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FIRST COMMITTEE
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at 10.30 a.m.
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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 35TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The first speaker is the representative of Sri Lanka, who will introduce the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference and draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.24.

Mr. BALASUBRAMANIAM (Sri Lanka), Chairman, Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference: It is my pleasure and privilege to introduce the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, which is contained in document A/35/28. The report has been prepared in accordance with the mandate entrusted to the Ad Hoc Committee in General Assembly resolution 34/81 of 11 December 1979.

The report contains three chapters, namely: I., Introduction; II., Work of the Committee and III., Conclusions and recommendations. I wish to draw the attention of members of the Committee in particular to paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 of the report.

Paragraph 13 refers to the contacts which the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee had with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States and the position of those States regarding the proposed world disarmament conference.

In paragraph 14 the Ad Hoc Committee reiterates that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support but with varying degrees of emphasis and differences on conditions and certain aspects. Those aspects include the question of the convening of the conference as well as the deteriorating international situation. The same paragraph draws the conclusion, from the views of the nuclear-weapon States referred to in paragraph 13, that there is no consensus yet among them with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference.

In paragraph 15 the Ad Hoc Committee notes that the General Assembly may wish to decide that, after its second special session devoted to disarmament, a world disarmament conference would take place as soon as the necessary consensus on its convening has been reached.

(Mr. Balasubramaniam, Chairman,
Ad Hoc Committee on the World
Disarmament Conference)

Let me now take this opportunity to introduce the draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.24 on the World Disarmament Conference. Members of the Committee will note that it is sponsored by Ecuador, Peru, Poland, Spain and Sri Lanka, all countries whose representatives are officers of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The draft resolution is quite similar to the one adopted last year by the General Assembly under this item, except for the sixth preambular paragraph. That paragraph notes that in its resolution 35/... of such and such a date on the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade, the General Assembly considered it also pertinent to recall that the Final Document stated the following:

"At the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conference should be convened with universal participation and with adequate preparation."

May I take this opportunity to commend the draft resolution before the Committee for adoption by consensus.

As I conclude my statement in introduction of the report and the draft resolution, I wish to take a few minutes of the time of this Committee to make a few general observations.

Year after year, the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference have come before this Committee to present the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee. Some delegations may feel that those reports may not have reflected any tangible progress towards our goal. That should not dishearten us and make us lose sight of our objectives.

Most, if not all, human endeavours appear to be difficult and quite often impossible at the beginning. This is true of work both at the United Nations and elsewhere.

Nearly 10 years ago, when we had the first meetings regarding the law of the sea, there were not many who would have ventured to envisage that a law of the sea treaty was feasible or possible. Time appears to have proved otherwise and it does seem today that a law of the sea is now within reach. That experience, I trust, will be a source of encouragement to those of us in the Ad Hoc Committee who have some reservations about the outcome of the Committee's work.

(Mr. Balasubramaniam, Chairman
Ad Hoc Committee on the World
Disarmament Conference)

In conclusion, I wish to express my sincere thanks to all members of the Ad Hoc Committee for their spirit of co-operation and accommodation so consistently and adequately displayed during our meetings. I also wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Secretary of the Committee and his colleagues in the Secretariat for their valuable assistance to the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon the representative of Hungary, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.27.

Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary): On behalf of the delegation of Hungary I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Conclusion of an international convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons" contained in document A/C.1/35/L.27.

Although radiological weapons were classified as weapons of mass destruction as far back as 1948, in a resolution adopted by the Commission for Conventional Armaments, the question of the prohibition of those weapons has come into the foreground only in recent years. That development is closely connected to the spread of nuclear energy production. As a consequence of that development, material which could be used in radiological weapons is today found in many facilities and in many countries. Thus the prevention of the appearance of a new form of new forms of weapons of destruction, namely radiological weapons, has become a timely and important task. The importance of the prohibition of radiological weapons needs no lengthy elaboration. The devastating and long-term effects of intensive radiation for human beings and for the environment are already well known.

The fact that the threat of radiological weapons is fortunately still but a potential threat does not diminish its danger and importance because it is a real threat. That is why the Committee on Disarmament responded favourably to the submission in July 1979 of the joint USSR-United States proposal on major elements of a treaty prohibiting radiological weapons. It was against that background that at its last session the General Assembly adopted resolution 34/87 A by consensus. Operative paragraph 1 of that resolution welcomed the report of the Committee on Disarmament with regard to radiological weapons and particularly its stated intention to continue its consideration of proposals for a convention banning those weapons at its next session. Operative paragraph 2 requested the Committee on Disarmament to proceed as soon as possible to achieve agreement through negotiation on the text of such a convention and to report to the General Assembly on the results achieved.

In pursuance of that resolution, on 17 March of this year the Committee on Disarmament adopted the following decision:.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

"The Committee on Disarmament decides to establish for the duration of its 1980 session an Ad Hoc Working Group of the Committee with a view to reaching agreement on a convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons". (A/35/27, p. 50, para. 4)

The Working Group, of which I had the honour to be Chairman, was able to deal with the task entrusted to it only in the second part of the 1980 session of the Committee on Disarmament. The Working Group agreed that the proceedings should encompass the following three phases: identification of the main elements of the future treaty; negotiation on each of the identified elements; and the drafting of the text of the treaty. Despite all its efforts the Working Group could not reach the third phase that is, the drafting of the text of the treaty. The work done by the Working Group is clearly reflected in its report, which is an integral part of the report of the Committee on Disarmament. In summarizing the situation the report states that:

"In carrying out its mandate, the Ad Hoc Working Group held extensive discussion on the main elements of a treaty prohibiting radiological weapons. The discussion revealed that, while all delegations were ready to negotiate a treaty on radiological weapons, different concepts existed with regard to approach, the priority, the role and scope of the treaty, the definition of radiological weapons, and the procedures of verifying compliance, as well as in some other areas." (Ibid., p. 53, para. 15)

The results achieved may be considered very meagre, although every member of the Working Group felt that the discussion of the main elements of a treaty was useful. The active participation of experts further contributed to a better understanding of the problems involved. The work of the Working Group was active, which is manifested also in the fact that many proposals and amendments were put forward on the joint USSR-United States proposal, which was central in the discussions. One can now state that the Ad Hoc Working Group has reached the stage at which negotiations on a concrete text could be possible.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

Taking into account the progress made and the various differences of approach to be resolved, the Committee on Disarmament decided to establish for its 1981 session a further Ad Hoc Working Group to continue negotiations on the elaboration of a treaty prohibiting radiological weapons.

The Hungarian delegation has noted with satisfaction that the question of banning radiological weapons received considerable attention and wide support in the general debate of our Committee. We consider it extremely important and encouraging the many delegations have advocated completing the elaboration of a treaty by the Committee on Disarmament during its 1981 session.

In his statement on 27 October, the representative of Nigeria, Ambassador Adeniji, in dealing with disarmament measures to be taken not later than the second special session to be devoted to disarmament, specifically mentioned, among others, a treaty on the prohibition of the development, production and use of radiological weapons. The representative of France said that:

"The negotiations on a convention on radiological weapons, which began this year, must be pursued and, we hope, reach a successful conclusion in 1981". (A/C.1/35/PV.21, p. 57)

I must add that the same idea was expressed by some other delegations.

My delegation is pleased to note that in the report of the Disarmament Commission (A/35/42), tackling those specific measures of disarmament which have been identified in the Final Document as being worthy of priority negotiations by the multilateral negotiating organ, specific mention has been made of a treaty on the prohibition of the development, production and use of radiological weapons.

The draft resolution which I have the honour to submit is based on the widely shared desire to contemplate the conclusion in 1981 of the elaboration of a treaty prohibiting radiological weapons.

The preambular part of the draft resolution recalls the aforementioned 1948 resolution of the Commission for Conventional Armaments. It recalls also General Assembly resolution 2602 C (XXIV) and paragraph 76 of the Final Document of the tenth special session, which deals with the

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

prohibition of radiological weapons. It reaffirms resolution 34/87 A, adopted by the General Assembly last year, on the conclusion of such a convention. The remaining paragraphs of the preamble express satisfaction that negotiations on the conclusion of an international convention prohibiting radiological weapons have begun, in the Committee on Disarmament, takes note of that part of the report of the Committee on Disarmament which deals with those negotiations, including the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group, and notes with satisfaction the wide recognition of the need to reach agreement on the text of a treaty prohibiting radiological weapons.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

Operative paragraph 1 calls upon the Committee on Disarmament to complete without delay the elaboration of a treaty prohibiting radiological weapons and to report on the results to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session.

Operative paragraph 2 notes the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Working Group contained in the report adopted by the Committee on Disarmament to set up at the beginning of its 1981 session a further ad hoc working group under an appropriate mandate to be determined at that time, to continue negotiations on the elaboration of such a treaty.

Operative paragraph 3 requests the Secretary-General to transmit to the Committee on Disarmament all documents relating to the discussion by this session of the General Assembly on the prohibition of radiological weapons.

The last operative paragraph decides to include in the provisional agenda of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly an item entitled "Prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons".

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope of my delegation that the draft resolution on radiological weapons will receive careful and positive consideration and will be adopted by consensus, as was the case last year.

Mr. NOLAN (Australia): I should like to address the Committee under agenda item 41 on the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean.

The year 1980 has been an important one for the Ad Hoc Committee. It has been a year in which for the first time all interested States were members of the Committee and have thus been able to participate directly in steering the Committee towards the achievement of its goal of the declaration of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean.

Whereas last year the primary task of the Ad Hoc Committee was the preparation for the Meeting of Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, this year the Committee was entrusted with the task of commencing preparations for the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean.

(Mr. Nolan, Australia)

The fact that the Meeting of Littoral and Hinterland States was not able to reach consensus on a final document indicated clearly that it was some way from achieving the degree of harmonization of views necessary for the convening of a conference. The call in resolution 34/80 B for a conference to be convened in 1981 was therefore ambitious, and we noted in our statement to the First Committee at last year's session of the General Assembly that the conclusion of the preparatory work would be a necessary precondition for a conference to take place at that time. However, we undertook to work constructively towards that end and in doing so stressed the need for all permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users to participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The Australian delegation was particularly pleased that these States, together with a number of other interested States, saw fit to join the Committee this year. Their presence and obvious desire to work constructively within the Committee certainly contributed to its work. There still remain, however, significant areas where views of States diverge. It is, we believe, recognized by all members of the Committee that these areas would have to be narrowed before a conference can be successfully convened.

Since the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly alarming events have occurred which even more directly affect the probability of convening a successful conference in 1981. I refer primarily to the invasion by the Soviet Union of Afghanistan, a hinterland State of the region. This deeply disturbing development has affected not only our desire to create a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean but also the stability and security of the world as a whole. A tense and dangerous situation has been created, and the Australian Government, together with the overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations General Assembly, has continued to express strong disapproval of this action. It is difficult to envisage how we could expect a conference to produce a declaration on a zone of peace when one of the hinterland States of the region is forcibly occupied by one of the Powers attending the conference. Moreover, the massing of forces on the borders of other littoral States by the Soviet Union has only created additional tension and lack of trust in the area.

(Mr. Nolan, Australia)

It is important that when a substantive conference on the Indian Ocean is convened we should be confident that it will be a success. A failed conference could only set back our goals. Success can be ensured only if adequate preparations have been completed, including the achievement of a significant degree of harmonization of positions on the issues outstanding. These prerequisites can be met only if the political climate in the area is conducive. At this stage there would appear to be grounds for believing that this will not be the case.

For there to be a conference next year the final decision would have to be taken at the first 1981 meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee. If all the preconditions necessary for ensuring a successful conference have not been met by that time the Committee will have the duty to delay the convening of the conference. This does not however mean that the Committee should cease continuing to work towards harmonizing positions on the Indian Ocean. Indeed one of the primary tasks of the Committee will continue to be to identify those areas on which harmonization will have to be reached before a zone of peace can be declared in the Indian Ocean.

I turn now to the draft resolution on this subject which is before the Committee. My delegation is pleased to say that it has Australia's support, and we hope that for the first time in the life of the Ad Hoc Committee the Indian Ocean resolution will be adopted by consensus. Delegations will be aware of the encouraging degree of co-operation which was exhibited by members of the Ad Hoc Committee in preparing this draft resolution. It reflects the views of all members of the Ad Hoc Committee, most significantly in its recognition of the necessity, when deciding if a conference should be held in 1981, to take into account the degree of preparations, the extent of harmonization of views and the political and security climate in the area - particularly in view of developments since the adoption of last year's resolution.

Before concluding my statement, it is my pleasure to express, on behalf of the Australian delegation, our appreciation of the excellent chairmanship of Ambassador Balasubramaniam. I know that the other members of the Ad Hoc Committee will agree with me when I say the constructive work which the

(Mr. Nolan, Australia)

Committee carried out this year was largely due to our Chairman's skill and perseverance. We have faced a number of seemingly insurmountable problems, but through the guidance of our Chairman the Committee is able to look back with satisfaction at its work over the year.

In addition, may I express the Australian delegation's thanks to the Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee, Mr. Kheradi, and the members of his staff for their considerable contribution to the work of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of India to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/35/L.22.

Mr. MITTAL (India): On behalf of its sponsors, including my own delegation, I have the honour of introducing the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/35/L.22 on the non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war.

It will be recalled that the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament unequivocally states:

"Nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization. It is essential to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race in all its aspects in order to avert the danger of war involving nuclear weapons. The ultimate goal in this context is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons." (resolution s-10/2, para. 47)

(Mr. Mittal, India)

The Final Document also stated that the most effective guarantee against the danger of nuclear war and the use of nuclear weapons is nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The several statements that we have heard during our debate in the past few weeks in this Committee have underscored the fact that the nuclear arms race has continued unchecked and that the danger of a nuclear war breaking out has significantly escalated. This is due not only to the continued increase in the nuclear arsenals of nuclear-weapon States, but also to the espousal of such dangerous strategic doctrines as nuclear deterrence, limited nuclear strikes and so on. Given this situation, the question of providing mankind with a credible and binding assurance against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons has become more urgent than ever before.

The draft resolution before us is basically a reiteration of the provisions of the Declaration contained in General Assembly resolution 1653 (XVI) of November 1961. That Declaration had clearly stated that the use of nuclear weapons would be a violation of the United Nations Charter and a crime against humanity. The effects of any nuclear war, as should be apparent to all, would not be limited merely to the territories of those who may wage it. All States, including non-nuclear-weapon countries, would suffer from the radioactive fall-out and the contamination that would inevitably ensue. This is amply clear from the study on nuclear weapons prepared by the Secretary-General with the assistance of a group of experts, contained in document A/35/392. It is for this pressing reason that we continue to hold that the sovereignty and well-being of all States, including those not involved in the conflict, would be endangered in the event of a nuclear war. Such a development, then, would clearly be a violation of the United Nations Charter and a crime against the whole of mankind. In addition, given the catastrophic consequences of a nuclear war, it may well mean the end of our species and human civilization as we know it.

(Mr. Mittal, India)

The present draft resolution refers in addition to two other resolutions on the subject. The first, General Assembly resolution 33/71 B, was sponsored by as many as 34 delegations and was adopted by an overwhelming majority of the international community. The present draft resolution is on similar lines. The reason why it is felt necessary to focus attention once again on this extremely important issue rests on the increasingly elusive prospect of making meaningful progress in regard to nuclear disarmament. The draft resolution further takes note of the study on nuclear weapons prepared by the Secretary-General to which I have already made reference.

The other resolution referred to is General Assembly resolution 34/83 G, which was mainly procedural in nature and had asked for the views of States concerning the non-use of nuclear weapons and avoidance of nuclear war to be transmitted to the Committee on Disarmament for its consideration.

The sponsors of the draft resolution which is now before us are not asking for the immediate conclusion of a convention on the non-use of nuclear weapons, since this would obviously take considerable time. But they do consider it necessary that at least a beginning must be made without delay in that direction to prevent the possibility of a nuclear conflict. In response to the earlier resolution 33/71 B, some States had communicated their proposals in this regard to the United Nations. These are available in documents A/34/456 of 28 September 1979 and A/34/456/Add.1 of 16 October 1979. The current draft resolution calls upon those States that have not already done so similarly to submit their suggestions in this regard so that the possibility of concluding an international convention or other suitable agreement on the subject may be seriously considered at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. It is the opinion of the sponsors that once a cross-section of views, which should be as broad as possible, has been obtained, the objective of negotiating a convention banning the use of nuclear weapons, or some other internationally binding agreement to that effect, could be taken up in a more practical and concrete manner.

(Mr. Mittal, India)

The sponsors of the draft resolution which I have just introduced earnestly hope that it will receive the widest support of all members of the First Committee and that this will in turn move the world community closer towards the goal of eliminating once and for all the danger of a nuclear war, thereby ensuring that our generation as well as future generations are free from the ever-present and growing threat to their survival from such a war.

Mr. PETREE (United States of America): For the first time in its history, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean has been able to formulate a draft resolution which, we believe, should be able to command unanimous support in this body. All countries who participated in the lengthy Ad Hoc Committee discussions of the past year share the credit for this achievement, but praise is most especially due to Chairman Balasubramaniam and his group of friends, whose tireless efforts played a key role in negotiating the present consensus draft resolution.

It is well recognised that this draft resolution may not be entirely satisfactory to all members of the Ad Hoc Committee. Indeed, the lengthy substantive discussions undertaken in the Committee and at the meetings of the "Friends of the Chairman" have clearly demonstrated that a wide divergence of views on a number of fundamental issues remains.

As this Committee is aware, the United States itself over the years has voiced its concerns on fundamental issues relating to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. Indeed, our difficulties with aspects of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee precluded our participation in its work until this year when, after lengthy consultations, the United States accepted the invitation extended to it to join the Ad Hoc Committee.

(Mr. Petree, United States)

On a number of occasions, we have stated our view that General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), as well as the conclusions in the Final Document of the Meeting of Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, held in 1979, do not constitute a sole or sufficient basis for establishing the consensus necessary for practical progress towards our common goals. In this connexion, I should note that resolution 2832 (XXVI) was passed almost a decade ago and received only 61 votes in the General Assembly as against 55 abstentions. In fact, less than half of the present membership of the Ad Hoc Committee actually voted in favour in that resolution. Likewise, some of the original members of the Ad Hoc Committee were not able to endorse the conclusions in the Final Document of the Littoral and Hinterland States.

(Mr. Petree, United States)

Most importantly, we believe that many of the goals and views set forth in those two documents have been rendered obsolete by drastic changes in the international situation. Future Committee work must reflect the reality that today the most immediate threat to regional security comes not from great Power naval forces, but from the intensification of conflict among the regional States themselves, and above all from the presence of Soviet land and air forces, as most clearly demonstrated by the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, a hinterland State.

In order to bring these and related points to the attention of the Ad Hoc Committee, and to the United Nations as a whole, the United States put forward positions on several key issues during its participation in the Committee's work. I should like briefly to review these now.

First, we have sought to ensure that the results of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee are in strict conformity with the basic provisions of international law and the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. In particular, we have expressed our concern that the work of the Committee not contravene the basic rights of all States to the freedoms of navigation and overflight as provided for in international law, and the right of all States to make appropriate arrangements for individual or collective self-defence, as provided for in the United Nations Charter.

Secondly, the United States has, on many occasions, made the point that while naval forces most certainly play a part in the security equation for the Indian Ocean area, any valid discussion of Indian Ocean security matters must also consider the role of regional forces, and above all the role of Soviet military forces and other external military forces associated with them, in the Indian Ocean region and adjacent areas. This issue must be a major focus of Committee work next year, particularly in view of the fact that Soviet troops continue to occupy Afghanistan, even though an overwhelming number of States have called for their withdrawal, both at the United Nations through resolution ES-6/2 and in other international forums.

Thirdly, on other substantive issues the United States has noted that much work needs to be done before there can be agreement on the principles underlying a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. These include not only the geographic limits of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, but also the issues of foreign military presence, regional forces, nuclear weapons, international security, and peaceful settlement of disputes.

Fourthly, because of the continuing existence of wide differences within the Committee on substantive issues, and because of the deteriorating security situation over the past year in the Indian Ocean area, the United States has continued to take the position that it would be premature to schedule a conference on the Indian Ocean under these conditions.

We are encouraged by the fact that over the past year the Ad Hoc Committee has engaged in lengthy and often productive discussions on those four fundamental issues and that our concerns, as well as those of others, are reflected in the current consensus draft resolution. Thus, the present draft resolution, while by no means perfect from our point of view, does nevertheless provide a firm basis for continuing productive discussions in the Ad Hoc Committee on the fundamental security problems facing the Indian Ocean region.

As we continue detailed examination of these important questions, the United States remains committed to enhancing the security and stability of regional States and will continue to lend its full support to efforts to increase security in the Indian Ocean area.

Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria): Under agenda item 37, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of the Denuclearization of Africa", I should like this morning on behalf of the sponsors, whose names appear in the texts, to introduce the two draft resolutions in documents A/C.1/35/L.30 and L.31.

Africa has had a peculiar historical experience imposed by outsiders and totally inconsistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, which recognize and guarantee the inalienable rights of peoples to self-determination and independence in peace and security. The aspiration of the African continent to free itself from the unacceptable past and to live in a climate which permits it to pursue the purposes of development is both legitimate and imperative.

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

The genesis of the African denuclearization efforts dates back to the first atomic test conducted in the Sahara by France. The many young African countries which were then emerging into independence were suddenly jolted into awareness of the grave danger of a new round of exploitation of the continent which the French test could signal.

With the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, one of its first major decisions was the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted at the first ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Cairo in 1964. Paradoxically, the greatest hindrance to the formalization of that Declaration and the conclusion of the necessary instrument for the establishment of an African nuclear-weapon-free zone has been the last bastion of colonialism in southern Africa as incarnated in the apartheid régime, which has openly shown its determination to use its nuclear weapon capability to preserve its policy of apartheid, which has been universally condemned as a crime against humanity.

The annual debate in the General Assembly over the years has underscored the outward manifestations of Member States to assist in the process of bringing South Africa to change course and accept civilized behaviour. What is intended, therefore, by the sponsors of the draft resolutions which I am introducing, is a translation of such manifestations into positive commitment.

Unfortunately, South Africa has been able to acquire a nuclear weapon capability with the collaboration of certain States which, in normal circumstances, would qualify as friends of Africa. It is that ambivalence in their conduct which is, to us, particularly reprehensible. Even if such collaboration with South Africa is essentially profit motivated, the reality is that it enables its beneficiary to destabilize an entire continent and to threaten the very survival of the countries of the continent. In this connexion, we call particularly on those countries which have persistently and flagrantly colluded with South Africa through nuclear collaboration with that racist régime to reflect on the consequences of their action.

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

The reality of the South African nuclear programme, which is anything but for peaceful purposes, has shocked the world on two different occasions. In 1977, South Africa made preparations for conducting a nuclear-weapon test in the Kalahari desert. Then, during the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly last year, there was a widespread report that South Africa might have detonated a nuclear explosion in the South Atlantic. Alarmed by that report, the General Assembly adopted resolution 34/76 B, which requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on South Africa's plan and capability in the nuclear field.

The report of the Secretary-General, in document A/35/402, contains a painstaking assessment of South Africa's nuclear capability which, in turn, confirms fully the fears of the international community. Paragraph 88 of the report draws the conclusion that South Africa could have produced sufficient weapon-grade uranium for at least a few nuclear weapons.

Though doubts still exist about the event of 22 September 1979, the Secretary-General's report nevertheless observed that the lack of corroborative evidence might reflect not that no explosion occurred but that, in fact, an explosion was conducted, and that whoever conducted it - and, in our view, it could only be South Africa - took great pains to cover all tracks.

The report shows also that, in preserving its criminal policy of apartheid, the South African régime's conduct, which has always baffled the international community, is aimed at finding new expression in nuclear blackmail. Thus, in the words of the report:

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

"The diplomatic and political costs of South African acquisition and deployment of nuclear weapons would be high, and quite possibly disastrous, if those weapons ever were used. Nevertheless, desperate to preserve the apartheid system, South Africa's leaders may eschew a rational weighing of costs and gains. Instead, they might try to justify the acquisition of nuclear weapons as a last resort to attempt to preserve white supremacy by intimidating neighbouring countries or as a device to demoralize black South Africans and, conversely, to buttress the morale of the white population." (A/35/402, para.89)

The proliferation of nuclear weapons is a question of the greatest concern to the international community in the light of the danger posed by nuclear weapons to the survival of mankind. As stated in the Secretary-General's report on the nuclear capability of South Africa:

"The introduction of nuclear weapons to the African continent, and particularly in such a volatile region as southern Africa, not only would be a severe blow to worldwide efforts at non-proliferation but also would upset many years' efforts to spare the African continent from the nuclear arms race and to make it a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Judgements of the consequences of that development only can be pessimistic." (Ibid., para. 92)

The Secretary-General's report then went on to make a very pertinent recommendation, when it said:

"...bearing in mind the unrelenting action of the United Nations in condemning the policies and practices of South Africa's apartheid régime, and in particular the recent imposition by the Security Council of an arms embargo and its call for cessation of co-operation in developing nuclear weapons, it is still the primary responsibility of the Members of the United Nations and of the international community as a whole to continue to follow closely South Africa's activity in this field and to take whatever necessary action aimed both at the eradication of apartheid and the prevention of further proliferation of nuclear weapons." (ibid., para.94)

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

Draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.30, on the nuclear capability of South Africa, draws extensively on the Secretary-General's report as well as on the report of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 421 (1977) concerning the question of South Africa on ways and means of making the mandatory arms embargo against South Africa more effective.

Bearing in mind the persistent concern of the international community regarding South Africa's capability and plans in the nuclear field, the General Assembly in the draft resolution expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on South Africa's plan and capability in the nuclear field and expresses its deep alarm that the report has established South Africa's capability to manufacture nuclear weapons. It also expresses its deep concern that South Africa's nuclear capability is being developed to preserve its universally condemned policy of apartheid by intimidating neighbouring countries and blackmailing the entire continent of Africa.

In paragraph 5, the draft resolution requests the Security Council to prohibit all forms of co-operation and collaboration with the racist régime of South Africa in the nuclear field. As a follow-up to the Secretary-General's report, paragraph 9 requests the Secretary-General to give maximum publicity to the report, and the penultimate paragraph, paragraph 10, requests the Secretary-General to follow closely South Africa's activity in the nuclear field and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session.

Draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.31, on the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1964, follows the pattern of previous resolutions on this subject. It recalls the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, it recalls the previous resolutions of the General Assembly on this subject, and it reaffirms that the nuclear programme of South Africa - which is a great hindrance to the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa - constitutes a very grave threat to the international peace and security and particularly jeopardizes the security of African States.

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

The draft expresses its indignation at the continued collaboration of certain Western countries and Israel with South Africa in the nuclear field, despite the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons which the South African nuclear programme clearly poses, and which the Secretary General's report to which I have referred makes clear.

In its operative paragraphs, the draft resolution again, of course, strongly reiterates the General Assembly's call upon all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa comprising the continental African States, Madagascar and other islands surrounding Africa, as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In its operative paragraph 3, in consideration of the danger posed by the South African nuclear programme, the draft resolution also condemns any form of nuclear collaboration by any State, corporation, institution or individual with the racist régime of South Africa, since such collaboration frustrates, inter alia, the objective of the declaration of the Organization of African Unity to keep Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Then, in operative paragraph 5, it requests the Security Council, in keeping with the recommendation of the Security Council committee established by Security Council resolution 421 (1977), to approve that recommendation and prohibit effectively all forms of co-operation and collaboration with the racist régime in the nuclear field.

The draft resolution also demands that South Africa submit all its nuclear installations to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Finally, the draft requests the Secretary-General to render all necessary assistance to the Organization of African Unity towards the realization of its solemn Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

It is the hope of the sponsors of the draft resolution that it will find support among all members of the committee and that it will be adopted by at least an overwhelming majority, if not by consensus, since we do realize that some representatives of those countries that have been

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

collaborating with South Africa still continue to draw a distinction which does not exist between collaboration in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and collaboration in the development of South Africa's nuclear weapon capability. The report of the Secretary-General, as well as the report of the Security Council Committee on South Africa, has indicated clearly that such a distinction is untenable.

Mr. HANDOYO (Indonesia): As we continue our deliberations, my delegation deems it useful to take stock of developments and to reflect briefly upon the outcome of our efforts concerning the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We have followed closely the discussions in the Ad Hoc Committee and are pleased to note that some progress has been made towards harmonizing divergent viewpoints. While we are aware of the existence of some fundamental differences among us, we nonetheless appreciate the efforts exerted by the friends of the Chairman, whose persistence and skills have resulted in a growing degree of consensus. This is due to a greater recognition of the mutuality of interests and to the spirit of co-operation which has prevailed in the interest of peace and security, thus rendering our task less difficult. The differences among us, however, appear to remain wide, but it is our duty to continue our efforts to narrow the differences that exist. We hope that these developments augur well and may lead to the realization of the objectives contained in the 1971 Declaration.

For its part, Indonesia fully recognizes the complexity of the issues involving the interests of all -- in particular, those of the littoral and hinterland States. The importance of the Indian Ocean derives from its strategic location and the dynamics flowing from various regional and extra-regional factors. As the political-strategic significance has gained momentum, so has the determination of the regional States to strive for implementation of the Declaration. We hope that this will generate a process of regional peace and accommodation,

(Mr. Handoyo, Indonesia)

which in turn would strengthen efforts to re-establish amity and co-operation through the proposed peace zone.

My delegation has taken particular note of the emergence of some area of agreement which is reflected in the draft resolution contained in the Ad Hoc Committee's report (A/35/29). Despite the presence of fundamental differences in perception that divide the big Powers, we have moved forward, and consensus has been rendered possible, thanks largely to the prevailing conviction of the imperative need for a zone of peace. The draft resolution itself spells out the agreement on that need, although it is clear that this is all that could be achieved under the present circumstances. We are nevertheless satisfied with the general thrust of the draft resolution, on the understanding that further intensified efforts will most certainly be necessary if we are determined to realize our momentous goal. In the forthcoming preparatory sessions, therefore, we shall have to redouble our efforts and agree on the substantive issues, as well as on a definite date for the convening of a conference.

My delegation wishes to reiterate that the proposal for zonal peace in the Indian Ocean should not be construed as a self-serving proposition by the countries of the area, aimed primarily at embarrassing one group of States or another, or at serving the interests of a particular bloc. It is aimed instead at the relaxation of tension and the strengthening of regional and global peace. Only in conditions of peace and stability can the States of the region be expected to concentrate on the task of development, and these conditions would also be beneficial to the extra-regional Powers.

Finally, the continued danger posed by the military presence of the great Powers has long been recognized as detrimental to peace in the region. It is precisely in view of these developments and to stem further deterioration that the planned conference has become more urgent. We

(Mr. Handoyo, Indonesia)

therefore believe in the wisdom of convening the conference next year, with the co-operation and participation of all concerned, to deal effectively with the current situation and to continue efforts to implement the Declaration. The global implications of the Declaration require that it should receive wide acceptance and dovetail into a larger scheme of universal peace and security. The essential question to which we should address ourselves is whether we have the necessary political will to chart our future course towards that ultimate goal.

Mr. SY (Senegal) (interpretation from French): Since this is the first time I have spoken in this Committee, permit me, Sir, to add my voice to those of previous speakers in expressing to you our sincere congratulations on your election as Chairman of our Committee. We are convinced that under your guidance the deliberations of our Committee will be crowned with success.

My delegation would like to make some observations on the following draft resolutions: A/C.1/35/L.1, A/C.1/35/L.30 and A/C.1/35/L.31.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.1 entitled "Certain urgent measures for reducing the danger of war", we must in the first place recognize that it has been proposed at an appropriate time, given the tensions that mark international relations at present. One of the measures advocated in the resolution is that military alliances be frozen or not increased. As several delegations have emphasized, that measure poses legal problems of some significance that would weaken its impact and in any case limit its application.

Another measure advocated in the draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.1 is the freezing of armed forces and conventional weapons. Although it is worthy of attention, such a measure does not take sufficient account of the need for certain peoples and States to recover their national right to defend their territory against armed aggression.

Two other provisions to be found in the draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.1, namely the uniform declarations on guarantees to non-nuclear States and a one-year moratorium on nuclear tests, also seem to us worthy of interest. But we consider that the measures proposed in the draft resolution should be supplemented by other steps designed to strengthen international security. In fact, the tensions and conflicts that characterize international relations at present have sources other than the arms race among rival military alliances. Those tensions and conflicts arise primarily from the ever more frequent use of force in international relations, armed intervention and the acquisition of territory by force as well as, and above all, the policy of apartheid.

We therefore believe it to be necessary, in order to work towards a return to détente and a relaxation of international tension, that other measures be contemplated to reduce the danger of war. It would be necessary,

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

inter alia, to take steps to ensure effective respect for the principles of the non-use of force in international relations, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, the elimination of the policy of apartheid and of colonialism and the cessation of the arms race.

Turning now to draft resolutions A/C.1/35/L.30 and A/C.1/35/L.31, which the Ambassador of Nigeria has just so ably introduced, I should like to say that those resolutions focus on the increasing risk of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in Africa in the wake of the capability and the policy of the racist régime of South Africa. That régime, which has structured its political system around oppression and exploitation, is by its very existence a constant source of violence and tension. That such a régime should provide itself with nuclear armaments constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security since the South African régime has in recent years been characterized by its ferocious repression of the claims of its black population and by numerous acts of armed aggression against neighbouring African States. Thanks to the collaboration of certain States and corporations, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General on this subject, that régime has now been able to increase its capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons.

Several facts have already given rise to concern on the part of a number of African countries. The Pretoria régime has never renounced the acquisition of nuclear weapons; on the contrary, it has removed and continues to remove some of its nuclear plants from the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The explosion in the South Atlantic last year only strengthened the suspicion that there had been a possible nuclear test conducted by South Africa with the assistance of other countries.

Confronted with this danger, the international community seems not to have at its disposal effective means with which to deal with a situation in which a State not a Party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty has nuclear weapons and poses a threat to non-nuclear-weapon States. The so-called positive guarantees contained in Security Council resolution 255 (1968) should be strengthened so as to take on a preventive character. As to the so-called negative security guarantees, the need for which we do not dispute, it nevertheless appears to us that they do not envisage nuclear aggression except by the five current members of the nuclear club.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

That hypothesis might prove inadequate if the South African régime were to make progress in its nuclear-weapon programme and were to acquire such weapons.

The international community must take effective measures to prevent the nuclear blackmail that South Africa would not hesitate to practise against neighbouring African countries which, it must be recalled, are for the most part signatories of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Military, economic and technical sanctions should be applied against the South African régime so as to induce it to make its nuclear facilities available for inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Such sanctions should be applied by all States under the supervision of the United Nations.

We believe that the development of the situation in southern Africa is only a portent of what might occur in other regions such as the Middle East. The proliferation of nuclear weapons seems imminent in some parts of the world because of the policy of aggression and the violation of human rights practised by certain States. If the political will is lacking to take adequate steps, including the adoption of sanctions, to face up to the situation, it must be expected that the nuclear menace will become truly unmanageable.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Since there are no more speakers on matters of substance, I should like to take up a question of perhaps lesser importance but one which I believe should be settled one way or another and on which a decision has to be taken by the competent authorities.

I am raising a question of terminology. The first time that I recall the adjective "comprehensive" being used in English was in connexion with the comprehensive programme of disarmament presented by the delegations of Sweden, Yugoslavia and Mexico in 1970 in the Conference on the Committee on Disarmament.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

The Spanish translation uses the adjective "amplio": "programa amplio de desarme". Spanish-speaking delegations in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament requested the Secretariat to produce a revised text using the word "comprehensivo": "programa comprensivo de desarme". That was done.

For reasons that I have been unable to elucidate it seems that in certain circles concerned with the subject the adjective "amplio" is particularly attractive. Thus when the Disarmament Commission was examining the elements of the comprehensive disarmament programme the word "amplio" emerged once again. My delegation mentioned all of this during the meetings of the Disarmament Commission, and I gather that a decision was taken to translate the word "comprehensive" as "comprehensivo".

But, rather than improving the situation continues to deteriorate. We have "Estudio amplio sobre las armas nucleares" for the English title "Comprehensive study on nuclear weapons", and there again we find the adjective "amplio" (A/35/392). If I say the situation has deteriorated, it is not only because of the translation of the word "comprehensive" by "amplio", it is also because the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.26 reads as follows:

"Recordando también su resolución 33/91 D de 16 de diciembre de 1978, en que se pedía al Secretario General que realizara un estudio completo sobre las armas nucleares".

Here the word "comprehensive" is translated as "completo". The original English text reads: "to carry out a comprehensive study on nuclear weapons". That is another way to translate the word "comprehensive". But that is not all. Operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.28 reads as follows:

"Pide al Comité de Desarme que, en su período de sesiones de 1981, prosiga las negociaciones sobre la elaboración de un programa general ...".

The programme is no longer "amplio" or "completo", or "comprehensivo"; it is "general". And in the English version of that paragraph the word: "comprehensive" remains unchanged.

As will be readily appreciated, this is likely to lead to great confusion. I would suggest to the Secretariat that the competent authorities prepare a brief memorandum indicating their views on the best way to translate the English word

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

"comprehensive", and that those officials tell us why they prefer a particular translation and that the memorandum be submitted to the Latin American Group, and also to Spain, so that all Spanish-speaking Members of the United Nations receive it. The Group's conclusions should be binding for future Spanish translations of the word "comprehensive".

The CHAIRMAN: I am grateful to Ambassador Garcia Robles for pointing out the variations in the Spanish translation of the English word "comprehensive". I can assure him and the other members of the Committee that I will certainly discuss the matter with the Secretariat, and, as he has requested, I shall be in a position at one of our later meetings to revert to this matter and perhaps to offer some clarifications after I have consulted the Secretariat.

As there are no further speakers for this morning, I would inform the Committee of the following additional sponsors of draft resolutions: Ethiopia and Colombia, A/C.1/35/L.18; Ethiopia, Brazil and Morocco, A/C.1/35/L.21; Cyprus, A/C.1/35/L.22; Congo, A/C.1/35/L.28; Japan, A/C.1/35/L.23; Somalia, A/C.1/35/L.30; Somalia and Mauritania, A/C.1/35/L.31; Bangladesh, A/C.1/35/L.25; Benin, A/C.1/35/L.12 and L.13; the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, A/C.1/35/L.15/Rev.1; Hungary, A/C.1/35/L.36.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I would inform members that 46 draft resolutions had been submitted by the deadline agreed upon by the Committee, which was 6 p.m. yesterday. The Secretariat has processed all of them up to A/C.1/35/L.37, as well as A/C.1/35/L.39, and they are now available in the various languages in the conference room.

The remaining texts - that is, A/C.1/35/L.38 and L.40 to L.46 - are being prepared by the technical services and will be available today before 6 p.m., in either final or provisional form.

In view of the record number of draft resolutions submitted, I appeal to all delegations to co-operate with the Chairman in ensuring that meetings of the Committee start without delay. I am sure that if we proceed expeditiously we may still be able to complete our work in accordance with our time-table, but in order to do so we shall have to utilize all the time available to us.

(The Chairman)

When we reach the decision-making stage, I intend to start our meetings punctually and to begin taking decisions as soon as there is a quorum in the room. Therefore, I urge all delegations to be present at the very beginning of our proceedings each day.

I wish also to inform the Committee that to the list of draft resolutions already announced for decision beginning on Thursday, 20 November, the following should be added: A/C.1/35/L.30 and L.31, on implementation of the Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa; A/C.1/35/L.3, on establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia; A/C.1/35/L.2/Rev.1, on a study on conventional disarmament; and A/C.1/35/L.26, on a study on nuclear weapons.

So as to avoid any ambiguity or misunderstanding, I shall read out the full list of draft resolutions as it now stands, and in doing so I wish to stress that when we take them up tomorrow it will be in the order in which they have been given in previous announcements, not in the order of their symbol numbers.

The list is: A/C.1/35/L.7, on preparations for the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament; A/C.1/35/L.9 and L.10, on the reduction of military budgets; A/C.1/35/L.11, on confidence-building measures; A/C.1/35/L.13, on the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present; A/C.1/35/L.14, on the United Nations programme of fellowships on disarmament; A/C.1/35/L.15, on the United Nations Conference on Prohibition or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons; A/C.1/35/L.16, on the economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security; A/C.1/35/L.17/Rev.1, on a study on all aspects of regional disarmament; A/C.1/35/L.19, on a study on the relationship between disarmament and international security; A/C.1/35/L.12 and L.21, on nuclear weapons in all aspects; A/C.1/35/L.29, on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 34/71 concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America; A/C.1/35/L.6 and L.8, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East; and A/C.1/35/L.18, on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

(The Chairman)

Today we have added to that list the draft resolutions I mentioned at the beginning of my statement, namely: A/C.1/35/L.30, L.31, L.3, L.2/Rev.1 and L.26.

I am grateful for the co-operation of those representatives who were to speak this afternoon, which has made it possible to cancel the meeting planned for then in order to give delegations time to prepare their positions for the decision-making process which will begin tomorrow morning at 10.30.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.