts to eliminate the apartheid régime in South Africa are of the greatest importance.

In the interests of bringing about effective settlements, we must continue to seek to enhance United Nations capabilities in carrying out peace-keeping operations, in operations to control the development of situations and in

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providing, in accordance with the Charter, peace-making missions in troubled regions to prevent disputes growing into armed conflicts. Once the United Nations system has developed its full peace-making potential, it can serve as a reliable guarantor of universal international security.

The founders of the United Nations itself conceived of it as an alternative to military methods of resolving conflicts between States, and it will indeed become such an alternative if the tasks set out for it in the Charter are implemented in full, and it becomes the centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining common goals. The permanent members of the Security Council, which are, moreover, nuclear Powers, have a particular responsibility for the situation in the world and, as a consequence, for the atmosphere in the United Nations. Dialogue between them - bilateral and multilateral - must play an important role in the renaissance and renewal of the United Nations.

In this regard, the Ukrainian SSR warmly welcomed the unanimity displayed by the General Assembly when it adopted, on the initiative of the USSR and the United States, a resolution on the strengthening of international peace, security and international co-operation in all their aspects pursuant to the United Nations Charter. By this step, Member States of the United Nations marked their desire to enhance its effectiveness in maintaining the security of all States through an improvement in international co-operation in resolving international political, ecological, social, cultural and humanitarian problems. The appeal to all States to step up their practical efforts to seek multifaceted approaches in international affairs in the interests of peace and security, which was so unanimously supported by the international community, confirms and consolidates the positive changes which have occurred in the United Nations and in the international arena as a whole. In our view, not only that General Assembly decision, but the very

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atmosphere, the very spirit that has prevailed at this forty-fourth session, marks the beginning of a new, encouraging period in the history of the United Nations.

Enhancement of the effectiveness of the United Nations and its major organs, active use of the procedures and mechanisms set out in the Charter and the taking of measures to prevent crises and conflicts should create the necessary conditions for fruitful co-operation by States on the basis of equality and democracy. The strengthening of co-operation on the basis of the principles of the Charter ought gradually to reduce the importance of the military factor and enhance the role of international law as a basis for relations between States, including the settlement or solution by peaceful means of disputes or situations which might lead to breaches of the peace.

Implementation by all States of the provisions of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security would be very significant in creating an atmosphere of trust and co-operation that would make possible the peaceful solution of any problems that might arise. Our delegation would like to confirm the commitment of the Ukrainian SSR to the goals and principles of that document, whose twentieth anniversary will be celebrated next year.

We view as extremely positive the growing understanding of the need for a comprehensive approach to disarmament issues combining confidence-building, development of effective control machinery and realistic measures based on a balance of interests. Extremely important in this regard is progress in the current bilateral and multilateral disarmament talks. Regional efforts also have a unique role to play in the achievement of universal security.

We welcome the prospects for achieving increased security for the European States at a lower level of armed forces. The Vienna talks on conventional armed

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forces and on confidence-building and security measures in Europe must play an important role in this process. In that context it remains to organize the machinery for constructive co-operation and ultimately to begin the work of ending the division of Europe into blocs.

Thus, we see positive political processes gathering momentum, promoting the strengthening of security, the growth of confidence and the development of international co-operation. It is important, however, for the major changes now taking place in Europe to be organically linked with the maintenance of stability, any breach of which would be retrogressive for Europe and the whole world. Reliable, stable international security is the only guarantee of free development for the internal processes of European States. There can be no doubt about the interdependence between the problems of the European continent and world-wide processes; indeed, subregional, regional and global efforts to strengthen security are inseparable.

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With respect to the Mediterranean, therefore, lowering the level of nuclear confrontation, limiting the scope of naval activities, eliminating the foreign military bases and facilities of non-Mediterranean States, and extending trust to the area would improve the situation in all the adjacent regions. Conditions favourable for strengthening security and stability in the Mediterranean and throughout the world could be created by movement on chronic conflicts in adjacent regions, particularly by bringing the process of a political settlement in the Middle East into step with the process of disarmament in Europe.

Improvement in the situation in the regions adjacent to Europe would add a new dimension to the question of European security. Therefore, the Ukrainian SSR supports the idea of making the Mediterranean a zone of lasting peace and co-operation and of stable and secure development.

By the terms of a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political Committee at this session of the General Assembly, the Security Council, Member States and the Secretary-General would be called upon to formulate measures for co-operation in promoting and protecting the security of small States from threats or acts of intervention in their internal affairs.

In noting the growth of non-military factors in ensuring security in our post-confrontational period, we must also stress the fundamental importance of strict compliance with, and respect for, the rights of peoples, particularly their right to free choice of their path to development, and the promotion of basic human rights. The social and moral aspects of peace-building warrant the attention of the international community. In that connection we cannot fail to note the positive impact of the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, the tenth anniversary of the adoption of which we marked last year. That

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Declaration has an important role to play in imprinting in the minds of peoples the moral principles rejecting war, confirming the desire for peace, and overcoming the image of the enemy, prejudices and war psychology.

The Ukrainian delegation calls upon all Members of the United Nations to continue actively the dialogue on the strengthening of international security. We hope that dialogue will lead to a further narrowing of differences, which would make it possible to implement concrete, purposeful measures for the good of international peace and security and which would enable the United Nations to accept the challenge it faces in today's troubled world.

Mr. MAS RESHA (Ethiopia): At a unique moment in history - when two leading Powers with an overkill capacity, which had vowed to destroy each other and which had come many times in the past to the brink of actually doing so, have chosen to seek the road of peace and co-operation rather than that of confrontation and eventual annihilation - the improvement in relations between East and West in general and between the leading Powers in particular has been the major focus of attention for some years. The changes that have taken place during those years have been sudden and, indeed, overwhelming. The meaning and impact of this turn of events therefore inevitably continue to command our attention and to remain the central theme in any meaningful review of international relations.

For our part, we continue to view these new developments with a degree of cautious optimism: cautious because we are unable to fathom the actual contribution of these developments to the emergence of a more equitable and democratic order at the global level, and because we have yet to examine the sustainability of the prevailing political atmosphere. None the less, we remain essentially optimistic, as these developments have contributed to a reduction of the pace of the arms race and to the relaxation of tension in many parts of the world.

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It is therefore with a unique sense of relief and satisfaction that we view the developments of the recent past around the world, as we believe that it was the fact that we in the non-aligned community of nations persevered in our quest for dialogue and détente on a global scale that paved the way for the current developments.

Along with the major gains and advances made in the field of disarmament and the solution of certain chronic long-standing problems that had beset the United Nations, we have witnessed an actual thaw, and even a warming, in the ice-cold relations between East and West. Even the cogs and wheels of the United Nations machinery, which had become rusty as a result of that unwelcome political climate, have recently been unlocked and oiled and put to better use than ever before. The recent holding of free and fair elections in Namibia under the supervision and control of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group is a salutary example of this major unique development. This trend gives us reason to hope that international efforts will go all the way and that it will not be long before we see the complete eradication and abolition of the hideous system of apartheid.

The wind of change seems lately to have gained in momentum, for all that had seemed a fixture and permanent feature of international relations is being swept away to be replaced with new and encouraging trends. The spirit of dialogue and cultural interaction among nations on the two sides of an ideological divide seems to be the order of the day.

Despite those encouraging signs, we have yet to witness a true spirit of international solidarity based on the participation of all humanity in matters affecting the fate of our planet and of mankind at large. The habits of thinking and terms of reference in some quarters reveal how, in some important respects, they remain bound to the cold war era. We therefore anxiously await the moment

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when the major actors in the international political arena will do away with that anachronism. It is our earnest hope that the prevailing political climate will continue to contribute to the further normalization and improvement of relations among nations.

It is quite obvious that the sustainability of these positive developments will depend very much on our thinking patterns and mentality. The now well-known phrase in the preamble to the constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization alludes to the need to remove obstacles to the attainment of peace. In the words of that constitution,

"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed."

Thus, partial arrangements likely to contribute to the prevalence of world peace must be led by minds that truly cherish the long-lasting values of peace and tranquillity. A new vista on a better, peaceful world must be based on a deep devotion to the higher interests of mankind.

Lasting peace can be based only on the solid foundations of mutual trust, respect and co-operation. More than anything else, this should start with a recognition of the fact that recent improvements in the international arena resulted from sustained and concerted effort on the part of the whole world, not just one important segment of it. The United Nations, such regional bodies as the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of American States, international bodies such as the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, individual countries and even prominent individuals have all worked long and hard to bring this about.

It is therefore very saddening to note the fact that, in a bid to claim all credit for themselves and downplay the role of others, some have preferred to view recent events not as the outcome of major developments or the dawning of a new



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modern era in international forums, but as the triumph of some over others. Such an attitude, needless to say, can in no way help the cause of peace and international co-operation but will rather block the way towards improved relations. The cobwebs of old habits and modes of thinking based on the crude logic of power politics should be removed once and for all.

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It is therefore our considered view that we would all do well to remember that the remarkable achievements of the recent past are the result of the common effort of the international community as a whole. We would also do well to take due note of the fact that the continued participation of every segment of humanity must continue to be sought. Those with traditional attachments to the ignoble theory of the balance of terror should draw the necessary lessons of history and redirect their human and material resources to the pursuit of justice and peace in our common abode. The situation calls for the exertion of more effort to create a yet more propitious atmosphere in which we can all, in a united fashion, work for peace, international co-operation and development.

In our view, what has transpired recently is a result of a realization - albeit perhaps a belated one - on the part of rival military blocs and their leading Powers that no amount of arms can fully guarantee one's security and that the ever-increasing and upwardly spiralling trend of the arms race and the attendant economic consequences of wasted resources cannot create a world in harmony with itself.

Another major source of concern for many developing countries in the light of recent developments seems to be the role they will play and the place they will be accorded - nay, have - in the new and revitalized international arena.

So far, it is not what we have accrued or what has transpired that has inspired us, but rather, as I have already mentioned, the prospects for the better world and more democratized international relations we can envisage as an outcome of the recent developments that now help us keep the faith. It is our deep conviction in the ascendancy of reason and justice that makes us sure that the improvement in the international political climate cannot but augur well for the welfare of mankind. But our modest hopes will remain pious intentions if the major

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actors in the international political arena remain oblivious to global problems affecting vast sections of humanity or to the need for a multilateral approach in the search for lasting solutions to those outstanding issues, be they political, economic, social or ecological.

Indeed, we cannot be mere participant-observers in matters that affect the fate of the only planet we collectively inhabit. We cannot remain on the fence of the consultations arena when our interests are ignored or relegated to the periphery. We were once left out when a post-war international order was formulated; we cannot be expected to remain in the back seat at a moment when the parameters of an emerging order are being established.

I have mentioned the fact that we view the recent improvement in international relations in a different light from that in which we viewed the *détentes* of the past. That is so because, as opposed to the *détentes* of the past that attempted to defuse a fast-building tension and, in the final analysis, helped restore and maintain the status quo, the recent phenomenon has so far given indications of doing away with that status quo and of bringing about a new and more balanced constellation of power as well as a more democratic relationship among nations. Thus, the major difference lies in the fact that whereas one is a mechanism that works towards the maintenance of the old, the latter serves as a harbinger that heralds the birth of a new era in international relations. We, for our part, have a lot at stake in a new and more democratic international order and would work towards its realization with a sustainable degree of commitment and renewed vigour.

What has inspired our hope more than anything else is - as I indicated at the outset -- the realization that the enormous potentials of the United Nations must be unleashed for the betterment of humanity. As has often been said, the United Nations is as strong or as weak as Member States allow it to be. Now that there is

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readiness and the political will required for dialogue and a generally propitious atmosphere there seems to be no limit to what it can do. I would like to state in this regard that my country would be heartened to see the United Nations play a more viable and strengthened role. Currently serving as it does as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Ethiopia will continue to work with all members of the Council towards the realization of that goal.

Steps taken to ensure that security and confidence-building measures are adopted and put to work would not only promote peace and mutual trust by allaying fears and suspicion; they would also enhance the United Nations role in peace-making and peace-keeping operations. The developing world would welcome such a turn of events, for a strengthened United Nations would in the final analysis be able to defend more vigorously such cardinal Charter principles as the maintenance of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of nations.

Yet another problem arises from the chronic economic problems we all - and especially the developing countries - face at present. General Assembly resolution 43/88, "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", indicated in a preambular paragraph the gravity of the problem when it pointed out the international community's concern as a result of

"the lack of solutions to the world economic problems, in which the deeper underlying problems of a structural nature have been compounded by cyclical factors and which has further aggravated the inequalities and injustices in international economic relations, all of which pose a grave threat to global peace and security".

At the risk of repeating what has now perhaps become a cliché, let me reiterate that the problem is now a time bomb that could go off at any time and cause serious

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problems that would jeopardize the whole process of international peace and security.

In the final analysis, that which is due every segment of humanity must not be set aside for the benefit of some privileged parts of that entire family of mankind. We must all work together to lay the foundations for durable peace and security. That will inevitably lead to the reorientation of our concept of security as well as its sustainability. In that endeavour all inhabitants of our world must be ready to bend a little for the benefit of all.

In conclusion we would like to express our belief that the road to peace and development lies through an abiding commitment to result-oriented dialogue and co-operation in accordance with the relevant principles of the Charter.

Mr. HUNG (Viet Nam): Security is a legitimate quest for all. Indeed, all nations have the solemn obligation to attempt to achieve security for their entire people. Moreover, true security for a nation extends far beyond military security and encompasses and combines, as it must, economic, social, humanitarian and environmental security. Security should be seen as encompassing protection against all threats to human life, not only from war but also from natural disasters, destruction of the environment, poverty and so on.

As it approaches the third millenium the human race is facing unprecedented challenges, a fundamentally life-or-death kind of choice. The discovery of nuclear weapons, like the discovery of fire, lies behind us on the path of history; it cannot be undone. Even if all nuclear arsenals were destroyed, the knowledge of how to invent them would remain and could be put to use. To guarantee against a nuclear holocaust that could lead to human extinction we must abolish war as a human institution, as slavery was abolished in the United States in the nineteenth century. Even complete nuclear disarmament would be insufficient for that purpose,

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if nations continue to settle conflicts through war. In that connection the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries, at their ninth summit Conference held at Belgrade last September, clearly pointed out that:

"They wished to stress in particular that the world of today but also the world of tomorrow requires that doctrines of power policies be replaced by a policy of co-operation, aimed at fulfilling the legitimate expectations of the entire international community." (A/44/551, p. 21, para. 8)

(Mr. Hung, Viet Nam)

Today, no country can be entirely self-sufficient and survive without external ties. No military alliance by itself can ensure its own military power. To survive, humanity more than ever before needs a daring, innovative spirit and realistic political thinking. The Declaration on the Enhancement of the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations, unanimously approved by the General Assembly in November 1987, and 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, adopted by the General Assembly last December, have strengthened the first shoots of new political thinking in international relations, which is based on the understanding that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. A comprehensive and just solution to such pressing international problems as achieving peace, security, disarmament and development can be assured only through negotiation. States must make every effort to build their international relations on the basis of mutual understanding, trust, respect and co-operation in all areas.

To solve global problems that no single country can tackle alone, global co-operation must take over. Some global problems entail potential dangers to human survival that are not related to military technology. The accumulation of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere caused by the excessive burning of fossil fuels worldwide could lead to a greenhouse effect, warming the Earth and melting the polar ice-caps. Coastal areas would be flooded, and the Earth's climate and food production patterns could change in unprecedented ways. Another danger is that certain industrial pollutants could deplete the ozone layer that protects life on Earth from excessive ultraviolet radiation. The result would be a higher rate of possibly lethal mutations in humans as well as in animals and plants.

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No country can prevent such potential catastrophes alone. As long as one major industrial Power continues to accumulate carbon dioxide or to deplete the ozone layer, all nations will be affected. The need for a joint effort to deal with global problems can perhaps help States overcome the differences over which they now fight wars. While technology has created many global problems, it has also provided better means for solving them.

While certain issues can be dealt with effectively only at the global level because they affect all countries, many other problems can be solved just as well at a regional or local level. It is best to leave decisions to the lowest level, which includes all those affected by the decisions, because those who benefit or suffer from the outcome have the greatest incentive to choose wisely. Also, if they make the wrong choice, they have no one but themselves to blame. That reduces a potential source of conflict.

Methods for settling conflicts peacefully, through negotiation, are needed at the international as well as the regional level. The solution of regional conflicts constitutes a significant step towards the realization of international peace and security. But all regional and subregional peace and security endeavours should take into account the characteristics of each region as well as measures adopted therein to strengthen mutual confidence and to assure the security of all States involved.

For over forty years Asia and the Pacific were the scene of constant conflicts. Three major wars were unleashed there, involving many world Powers. The region was also the scene of dozens of lesser wars and conflicts with the participation of hundreds of thousands of soldiers. At the same time, it is the most dynamic region of the world. Today, its progress towards the twenty-first century proceeds in a most favourable political atmosphere, which was enhanced by



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the normalization of relations between the Soviet Union and China, the biggest socialist countries in the region, which occurred against the backdrop of the most dynamic economic development.

South-East Asia is one of the most dynamic and promising areas of the Asia and Pacific region, but for over 40 years it was one of the hottest zones on the globe, a zone where the most profound changes have been taking place. For nearly three decades after the proclamation of the republic, the Vietnamese people had to uphold its right to life and independent existence. The Vietnamese land was burned with napalm, poisoned with chemicals and showered with more explosives than were used in the whole of the Second World War. But Viet Nam held out to win.

The victory of the peoples of South-East Asia has radically changed the situation in the area. Peace, national independence and development have become the main trend in the region, a fact that is reflected in the concept of the establishment there of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality advanced by the Association of South-East Asian Nations, and in the proposal of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to build a zone of peace, freedom, neutrality, friendship and co-operation in South-East Asia.

The desire to achieve that goal is most visible and strong in the course set forth by the Prime Minister of Thailand to turn Indo-China from a battlefield into a zone of commerce. Good conditions are in the making for the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in that long-suffering region. To realize that common objective, the concerted endeavours of the regional countries are needed.

International relations are today entering a new stage and differ substantially from those of the past. The new situation requires of us renovation and, primarily, a new way of thinking. Many old concepts that were valid for decades and affected international relations are today losing their significance.

(Mr. Hung, Viet Nam)

They are not applicable to the renovation of international relations. The renewal of thinking is not an easy process. It is the struggle between the new and the old.

South-East Asia is also on the threshold of a new era, the era of peace and co-operation. The new and realistic approach to peace and security should also be applicable to our region, in harmony with the present general trend in world politics.

Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta): I should like to take the opportunity of my first statement to the First Committee to extend to the Chairman my congratulations on his election. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau. The Committee relies heavily on their wisdom and experience to guide it to a successful conclusion of its work.

At the outset, I wish to express to the people of the Republic of Lebanon my Government's sincere condolences and sorrow with regard to the assassination of President René Moawad. Malta condemns that cruel act of violence, which seriously undermines and threatens the process of peaceful settlement and internal reconciliation in Lebanon. We admire and support the courage of the Lebanese people in its determination to persevere in that process, notwithstanding the difficulties that stand in its way.

Even as the Committee considers the subject of international security, events are taking place that continue to shake to their very foundations some of the basic assumptions that determined the conduct of international relations throughout the post-war era. Such is the far-reaching nature of those changes that many are still hesitant to openly acknowledge their full implications.

(Mr. Borg Olivier, Malta)

Yet the pace of change is, if anything, accelerating. In the space of less than four years the super-Power dialogue has moved to the point where it is now possible for the United States and the Soviet Union jointly to promote in the General Assembly an agenda item on international peace, security and international co-operation. In the space of just a few months most of Eastern Europe has undergone a major political transformation. And in the space of just a few days long-standing physical and psychological barriers between Eastern and Western Europe have been dismantled.

While these developments are widely welcomed, voices of caution are also being raised. Some fear the complications which may arise from the speed with which events are occurring. Others are concerned about the possible fragility of those events and the danger of sudden reversals. Many remind us that, in the midst of East-West rapprochement, other serious international problems - notably those related to poverty and development and to specific regional conflicts - remain to pose their own significant challenges to global peace and security.

Malta looks at these developments with its own regional perspective - that of the Mediterranean. My Government warmly welcomes the agreements which have been reached, and those which are being considered, between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the reduction of nuclear armaments. It looks forward to the successful conclusion of ongoing negotiations on the reduction of conventional armaments in Europe. It welcomes the liberalization and democratization process which is so dramatically unfolding in Eastern Europe.

We consider these developments to be major contributions to the promotion of international peace, security and co-operation in general and to the relaxation of tension in Europe in particular. We share the expectation that the benefits of this new era of dialogue and co-operation will have their own positive effect on

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the search for the resolution of problems and conflicts in other parts of the globe. Indeed, there are already signs of such beneficial effects in the progress achieved over the last two years over Afghanistan, Namibia and Kampuchea.

In the particular context of the Mediterranean, Malta is hopeful that these beneficial effects will include an early agreement on the extension of the European disarmament process to the waters of our region. We also hope that within the more relaxed and secure international environment which now exists the search for solutions to the still intractable problems of the Mediterranean - the question of Cyprus, the tragedy of Lebanon and the plight of the Palestinian people - will be tackled with greater vigour and determination.

It is in this context that we attach particular significance to the fact that Presidents Bush and Gorbachev have chosen the Mediterranean as the venue for their early December meeting. This will be the first meeting in many years held by leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union outside the territory of their two alliances. They have chosen as a venue a region which remains one of the most sensitive international trouble spots, and which presents constant reminders, as was the case earlier this year, of the threat it could pose to global peace and stability.

It is therefore to be hoped that the forthcoming meeting close to our shores in the Mediterranean will help focus attention on the need for a peaceful settlement of the region's long-festered problems, and on the means to be applied to achieve such a settlement. As it once again urged in the Security Council earlier this year, Malta believes that just and peaceful solutions to outstanding problems in the Mediterranean can be achieved only on the basis of the principle of the non-use of force and respect for the right of all peoples in the region to live in peace and security within their own borders.

(Mr. Borg Olivier, Malta)

My Government takes pride in the fact that the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union have chosen to hold their meeting in such close proximity to Malta, and that as a result our nation will be historically linked with this important event. In welcoming them in our midst, we see their decision as acknowledgement of the role for peace which we are seeking to play in the region and in international relations in general.

I should like to refer briefly to the many initiatives already taking place to strengthen the process of peace, security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region. Special mention must be made of the role of the United Nations in this context. The quiet diplomacy of the Secretary-General or the question of Cyprus and the unsung role of the United Nations peace-keeping force in Lebanon are deeply appreciated and respected. The people of Palestine are particularly conscious of the efforts being made by the Secretary-General and the United Nations on their behalf. Experience has shown that it is through such patient, persistent and largely unpublicized work that the foundations for the eventual settlement of long-standing problems can be put firmly in place.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has also been consistently supportive of the efforts of Mediterranean countries to transform their region into one of peace, security and co-operation, free from conflict and confrontation. In Belgrade last September the Heads of State or Government of the countries of the Movement, in reaffirming once again their often-stated positions on the subject, also welcomed the readiness of European Mediterranean States to pursue dialogue and co-operation with the non-aligned Mediterranean countries.

With the support of their Movement, the Mediterranean non-aligned countries themselves have taken their own special initiatives to strengthen peace and security in their region. At meetings in Valletta, in 1985, and in Brioni, in

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1987, they assumed specific commitments in this regard. They also asserted their strong desire to intensify the process of dialogue and consultation with the European-Mediterranean and other European countries aimed at strengthening efforts to promote peace and security in the region.

In underlining the linkage which exists between European and Mediterranean security, the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) firmly placed the question of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean within the broader framework of international security. Inspired by the objectives contained in the Mediterranean chapter of the Final Act, various initiatives have been taken to promote the development of good-neighbourly relations between European and Mediterranean States. The next step in this process will be the meeting due to be held in Palma de Mallorca in 1990, which will consider ways and means of enhancing various aspects of co-operation, including the protection and improvement of Mediterranean ecosystems.

Malta is looking forward to hosting the CSCE meeting on peaceful settlement of disputes, to be held in early 1991. This will be the third meeting on the subject within the CSCE process. We hope that it will mark a further useful step forward in the slow but steady endeavour to achieve the United Nations Charter's objective of eliminating resort to the threat or use of force as an acceptable option in inter-State relations.

The CSCE process provides an ideal forum in which to pursue the objective of extending to Mediterranean waters the confidence- and security-building and disarmament measures which are being agreed for continental Europe. The Stockholm meeting on confidence- and security-building measures dealt principally with military activities on land, and touched only marginally, through the question of amphibious manoeuvres, on naval activities.

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We are hoping to redress the imbalance at the ongoing negotiations in Vienna. Together with the neutral and non-aligned participants in the CSCE, Malta has tabled in Vienna a proposal regarding voluntary prior notification of the exercise of the right of innocent passage by warships of participating States through the territorial waters of other participating States. We expect that agreement on this moderate and straightforward proposal will mark a significant breakthrough in the endeavour to start extending confidence- and security-building measures and disarmament measures to naval activities, particularly in the Mediterranean.

It has frequently been remarked that the convergence of three continents onto the Mediterranean provides unique opportunities for initiatives of functional co-operation, which in turn serve to promote and enhance the process of security building. Such areas as environment planning and management, transport, marine industrial technology and social and cultural co-operation offer scope for effective action in this regard. Relevant initiatives can be pursued not only at the multilateral level, within the framework of the CSCE, the Council of Europe and the various United Nations agencies and bodies, particularly the Economic Commissions, but also at the subregional and bilateral levels.

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Mention should be made in that context of the significant contribution to peace, security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region made by the Treaty instituting the Arab Maghreb Union, which was signed at Marrakesh, Morocco, and entered into force in July this year. In their initial declaration, the States forming that Union expressed their objective of making "our region an area of security and a haven of peace, which will permit it to contribute to the consolidation of international co-operation and peace".

Malta's own efforts in expanding co-operation in the Mediterranean are not directed solely through the multilateral forums. Bilateral co-operation has also been pursued. Discussions with our neighbours to the north and to the south on issues of mutual benefit and interest have continued during the last 12 months, consolidating friendships and good-neighbourly relations.

A useful opportunity in that regard has been created by the European Community's framework of political co-operation, within which the Foreign Ministers of the Twelve regularly meet with their Maltese counterpart to exchange views on a wide range of issues, mostly related to matters concerning the Mediterranean region. Malta also intends to use the framework of its third financial protocol with the European Economic Community to propose projects that are compatible and convergent with the community's own thinking on the Mediterranean region.

Malta has also concluded various cultural, scientific, educational, technical and other forms of bilateral agreements with a wide range of countries in the region, in the endeavour to open further horizons for co-operation. With its North African neighbours, Malta has joint industrial ventures that cover projects related to fisheries, air and sea transport, and various industrial processes. Tourism is another area through which economic relations and human contacts are being consolidated. Two other joint projects intended to promote co-operation in the



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regional interest are Radio Mediterranean and the Voice of the Mediterranean, operated from Malta.

I have only highlighted a few of the events and activities that are bringing closer together the States of a much troubled region. As those examples show, Mediterranean countries are ready to set aside their differences in the interest of their common heritage and the future of their peoples. The fact that so many deep-rooted prejudices can be overcome in the process of seeking concrete and pragmatic forms of co-operation offers perhaps the best hope for the eventual resolution of the major security problems of our region.

In his statement inaugurating an international conference on technological co-operation in the Mediterranean, recently organized in Malta, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malta pointed out that Mediterranean co-operation is a painstaking but wholly worthwhile exercise in putting together an edifice structured on identified needs and joint efforts in fulfilling them. That exercise will undoubtedly be of great benefit to all Mediterranean States. We must recognize that together we are the architects of a peace-building and peace-keeping process, an edifice that must rest on the solid foundations of the United Nations Charter.

With those objectives in mind, the delegation of Malta, together with delegations from other Mediterranean States, annually presents for consideration in this Committee a draft resolution on the strengthening of security in the Mediterranean. We attach great importance to the fact that those draft resolutions have been regularly adopted by consensus by the General Assembly. Through those resolutions, the international community recognizes and encourages the collective determination of the Mediterranean States in their efforts to enhance peace, security and co-operation in their region. It is our sincere hope that consensus will be achieved again this year on the draft resolution on that subject.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.