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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 37th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PASTINEN (Finland)
Vice-Chairman

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

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The CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed to the business of the day, I would draw the attention of representatives to the fact that today's journal provides for three meetings of the First Committee. It is, I understand, the urgent wish of the Chairman of this Committee, Mr. Boaten of Ghana, that we finish all the disarmament items today. I understand that that feeling is broadly shared by the members of this Committee. It is my wish, and I hope that of all delegations, that we should be able to finish the disarmament items today without the necessity of an evening meeting. I think this should be possible by moving expeditiously this morning and this afternoon and with the requisite amount of co-operation from all the delegations.

It is in that spirit that I suggest that the Committee now turn its attention to various draft resolutions. It is my intention that the Committee take decisions on the following draft resolutions, as a minimum, this morning, and we shall take additional ones if we can: first, the draft resolution in document A/32/29 and Corr.1, which refers to item 48 concerning the Indian Ocean; secondly, draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.7, which refers to item 45, "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia"; thirdly, draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24*, which relates to item 47, "Reduction of military budgets"; and fourthly, draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.26 which, under the general heading of "General and complete disarmament", refers to regional aspects of disarmament under item 51.

Mr. SAWAI (Japan): With regard to the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace" (A/32/29 and Corr.1) which was introduced by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, Mr. Amerasinghe on 17 November 1977, my delegation wishes to make a brief statement.

We fully understand the desire of all States concerned not to allow the Indian Ocean to become an arena of military confrontation, and instead to establish a zone of peace in the region. My delegation considers that the establishment of such a zone in the Indian Ocean would contribute to the security

(Mr. Sawai, Japan)

of the countries in the region concerned as well as to the achievement of general and complete disarmament, provided that the establishment of such a zone is approved by consensus of the States concerned, including the nuclear-weapon States, does not undermine the peace and security of the region or of the world, is accompanied by an effective safeguards system embracing international inspection and verification, and is consistent with the principles of international law, including the principle of freedom of navigation on the high seas.

According to the draft resolution, a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean is to be convened in New York at a suitable date as the next step towards the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean. My delegation wishes to endorse the proposal for such a meeting but feels strongly that it is necessary to make ample advanced preparations to ensure the success of the proposed meeting. While we are proceeding with the plan to hold such a meeting we should co-ordinate its work with the consultations under way between the United States and the USSR on their military presence in the Indian Ocean, which, in our view, could have a significant effect on the maintenance of international peace and security in the area concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution in document A/32/29 and Corr.1, the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. This draft resolution appears on pages 11 and 12 of the report. The draft resolution has financial implications and in that connexion I would draw the attention of representatives to document A/C.1/32/L.32 in which this problem is addressed.

(The Chairman)

In introducing the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, the Chairman of that Committee proposed certain oral amendments to the draft resolution contained in that report. Those oral amendments are in written form before the Committee in document A/32/29/Corr.1. Before putting the amended draft resolution to the vote, I shall call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote before the vote.

Mr. HSU YI-MIN (China) (interpretation from Chinese): On the initiative of the Governments of Sri Lanka and others at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly in 1971, the countries in the Indian Ocean region, supported by the overwhelming majority of countries of the world, particularly the third world countries, have made unremitting efforts for the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean has also worked actively for this purpose. It is regrettable that, although six years have elapsed, this anxiously awaited goal has yet to be reached. Peace and security in the Indian Ocean region are still being seriously threatened and undermined; the numerous countries and peoples of the region still find themselves in a state of turbulence and instability.

The prolonged failure in establishing the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace is directly linked to the obstruction and sabotage on the part of the two hegemonic Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States.

Over the years, those two super-Powers have been engaged in a fierce rivalry for world hegemony. The Indian Ocean is a vital passage between Europe and Asia; it is of major strategic significance for South Asia, the Middle East and Africa. In their quest for world domination, both super-Powers regard the Indian Ocean as vitally indispensable in their effort to seize control over Europe, the strategic focus of their rivalry. Both of them have dispatched naval fleets to the Indian Ocean and are continuously expanding their military installations, building up their military strength and stepping up their infiltration and expansion in the region. The series of vicious storms stirred up by them in the Indian Ocean has aroused the anxiety and indignation of the countries and peoples of the region. In its rivalry with the other super-Power - the United States - for

(Mr. Hsu Yi-Min, China)

the command of the sea in the Indian Ocean, the Soviet Union, in particular, is stepping up its "gunboat policy" in the Indian Ocean and is doing its utmost to subject the countries of the region to its infiltration, interference, subversion and control. In its obsessive desire to gain over-all military superiority over the other super-Power in the Indian Ocean, it has resorted to the despicable tactic of coupling threat with blandishment in order to extort concessions for the use of ports and to establish overt or covert military bases.

Faced with mounting demands for the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, the Soviet Union and the United States have recently held talks on the so-called "limitation" of their respective military strength in the Indian Ocean in an attempt to divert people's attention and to deceive world opinion. The mass media of both countries are making a great deal of fuss about it. However, even they themselves have confessed that the so-called bilateral talks were only aimed at "stabilizing" their military strength. Is this not an obvious attempt to legalize their continued rivalry in the Indian Ocean, as well as a clear manifestation of their obstinate refusal to leave the region? What is more, under the guise of "stabilization", they will be free to do the kind of dirty work that will surprise no one. The Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, as well as the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, has explicitly called for an end to great-Power rivalry and the elimination of any manifestation of their military presence in the Indian Ocean. This is the key to the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

(Mr. Hsu Yi-Min, China)

The Indian Ocean belongs to the countries and peoples of the region. The affairs of the Indian Ocean should be managed by the countries and peoples of the region themselves. The two super-Powers' military expansion and rivalry for hegemony in the Indian Ocean must be stopped. All foreign forces - and, above all, the aggressive forces of the two hegemonic Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States - must be totally withdrawn from the Indian Ocean. All foreign military presence in the Indian Ocean and its littoral areas, including all overt and covert military bases, must be completely and thoroughly eliminated. No nuclear-weapon State shall be allowed to deploy or use nuclear weapons in the Indian Ocean. No foreign warships or military aircraft shall be allowed to use the Indian Ocean to infringe on the sovereignty, independence or territorial integrity of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean.

It is our hope that all the countries in the Indian Ocean region, proceeding from the over-all interests of security in the region, and acting on the principles of respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence, will continue to strengthen their unity, guard against the super-Powers' interference and sowing of discord, and work and contribute to the realization of the just proposal for the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

Basing ourselves on the principled position of the Chinese Government and people in consistently supporting the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, the Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/32/29 and Corr.1.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In connexion with the forthcoming vote on the draft resolution on the question of declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, the Soviet delegation would like to explain the reasons that will guide it in this vote.

The Soviet Union supports the proposal as it will genuinely facilitate the strengthening of the peace and security of States and the strengthening and deepening of détente in international relations, and its extension to new parts of the world.

The Soviet Union is very sympathetic towards the proposal to convert the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, in the belief that this proposal can serve the purpose I have mentioned.

We view the draft resolution which has been submitted on the question of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace on the basis of the approach of principle which I have outlined. At the same time, we have drawn attention to the fact that in the fifth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, mention is made of the military presence and military rivalry of the great-Powers in that area. In this regard, we should like to state that the Soviet Union, of course, bears no responsibility whatsoever for military tension in the Indian Ocean.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In the draft resolution reference is made to the fact that the United States and the Soviet Union have started talks on certain questions connected with the Indian Ocean. In the course of these talks the Soviet Union has been taking into account the interest of the coastal States in converting this area into a zone of peace. We believe that the fundamental condition for creating a genuine peace zone in the Indian Ocean is the elimination therefrom of foreign military bases and the prevention of the creation of new ones.

The Soviet delegation is authorized to state that the Soviet Union has no military bases whatsoever in the Indian Ocean and has no intention of establishing any. It is also our belief that, given the implementation of the idea of converting the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, it goes without saying that no obstacle should be created to freedom of navigation and scientific research in that part of the world. If this approach of ours is duly taken into account by the States concerned, then the Soviet Union can take part in consultations on the questions connected with preparations for convening an international conference on the Indian Ocean.

In the light of the considerations I have set forth, the Soviet delegation will vote in favour of this draft resolution.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): The United States shares the goal of the supporters of the draft resolution that the Indian Ocean not become an arena for increased military competition or the site for a new arms race. As President Carter stated during his address in March in the General Assembly hall, the United States is prepared to reach agreement with the Soviet Union on mutual military restraint in the Indian Ocean. As is noted in this year's draft resolution, talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on this issue have begun.

In the view of the United States, the first step in reaching an Indian Ocean agreement is to stabilize the existing situation. We would then be prepared to attempt to bring about mutual reductions in the military presence of the forces of the United States and the USSR in the Indian Ocean.

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

We are hopeful that as a result of the ongoing talks, our efforts will be successful. We are pleased that the talks have already moved into an advanced stage and we will do our part to make further progress. The United States fully recognizes that the Indian Ocean littoral and hinterland States have taken an active interest in promoting peace and stability in the Indian Ocean. We have undertaken to keep the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, which was established by the General Assembly, informed of important developments that may have a bearing on its work and be of interest to its members.

In this regard the United States has kept the Ad Hoc Committee informed of the progress of the United States-Soviet talks. Nevertheless, in spite of our shared goal of promoting peace and stability in the region, the United States must abstain on this draft resolution. Our reasons have been expressed in the past and remain the same.

In our view the original 1971 resolution on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace can be interpreted as giving littoral States of the region the right to establish a legal régime for the seas in that region. The United States cannot accept such an understanding. We also do not agree that the convening of a multilateral conference would be the best way of achieving the goal of promoting peace and stability for all concerned. The United States is hopeful that the discussions we and the USSR have begun will lead to an Indian Ocean agreement preventing an arms competition in the region. We believe that such an agreement will be to the benefit not only of the United States and the Soviet Union but of all States of the region. We remain prepared to consult bilaterally with interested States in finding ways to promote progress in our common endeavour.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/32/29 as amended in Corr.1.

The draft resolution was adopted by 95 votes to none, with 13 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to explain their vote after the vote.

Mr. ASHE (United Kingdom): The British Government sympathizes with and indeed shares the desire of the littoral States that the Indian Ocean should be tranquil and peaceful, and for this reason we welcome the current discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union about restraint in the region.

We believe that the littoral States should agree amongst themselves on the sort of arrangements they wish to see for a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, so we also believe that this year's draft resolution, which calls for a conference of all the littoral States is a step in the right direction to achieve this. We continue to believe, however, that the definition of the limits of the zone and the activities which would be excluded from it should precede rather than follow the declaration of any peace zone. Therefore, we have felt bound to maintain our abstention.

Mr. OXLEY (Australia): My delegation supported the draft resolution on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We find it necessary, however, to elaborate on Australia's position on the matters which were dealt with by the Ad Hoc Committee this year and which are reflected in the Committee's report.

There were major developments this year which may have a direct bearing on the achievement of conditions of peace and security in the Indian Ocean: the ultimate goal of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. I refer specifically to the commencement of discussions between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics about their military presences in the Indian Ocean.

In addition to the importance of the commencement of those discussions in respect of what substantive results may emerge, there was also another development, tangential to those talks but also of importance to the Ad Hoc Committee. I refer to the fact that this year the two super-Powers commenced the practice of informing, albeit in general terms, the Ad Hoc Committee, through its Chairman, of its discussions. The report of the Ad Hoc Committee reflects that this occurred after the two occasions the super-Powers held discussions this year. The Ad Hoc Committee, since its inception, has been inviting the super-Powers, as well as all the great Powers and major maritime users which are not members of the Ad Hoc Committee, to co-operate with it, both in a practical manner, and with its consultations with the littoral and hinterland States about the convening of an Indian Ocean conference. The super-Powers have still not responded to the invitation to consult about the convening of an Indian Ocean conference. But their decision to inform the Committee about their bilateral talks is very welcome indeed. I should like to emphasize again that my delegation attached great weight to this occurrence - it is the first time it has happened since the Committee's inception. My delegation would have liked this development to be more positively reflected in the report.

(Mr. Oxley, Australia)

We were conscious that many members of the Committee wished to reserve judgement about the outcome of the super-Power bilateral discussions about their military presences in the Indian Ocean. This is of course an understandable approach. However, the two reports of those discussions provided to the Committee which are reflected in its report do indicate that progress is being made. We naturally cannot anticipate what agreed measures on mutual military restraints or reductions in the Indian Ocean might emerge, but given that this is a new development and that the discussions appear still to have impetus, my delegation's view is that the Committee should avoid taking precipitate steps which might prejudice those discussions. In our view, while realization of the goals of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace remains as desirable as ever, the commencement of the super-Powers' discussions demonstrates a preparedness by the super-Powers to consider ending the situation in the Ocean where great Power rivalry is not conducive to the establishment of conditions of peace and security in the area. This trend gives the littoral and hinterland States more time to contemplate, in the absence of pressures which might otherwise be brought about by a worsening of the conditions of peace and security in the Ocean, calmly and objectively, appropriate means by which realization of the objectives of the Declaration might be brought about.

It is with some regret that we have to note that we have not yet reached the stage where the basis exists for the convening of an Indian Ocean conference. To ensure a productive result leading to the achievement of the goals of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, adequate preparation is required, including prior agreement among the super-Powers, major maritime users and littoral and hinterland States. The inspiration for the adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration was the military activity of major Powers in the Indian Ocean. Also, in the preparation of the Declaration it was appreciated that the littoral and hinterland States themselves had to be of common mind. The convening of a conference which did not adequately embrace these elements would not be prudent.

Mr. KARTTILA (Finland): For the third consecutive time the Finnish delegation has voted for the draft resolution on this subject. We have done so because we consider that the aim of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace is closely aligned with the aim which we are pursuing by trying to do whatever we can to promote the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. That aim is to strengthen peace and security on a regional basis.

Mr. SCHLAICH (Federal Republic of Germany): I should like to give a brief explanation of our vote of abstention on the draft resolution which has just been adopted. In principle, being in favour of regional disarmament and arms control agreements, including the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany takes a positive view towards the establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones. We think, however, that all littoral States should participate in the efforts aimed towards the goal of creating such a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. We therefore welcome the positive step taken in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, which calls for the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean, a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean. That conference would certainly offer the opportunity of examining and defining the principles and their limits which would rule such a zone.

There is also another point which, in our view, needs clarification, and I refer to our reply to the letter dated 14 April 1977 from the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. In that reply we pointed out our concern

"that the proposed designation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace might adversely affect the principle of the freedom of the seas embodied in international law and thereby set a negative precedent regarding other areas of the high seas". (A/32/29, p. 13)

We therefore regret that we still could not vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. ELIAV (Israel): Israel supports all efforts to promote peace and stability in the region of the Indian Ocean. This attitude is geared not only to its general policy, but in particular to its close proximity to that region and its concern for the safety of the maritime routes there which are vital to the security and economy of Israel.

Thus, in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Charter, which enunciates the principle of the sovereign equality of all Members of the United Nations, Israel seeks and will continue to seek to give adequate expression to these facts in the relevant activities and bodies of the United Nations.

Therefore, my Government has followed with considerable interest the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and the Group of Litteral and Hinterland States, with which it wishes to be associated.

However, the draft resolution just voted upon included certain provisions the language of which we could not support, and therefore, regretfully, we had to abstain.

Mr. BERNARDO (Italy): The Italian delegation wishes to state that it shares the views expressed by the representatives of the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany on the draft resolution just adopted, and consequently has abstained in the vote.

Mr. MARIDUEÑO (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the delegation of my country, Ecuador, I wish to state that we regret that we were absent at the time of the voting and that we should like it shown in the record that had we been present we would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/32/29 and Corr.1 on agenda item 48.

Mr. FADHLI (Democratic Yemen): Had we been present we would have voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/32/29 and Corr.1.

The CHAIRMAN: The statements of the representatives of Ecuador and Democratic Yemen will be adequately reflected in the records of this Committee.

Mr. CHAMPENOIS (Belgium) (interpretation from French): I should like to explain the abstention of my country on the draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration of a Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean. My country recognizes that as long as the modalities are clearly established, such a zone could contribute effectively to the strengthening of peace and security in the region.

In that context, my delegation is pleased by the talks that have been taking place between the United States and the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, we believe that, as in all other regional matters, such a zone must be established on the initiative and with the agreement of all the coastal States and, as regards the Indian Ocean, the main users. It seems to us that these criteria, as reflected in the new operative paragraph 3, have not yet been completely met, despite the progress achieved.

Furthermore, my delegation wishes to avail itself of this opportunity to recall its position to the effect that the establishment of such a zone could not imply any limitation regarding the freedom of peaceful navigation as recognized under international law.

Mr. MAKOBERO (Burundi) (interpretation from French): My delegation was not present during the vote, but had it been here it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution. We wish the Secretariat to take note of this.

The CHAIRMAN: The point made by the representative of Burundi will be noted.

Mr. AL-SAIDI (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): First of all, I should like to state that if my delegation had been present during the vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/32/29 and Corr.1 we would have voted in favour of it.

Also, on behalf of my delegation, I should like to lay stress on the fact that operative paragraph 3, as we understand it, means that the littoral and hinterland States and the countries that have participated in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee are the only countries concerned. On that basis, my country would have voted in favour of the text.

The CHAIRMAN: The position of the delegation of Yemen will be reflected in the record.

Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): The delegation of my country attaches very great importance to the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace removed from international rivalry, because the military dangers created by the policies of the great Powers whose ships navigate the seas and oceans and their rivalry in setting up military bases create major risks to our region.

My delegation wishes to confirm that if we are expected to make a major contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security we must be able to count on concrete steps being taken in the implementation of this Declaration which will create an atmosphere of co-operation among the countries of the region and contribute to ensuring the security of the littoral and hinterland States as well as their territorial integrity.

Recent events in the region of the Indian Ocean require that littoral and hinterland States make concerted efforts to set up a common front with a view to achieving a major step forward towards the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

I should like to say that while my delegation was absent during the vote on the draft resolution in document A/32/29 and Corr.1, had we been present we would have voted in favour of it, and we hope that this will be noted in the record of our meeting.

The CHAIRMAN: The position of the delegation of Qatar will be duly reflected in the record.

Mr. DUMEVI (Ghana): I regret that my delegation was not present during the vote, but if we had been present we also would have voted in support of the draft resolution in document A/32/29 and Corr.1. I appeal to the Secretariat to take note of this.

The CHAIRMAN: The position of the delegation of Ghana will be duly reflected in the records of this Committee.

Since there are no other representatives wishing to speak in explanation of their votes on the draft resolution on the Indian Ocean, I declare the consideration of agenda item 48 concluded.

It was my intention to proceed next to the consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.7 concerning the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. However, various delegations have approached me expressing the wish that we delay somewhat action on this particular draft resolution since they are still expecting to receive instructions from their capitals. This being the state of affairs, we shall therefore move on to the next item, which is item 47, entitled "Reduction of military budgets", and we shall consider the draft resolution on that question contained in document A/C.1/32/L.24 and the proposed amendments in document A/C.1/32/L.33.

I call on the representative of the United States of America, who wishes to introduce the amendments contained in document A/C.1/32/L.33.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): I should like to introduce, explain and, I hope, win the Committee's support for the amendment to the resolution in document A/C.1/32/L.24.* The amendment is contained in document A/C.1/32/L.33, which was made available to the Secretariat last night, before the deadline, and I believe it is on the desks of all the representatives here. The amendments are relatively modest, and I shall take only a short time to explain them.

The first amendment involves the insertion after the second preambular paragraph of a new paragraph which reads as follows:

"Recognizing the value of the availability of a satisfactory instrument for standardized reporting on the military expenditures of Member States, particularly of the States permanent members of the Security Council, as well as any other States with comparable military expenditures,"

This proposed amendment gives explicit recognition to the value of standardized reporting on military expenditures for achieving agreement on the reduction of those expenditures. I submit that the adoption of this amendment would follow as a necessary corollary to the amendment to the seventh preambular paragraph, which urges that Member States, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, reduce their military budgets. If we are to be urged to reduce our military budgets, it seems to me that we should not in that way overlook the fact that it would be nice to have some uniform standard of what it is we are talking about, and therefore reaffirm the work that has been done in the United Nations, which indicates that we ought to develop a comparable standard of military expenditures. Work has been going on on this for a long period of time, and it seems to me that it would be a great shame if we were to pass a resolution on military expenditures that suddenly forgets it. Perhaps it does not forget it entirely but it overlooks it a bit.

Then we come to the next part of the amendment which the United States is pleased to present and which is sponsored also by the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. After operative paragraph 1, a new paragraph would be inserted which says:

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

"Requests the Secretary-General to ascertain those States which would be prepared to participate in a pilot test of the reporting instrument and to report on this to the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament;"

Clearly this is a very modest proposal. We all recognize that the question of military expenditures, of standardized reporting and the notion of a pilot test will be before us in the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. Would not that discussion be aided if we knew which countries were prepared to participate in the pilot test? We might spend some weeks at the special session saying, "A pilot test is fine, but who is going to participate?" Why cannot we take the time between now and then to find out who is willing to participate? The United States and the other sponsors submit that our deliberation on this subject at the special session will be helped, not hindered, if we know who is prepared to participate in a test programme. Our deliberations on the subject at that point will be much more meaningful than if we then had to say, "The pilot test is all right, but we do not know who is prepared to do it". This amendment merely asks the Secretary-General to get the information which would make our deliberations at the special session more, rather than less, meaningful.

In supporting these two quite modest amendments, the United States does so in support of the work carried out by the Secretary-General and the group of experts which has been working with him. We reassert the conviction - which I believe has been the conviction of this Committee and this Assembly - that the ready availability of meaningful and reliable data on military expenditures in a form suited to international comparison can play an important role in promoting international security and confidence. We have the belief - and I believe it is shared by others - that standardized reporting by all nations can lay the foundation - and I would submit, a necessary foundation - for future agreements limiting military expenditures.

The United States has supported this activity, and we frankly believe that the draft resolution we are now considering would be greatly improved as a step towards peace and as a step towards effective arms control agreements based on expenditures, if we reasserted our belief that that was a worthwhile endeavour and if we reasserted our belief that the preconditions for it - namely, an agreed type of reporting - were still there and if we took the steps necessary to place our discussion of this subject on a meaningful basis at the special session of the United Nations on disarmament.

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

I should like to add one item, and it is over and above the fact that a standardized reporting system is necessary if agreements on military budgets are to have real meaning. The Committee may recall that in my statement in the general debate on 18 October I stressed the recognition of my Government of the important relationship between disarmament and development. That recognition is also demonstrated by the United States in joining the sponsors of the resolution offered by the Nordic States in support of a study of this relationship by the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. If funds devoted to military budgets around the world could finally be reduced instead of continuously rising, as virtually every delegation here has pointed out in this Committee, the effect on the material and spiritual quality of life of mankind - not the least in those countries struggling at the lowest living standard - could be tremendous. I think we can all agree on that. But surely we should also be able to agree that negotiation on military expenditures must be related to an agreed, understandable and positively verifiable basis.

My delegation is deeply hopeful that this Committee will not ignore the effective progress achieved on the instrument for reporting military expenditures and will not turn its back on recommendations of the Secretary-General that this work should continue. Further progress can and certainly should be made at the special session in the area of reduction of military budgets. But the convening of a special session on disarmament certainly should not serve as a reason now to halt ongoing efforts, and the ongoing efforts we are suggesting are really quite modest and may serve to make the special session more meaningful.

Therefore I urge the Committee to approve these amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24*, and thus give it greater substance.

Mr. ELLIOTT (Belgium) speaking on behalf of the nine Member States of the European Community, I would like to stress that we fully share the ideas expressed in draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* and we will support it.

However, we think that the draft resolution does not bring as much progress as we believe necessary and possible at this juncture, considering the recommendations of the expert group contained in document A/32/194. As one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* himself pointed out in his statement in this Committee yesterday, we have now reached the position where practical steps can be taken. We therefore see no valid reason for postponing any further these steps which were also recommended by the expert group, namely to initiate a pilot study on an international reporting instrument on military budgets.

Starting the pilot study now would have the additional advantage of taking us a step further before the special session devoted to disarmament begins. That is why we support the amendment contained in document A/C.1/32/L.33, and I would like to explain our reasons for doing so.

We believe that the diversion of resources, both human and material, from peaceful economic and social purposes to military expenditure places a great burden on the developing and developed countries alike. We believe that a universal, balanced and verifiable reduction of military budgets might be achieved without affecting the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence under the United Nations Charter and without detriment to the national security of States. We are in favour of greater openness in the publication of military budgets; we think that secretiveness merely produces suspicion and instability.

The systematic and reliable measurement and reporting of military expenditures is an essential first step towards limiting and reducing them. Moreover, we consider that if any such reductions are to have beneficial consequences for economic and social progress in all countries, it is essential that those reductions, which would constitute steps towards disarmament, should be measurable by a clearly defined and universally accepted yardstick.

(Mr. Elliott, Belgium)

Only a device of that type could provide us with a meaningful basis for a serious discussion about the order of magnitude of reductions and of savings in resources, on the one hand, and of the magnitude of economic and social needs on the other. That is an additional reason why we believe that the reporting system proposed by the Secretary-General's group of experts should have been put to the test forthwith. The best way for taking this matter forward would have been by a pilot study, as the experts report recommends, involving a small number of States with varied military budgeting and accounting procedures. We consider that the time has come for the Secretary-General to arrange such a study and an analysis of its results.

We would have liked to have seen all Governments extend their co-operation and do all they could to provide any assistance that might have been required for the efficient preparation of such a pilot study. Without the co-operation of all States with different economic systems and at different stages of development, it will not be possible to achieve the ultimate objective, which is the reduction of military expenditure and the release of resources, both nationally and internationally, for urgent economic and social needs.

We see no direct link between the military expenditure of an industrialized country and the amount it allocates in overseas aid since quite different criteria and decisions are involved. Indeed, to make the transfer of resources to developing countries dependent upon the reduction of military budgets would surely be against the interests of all concerned, both developing and developed countries. The best guarantee of increased financial assistance that the developing countries could have would be a collective pledge by all donors that aid flows will be increased regardless of other budgetary commitments. The nine States members of the European Community have already given such an undertaking in the Conference on International Economic Co-operation. We are now working to make a substantial increase in our development aid contribution and to work towards a common target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as early as circumstances will allow. The total flow of

(Mr. Elliott, Belgium)

and to the third world could be greatly increased if all industrialized countries would participate in that effort.

We remain hopeful that the prospect of beneficial results for all will be hastened by the initiation of the pilot study which the draft amendment calls for. We urge delegations to give these amendments careful and positive consideration so that the Secretary-General may be enabled to take positive action in this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I would draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that we are not as yet engaged in explanations of vote but on a debate over the item.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): For all those who have been following this item in our debate, it is superfluous, it seems to me, to try to demonstrate the very special interest of the delegation of Mexico in achieving a reduction in the military budgets of the States permanent members of the Security Council, as well as any other State with comparable military expenditures. May I merely be allowed to recall that those studies began four years ago following a draft resolution submitted by Mexico which became General Assembly resolution 3093 B (XXVIII) of 7 December 1973. That was the origin of the studies prepared by the Secretary-General with the help of expert consultants. We already have three reports; the last one was prepared this year.

It is precisely because the delegation of Mexico has a very special interest in obtaining the desired results that my delegation, together with the delegation of Sweden, which co-sponsors draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24*, has sought to proceed with the utmost caution and also with the greatest patience.

It goes without saying that the statement made by the representative of the United States is without doubt a masterpiece of logic and persuasion. But we all know that it is not precisely logic that governs decisions and actions in the matter of disarmament.

AH/adv/me

A/C.1/32/FV.37
34-35

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Hence, even though my delegation is in complete agreement with the need to have a comparable system for standardized reporting, we deliberately refrained, as did the delegation of Sweden, from including in draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* a specific provision of the type embodied in paragraphs II and III of A/C.1/32/L.33.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

We wished - and still wish - to exhaust every possibility to reach an agreement, principally among the States directly referred to here, that is, the permanent members of the Security Council and other members with comparable military expenditures. Clearly, we shall not wait for ever to take another step of the kind mentioned by the representative of the United States here and of the type envisaged in document A/C.1/32/L.33. Perhaps by next year there will either be a favourable change in the present situation or we shall consider that the time has come to take a further step. But my delegation has often given factual evidence that when we consider that we can wait no longer for lack of agreement between the great Powers or the super-Powers we have not hesitated to submit the necessary draft resolution or draft amendments. But I repeat that in our view, based on lengthy consultations with numerous delegations, we had better wait a little longer.

We very much fear that adoption now of amendments such as those in paragraphs II and III of document A/C.1/32/L.33, far from helping to achieve the desired objective, might result in a hardening of the present negative attitude among many delegations regarding submission of the instruments referred to in paragraph II. If this happens, it will be even more difficult, if not impossible, to achieve the desired objective.

That is why when the time comes to vote my delegation will request a separate vote on the amendment in paragraph I of document A/C.1/32/L.33 and the amendments in paragraphs II and III. The amendments in II and III can be voted on jointly, because they are very closely interrelated.

My delegation will vote in favour of the amendment in paragraph I but, much to our regret, we shall have to vote against the amendments in paragraphs II and III. We shall have to do so, I repeat, much to our regret because the purpose we pursue is exactly the same as that pursued by the representative of the United States and the members of the European Community. However, we are convinced that to try to impose such a procedure now would be premature and contrary to our objective.

Furthermore approval of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* with the amendment in paragraph I of document A/C.1/32/L.33 only, will not in any way

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

prevent the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament from giving this matter the consideration it deems appropriate. What is more, such consideration is specifically provided for.

Thus the fourth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* reads:

"Noting that the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in May/June 1978 will provide an opportunity to consider the disarmament problem in a broad perspective".

That implies that any aspect related to the reduction of military budgets may be considered. But should it be necessary to make it clearer, the next paragraph says:

"Noting further that at the special session several matters related to the reduction of military expenditures will be considered".

In conclusion, I should merely like to emphasize that we are compelled to vote against the amendments in paragraphs II and III of document A/C.1/32/L.33 at this session simply because we believe that the result of approval of those two amendments would be counterproductive for the end we seek. To prove that we agree completely on the substance I shall say that, if at the thirty-third session the situation unfortunately remains unchanged, my delegation would not only accept paragraphs of that kind but would probably even include them in any draft resolution we might submit on the subject.

The CHAIRMAN: I understood the representative of Mexico to have made a formal proposal that will affect the voting when we come to that point, on the amendments contained in document A/C.1/32/L.33. I understand that he is requesting a separate vote on the amendment in paragraph I followed by a separate vote on the amendments in paragraphs II and III taken together.

Would the representative of Mexico please confirm that my understanding is correct?

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): That is correct.

Mr. HAMILTON (Sweden): I wish to make a brief comment on the proposed amendments to the draft resolution concerning military budgets just presented by the representative of the United States. In order to explain the reason for our position I have not much to say in addition to what was said yesterday morning and today by the representative of Mexico and in my own statement yesterday. I merely wish to emphasize again that the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will provide the most appropriate opportunity for considering this and other related disarmament issues in a broad perspective. We firmly believe that that will be the right moment at which to adopt a programme for operational development and implementation of the reporting system.

As regards the amendments proposed by the United States delegation, my delegation can agree to the proposal in paragraph I on the preambular part of the draft resolution. On the other hand, we cannot accept paragraphs II and III and accordingly we shall have to vote against them.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* pertaining to agenda item 47, entitled "Reduction of military budgets". I understand that the draft resolution has no financial implications. As the Committee knows, this draft resolution is sponsored by the delegations of Mexico and Sweden and was introduced in this Committee by the representative of Mexico on 17 November. The other document pertaining to the same item is A/C.1/32/L.33 which contains the proposed amendments introduced a short while ago by the representative of the United States. There has been a procedural proposal by the representative of Mexico as to how we should vote on those proposed amendments, and I shall revert to that matter when we come to vote.

Before proceeding to the vote on the amendments or the draft resolution, I shall call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote before the vote.

Mr. OGISO (Japan): My delegation wishes to explain its position on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* and the proposed amendments contained in document A/C.1/32/L.33.

First of all, we welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the reduction of military budgets (A/32/194), which contained an analysis of comments provided by States in response to suggestions contained in the 1976 report on the reduction of military budgets (A/31/222/Rev.1).

Looking back at the history of United Nations deliberations on the question of the reduction of military budgets, in 1973 the Soviet Union proposed the inclusion of a new item in the agenda of the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly entitled "Reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the United Nations Security Council by 10 per cent and the use of a part of the funds thus saved for providing assistance to developing countries". This was the subject of resolution 3093 A (XXVIII) adopted on 7 December 1973. In operative paragraph 1 of that resolution, the General Assembly:

"Recommends that all States permanent members of the Security Council should reduce their military budgets by 10 per cent from the 1973 level during the next financial year."

However, this raised a problem as far as taking serious steps towards the goal proclaimed in that resolution is concerned since the composition of military budgets varies from one country to another.

In an effort to overcome this difficulty the General Assembly adopted resolution 3463 (XXX), sponsored by Mexico and Sweden, on 11 December 1975, in which it requested:

"... the Secretary-General, assisted by a group of qualified experts ... to prepare a report containing an in-depth analysis and examination in concrete terms of the various matters specified ... including conclusions and recommendations."

In pursuance of this resolution, the Group of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General worked out quite an excellent means of measurement, or format, in 1976 and further improved the proposed reporting instrument in 1977. My delegation is convinced that in order to implement the 1973 resolution on the reduction of military budgets, originally introduced by the Soviet Union,

we need to agree on an appropriate means of measuring national military expenditures in order to compare them on a fair and concrete basis. In this sense, my delegation is disappointed that there is no specific reference in draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* to putting into operation the proposed reporting instruments.

In this connexion, in paragraph 106 of the report there is the following recommendation:

"The work set in motion by General Assembly resolution 3093 A and B (XXVIII) of 7 December 1973 has reached a decisive stage. A satisfactory reporting instrument has been devised and reviewed. The time thus appears propitious to attempt to move a step further. Progress along these lines will require operational testing and refining of the reporting instrument, which is work of a character different from that undertaken by the expert groups of 1974, 1976 and 1977." (A/32/194, para. 106)

My delegation associates itself fully with that recommendation and believes it to be absolutely necessary that further and concrete steps be taken as a matter of urgency.

With regard to the proposed amendments to the draft resolution by the United States, my delegation considers that those amendments reflect at least the minimum necessities at this stage to which I have called attention and that for this reason they greatly improve the draft resolution. My delegation therefore strongly supports the proposed amendments in document A/C.1/32/L.33.

(Mr. Ogiso, Japan)

My delegation, therefore, strongly hopes that the amendments are adopted. However, even if that is not the case, my delegation will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24*, but on the understanding, which was confirmed a few minutes ago by the representative of Mexico, that a decision on putting into operation the proposed standardized reporting instrument will be considered at the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

As is suggested in the report, preparations for the start of operations would best be entrusted to an ad hoc panel of experienced practitioners in this field of military budgeting, under the aegis of the United Nations.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take a decision on the amendments contained in document A/C.1/32/L.33. These draft amendments have been submitted by the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

The representative of Mexico has asked that a separate vote be taken on amendment I in document A/C.1/32/L.33, and that another separate vote be taken on amendments II and III together, appearing in the same document.

The Committee will therefore be requested to take a decision first on amendment I. For greater clarity, I shall read out that particular amendment:

"I. After the second preambular paragraph, insert a new paragraph reading as follows:

Recognizing the value of the availability of a satisfactory instrument for standardized reporting on the military expenditures of Member States, particularly of the States permanent members of the Security Council, as well as any other States with comparable military expenditures,".

(The Chairman)

A recorded vote has been requested by the delegation of the United States.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Empire, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Surinam, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia

Against: China

Abstaining: Algeria, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Ireland, Mauritania, Mongolia, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Amendment I was adopted by 103 votes to 1, with 17 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on amendments II and III in document A/C.1/32/L.33. Again for the sake of clarity, I shall read out those amendments:

"II. After paragraph 1, insert a new paragraph reading as follows:

2. Requests the Secretary-General to ascertain those States which would be prepared to participate in a pilot test of the reporting instrument and to report on this to the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

"III. To paragraph 2, henceforth paragraph 3, add a new clause reading as follows:

and containing information concerning the progress made in carrying out the task referred to in paragraph 2, above."

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Burundi, Canada, Chad, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Iceland, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Luxembourg, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Surinam, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against: China, Mexico, Peru, Sweden,

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cape Verde, Central African Empire, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Poland,

Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan,
Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago,
Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates,
United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania,
Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia,
Zaire, Zambia,

Amendments II and III were adopted by 40 votes to 4, with 76 absentions.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* as amended by the decisions just taken by the Committee. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Empire, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland,^T France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Surinam, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Albania, China

Abstaining: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24*, as amended, was adopted by 109 votes to 2, with 11 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes.

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): The Pakistan delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24* relating to the reduction of military budgets. We are in favour of the objective of this draft resolution: that is, of bringing about a reduction in global military expenditures. The preliminary studies carried out so far on the subject have been valuable if only in pointing to the complex and difficult problems involved.

We deem it necessary to express certain important considerations that underline our approach to this question. First, the primary responsibility for achieving reductions globally devolve on those States which possess the largest military arsenals. Similarly, in a regional context also, it is the more powerful States which need to take the first confidence-building steps.

Second, we feel that reduction in military budgets by specific percentages may bring about a situation which is disadvantageous to the weaker States. It would be more equitable to link the reduction of expenditure to actual force reductions expressed in physical terms.

Third, the models for accounting of military budgets outlined in the report of the Secretary-General suffer from a number of technical deficiencies. These would have the effect of presenting an incomplete picture of the military potential and capability of the advanced industrialized States.

The proposed system appears to follow a less scientific approach than is warranted in an era of rapid technological development.

We shall elaborate these comments on the subject at a later date.

Mr. LOZINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In connexion with the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.24*, the Soviet delegation would like to make the following statement.

(Mr. Lozinsky, USSR)

The Soviet Union has been consistently in favour of reducing military budgets of States in the belief that the implementation of this measure would be one of the most effective means of curbing the arms race. It would make possible the diverting of the freed resources to the purposes of economic and social progress of the peoples and the affording of assistance to developing countries. It is well known also that this question has appeared on the agenda of the United Nations, as an independent item, since the time when the Soviet Union, in 1973, came forward with the initiative for reducing military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent, earmarking some of the resources saved for the affording of assistance to developing countries.

The General Assembly approved that initiative, but its implementation unfortunately has been delayed, and it has not been our fault.

Subsequently, the USSR has repeatedly appealed to have the question of the reduction of military budgets made the subject of businesslike talks among interested States, and for its part has expressed its readiness to take serious steps towards this end. Such readiness, however, we do not observe on the part of certain permanent members of the Security Council.

Furthermore, in recent years in the United Nations we have noticed a line for carrying out technical studies of military budgets which in essence have become detailed investigations, of the methodology for comparing the military potentials of States. As a result, the main purpose is lost, which is that of reducing military budgets. The content of the last report of the Group of Experts, circulated in document A/32/194, and the draft resolution which has recently been put to the vote, confirm this conclusion.

We believe that the efforts of States Members of the United Nations should be devoted not to comparisons of ever more complex contradictory and abstract reports, but to the implementation of genuine effective measures to reduce military budgets.

On the basis of these considerations, the Soviet delegation abstained in the voting on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/32/L.24*.

Mr. MULLOY (Ireland): Ireland fully supported all the amendments proposed in document A/C.1/32/L.33 but by inadvertence abstained in the vote on paragraph I. I should like that error to be corrected to show a vote in favour of paragraph I.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement of the representative of Ireland will be noted in the records of the Committee.

We have thus concluded consideration of agenda item 47, entitled "Reduction of military budgets".

The Committee will now proceed to agenda item 51, entitled "General and complete disarmament" under which it has before it draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.26 submitted by the delegation of Belgium on 15 November. I have been informed by the Secretariat that the draft resolution has no financial implications.

Since no representative wishes to speak at this stage, the Committee will proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.26.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Singapore, Spain, Surinam, Swaziland, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: None

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Yemen, Yugoslavia

The draft resolution was adopted by 71 votes to none, with 41 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on delegations that wish to explain their votes.

Mr. HSU YI-MIN (China) (interpretation from Chinese): With respect to draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.26, which has just been adopted, the Chinese delegation would like to state that it did not participate in the vote and requests this statement to be included in the record of our meeting.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement of the representative of China will be included in the records of the Committee.

Mr. ELIAV (Israel): Israel has always supported the principle of regional disarmament as the most practical way to ensure global disarmament, and steps in that direction certainly should not be postponed until a comprehensive world-wide scheme has been worked out and put into effect. This is certainly Israel's view as far as the Middle East is concerned and its leaders have declared time and again their readiness to tackle the problem of the limitation and reduction of arms in the region as a separate issue, progress on which should not be contingent on the solution of other problems.

That attitude has been at the core of Israel's suggestion that the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament should examine a proposal for the establishment of regional disarmament commissions which would consider in depth ideas and suggestions for intergovernmental regional agreements on arms reduction and control. I am referring, of course, to document A/AC.187/38, which sets forth Israel's views regarding that session.

My delegation was therefore very happy to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.26, which we regard as an important step in the right direction, and we noted in particular with satisfaction that the latter part of operative paragraph 1 of that draft resolution indicates that "measures designed to increase confidence and stability" - "measures designed to increase confidence and stability" - could play an important part in the process of regional disarmament.

As all members know, such a measure of historical dimensions designed to increase confidence and stability will take place tomorrow in Jerusalem, the eternal city of peace, and may I thus express the hope that the Middle East in the not-too-distant future instead of being one of the most heavily armed zones in the world will become a model for regional disarmament and coexistence.

Mr. MADADHA (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): Had my delegation participated in the vote it would have abstained on the draft resolution submitted by Belgium in document A/C.1/32/L.26. The reason for that abstention is our solidarity with our friends and the non-aligned countries that consider the draft resolution not to be suitable at this time, when world attention should be concentrated on nuclear disarmament and on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. The draft resolution submitted by Belgium goes beyond that and deals with general and complete disarmament at a time when countries are facing problems caused by aggression and therefore need continually to defend themselves, and when many countries pay absolutely no attention to the emphasis which has been placed by the international community on the need for nuclear disarmament. I should like the abstention of Jordan to be recorded.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement by the delegation of Jordan will be duly recorded.

The Committee will now take up its next item of business, namely, draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.7 pertaining to agenda item 45, which is entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia".

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, I request your kind consideration of our earlier request that the vote on this draft resolution be deferred until this afternoon's meeting of the Committee. However, we would have no objection to explanations of vote before the vote being given now.

The CHAIRMAN: Unless there is any objection to the procedure that has just been suggested, we shall proceed to the explanations of vote before the vote so that we may take the vote promptly as the first business of the Committee in the afternoon.

The draft resolution, as the Committee will recall, was introduced by the delegation of Pakistan on 11 November. It has no financial implications.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): The United States is pleased to be able to vote for the draft resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. This vote reflects United States support for the concept of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world which President Carter emphasized at the Organizing Conference of the International Fuel Cycle Evaluation in Washington last month. We believe that effective nuclear-weapon-free zones can enhance the security of the parties and can reinforce non-proliferation on a regional basis.

The United States vote in favour of this draft resolution also reflects continuing United States support for the objectives of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in south Asia under conditions that would ensure its effectiveness. The criteria by which the United States Government judges the effectiveness of any nuclear-weapon-free zone have been elaborated by my delegation many times in the past. We also recognize the responsibility of all nuclear-weapon States in connexion with the establishment of such zones.

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

The United States does not regard this draft resolution as being directed against any State in the region and would not have been able to support it had we thought otherwise. We believe that the actual provisions governing the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, as in any other area, must be negotiated and agreed on among the appropriate parties before States can be expected to undertake commitments regarding the zone.

The United States, by its vote for this draft resolution, wishes to endorse the concept of a south Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone that is developed and supported by the States in the region.

Mr. DHAN (India): I should like to speak this afternoon in explanation of vote before the vote, and I request that I may be allowed to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: Since there are no other speakers wishing to speak now in explanation of vote before the vote, and in deference to the request made by the representative of India, I shall adjourn the meeting at this time on the understanding that when the Committee reconvenes this afternoon it will continue with the consideration of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/32/L.7.

However, I should first like to announce that the following delegations have indicated their wish to become cosponsors of draft resolutions: Senegal, draft resolutions A/C.1/32/L.3 and L.29; New Zealand, draft resolutions A/C.1/32/L.28 and L.29; and Jordan, draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.29.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.