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Chairman: Mr. ROCHE (Canada)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 70 (continued)

QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA; GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

The CHAIRMAN: This afternoon the Committee will conclude its debate and consideration of draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.82 and L.83 and then take action on them. The first speaker this afternoon is the representative of Fiji, and I now call upon him.

Mr. SAVUA (Fiji): For the sixth year in succession the Committee is considering the question of Antarctica. Past debates on this issue and the Secretary-General's reports for the past two years (A/42/587 and A/43/565) have greatly clarified this complex and controversial question, especially for those of us not directly involved. While Fiji is neither a Consultative nor a non-consultative Party, we are very definitely an interested party, located as we are only a short distance from the Antarctic region. We would like to see consensus and co-operation, rather than confrontation.

Before the Antarctic Treaty was signed in 1959 the scramble for Antarctica had resulted in many competing territorial claims, some dating well back into the nineteenth century. Those claims, covering a total of 85 per cent of Antarctica, were made unilaterally by countries on grounds of discovery, contiguity, occupation, geological affinity and other arguments. Those claims and subsequent activities led to heightened tensions among the claimants, posing real danger of open conflict.

Since the establishment of the Antarctic Treaty in 1959, potential conflicts have been avoided. For three decades the Treaty has been responsible for peace and stability in Antarctica, fostering co-operation among the Parties to it.

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

The Treaty specifically prohibits any measures of a military nature such as establishing military bases and fortifications, conducting military manoeuvres and testing any type of weapon. It prohibits nuclear explosions in Antarctica for military or peaceful purposes, and the disposal of radioactive wastes. Thus Antarctica is both a demilitarised and a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The significance of the Antarctic Treaty internationally and to our region was recognized by the leaders of the South Pacific Forum. That recognition culminated in the South Pacific Nuclear-Free-Zone Treaty which was launched at their meeting in Rarotonga in July 1986. They noted that the southern boundary of the South Pacific nuclear-free-zone was the area governed by the Antarctic Treaty, which provides for the Antarctic to remain demilitarised, free of nuclear weapons, for there to be a ban on nuclear testing and the disposal of nuclear wastes. Clearly, those are very important features of the Treaty and no one questions their continuing validity. Indeed, many countries have sought to extend such provisions to their own regions so as to better achieve the international peace and security envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations.

We also fully acknowledge and support the provisions of the Treaty aimed at preserving the very fragile ecosystem in Antarctica. Almost daily there are reports from all over the world of further threats to the global environment which demand urgent and co-operative action. The Brundtland Commission Report of March 1987 is eloquent testimony to the dangers facing the planet. The provisions contained in the Antarctic Treaty could well be emulated elsewhere if our environment is to be safeguarded from further devastation.

Since the adoption of the Antarctic Treaty - which now has 22 consultative and 16 non-consultative members - Antarctica has attracted the increasing attention of the world community. That is only natural. It is, therefore, unrealistic for anyone to expect that a system based on decision-making by the few for the many

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

will be readily acquiesced to in this day and age. Antarctica covers one-tenth of the globe, has considerable environmental, climatic, scientific, geophysical, economic and security significance far beyond the Antarctic region and, by any definition, must be regarded as of vital concern to all mankind. Why, then, should the important principle of universality not apply in the case of Antarctica as it has in other similar areas?

The common refrain that one hears is that the Treaty is an international instrument open to all countries. However, because of the two-tier system with difficult and, for many, somewhat prohibitive entry qualifications for becoming a consultative member, small developing countries such as mine simply do not have the economic means or the technical resources to qualify. While we accept the principle that one must be prepared to pay one's way, we believe it should be possible to devise a system of representation and consultation that is fairer and more democratic than that existing at present. We believe it is time for the Antarctic Treaty to evolve from the solid foundation already laid and proved to work well to an arrangement that incorporates present-day realities and aspirations. My delegation believes it is not beyond the ingenuity of both schools of thought to devise a workable and appropriate framework.

Against the background of the Charter, it is inconsistent for the Treaty parties to argue that the principle of universality is somehow inapplicable and is even dangerous and disruptive if applied to future decision-making on the Antarctic. It is the view of my delegation that with increasing international concern for the survival of our planet and taking into account the obvious need to harness every possibility for planning our common future, the continuation of an exclusive régime in what must be regarded as the "last frontier" on earth is not sustainable. The Treaty parties themselves must first demonstrate a willingness to incorporate the concerns of countries who have a legitimate interest in Antarctic

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

matters. We therefore urge that serious consideration be given by the Committee to harmonizing the Antarctic with the United Nations system.

Mr. KATSIGAZI (Uganda): Antarctica is thousands of miles or kilometres away from my country, but at the same time it is not far from our hearts. We belong to the human race. We are part and parcel of mankind. Antarctica has been designated as the common heritage of mankind. Therein lies a legitimate link between my country and Antarctica. With that in mind, therefore, the collective interests of countries in the same category as mine in that region on planet Earth are genuine and valid and ought to be accommodated without being brushed aside by the technologically advantaged.

My delegation is of course fully aware of the fact that, because of different levels of technological development, not all of us can effectively participate in all that is taking place in Antarctica. It is not without valid reasons that we have not been able to develop the necessary capability. In the case of my country, some of those reasons have been well articulated in the Government's Ten-Point Programme, from which I now quote:

"The basic phenomenon that has been responsible for African under-development for the last 500 years - the phenomenon of African value being exchanged for no value and the stunting of our productive forces (science, technology and the managerial capacity of a society) - is still the main tendency ... While a hundred years ago we possessed, at least, enough technology to extract iron from its ore and use it to make agricultural tools (such as hoes and pangas), now even these most primitive tools must be sold to us by foreign firms, and we must, in order to get them, pay in precious resources, many of them exhaustible (for example, copper, gold, oil where available, iron, uranium, etc.). There is, therefore, a qualitative regression, what some people call 'development'."

(Mr. Katsigazi, Uganda)

There are external pressures on, and conspiracies against our economies. Those economic manipulations have caused so much inflation that it is quite a miracle for an average worker to live on his monthly wage. Thus, economic hardships have led to the brain-drain from developing to developed countries. Our professionals, especially scientists, have left their countries for greener pastures. I consider that to be a temporary disadvantage which should not constitute a pretext for a few countries with much more advanced scientific technology to deny us access to the benefits from the resources of Antarctica.

(Mr. Katsigazi, Uganda)

Our interest in what Antarctica has in store for mankind has constantly been shown at meetings of various organizations to which some of us belong. The Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Harare from 1 to 6 September 1986, pronounced itself on Antarctica in the final Political Declaration adopted by the Conference.

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), at its forty-second ordinary session held at Addis Ababa from 10 to 17 July 1985, deliberated on the question of Antarctica and adopted by consensus resolution C/Res.988 (XLII). The concerns of those organizations and of many others have added to the on-going debate on the question of Antarctica that has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for the past six years.

Thus, to ensure that the interests and concerns of developing countries vis-à-vis Antarctica are taken care of, the General Assembly at its forty-first and forty-second sessions reaffirmed in resolutions 41/88 A and 42/46 B the principle that the international community is entitled and must be privy to information covering all aspects of Antarctica and that the United Nations should be the repository for all such information. Unfortunately, that has not been heeded by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties.

As a number of us, for obvious reasons, are not yet in a position to join what appears to be a "scramble for Antarctica", the General Assembly further reaffirmed that any eventual minerals régime on Antarctica should take fully into account the interests of the international community and proceeded to call for a moratorium on the negotiations to establish a minerals régime to be imposed "until such time as all members of the international community can participate fully in such negotiations". The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties were not only called upon to impose a moratorium, but they were also asked to invite the Secretary-General or his representative to all meetings of the Treaty parties, including their

(Mr. Katsigazi, Uganda)

consultative meetings and the minerals régime negotiations. However, with self-serving indifference, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have ignored the wishes and aspirations embodied in the General Assembly resolutions.

The racist apartheid régime of South Africa was suspended from participation in the General Assembly of the United Nations. Its racial and repressive policies against the majority people in South Africa have been universally condemned. Its illegal occupation of Namibia has been equally and vehemently condemned. The notoriety of the ruling white clique in South Africa, which arbitrarily arrests, detains, imprisons, maims, kills and deports in its terrorism against the majority of the people of South Africa, goes against the spirit of the United Nations Charter. Its policy and practices of economic and political destabilization against front-line States constitute a threat to regional peace and international security.

The Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, the OAU Council of Ministers and the United Nations General Assembly, notably at its forty-first and forty-second sessions, expressed in resolutions 41/88 C of 4 December 1986 and 42/46 B of 30 November 1987 its deep concern at the continued participation of the racist apartheid régime of South Africa in the meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties and called on them to take urgent measures to exclude that régime from participation in those meetings at the earliest possible date and to inform the Secretary-General of the action they had taken on the resolutions.

In spite of the General Assembly's appeals and resolutions, some of them adopted less than a year ago, the Antarctic Treaty Special Consultative Meeting on Antarctic Mineral Resources convened in Wellington, New Zealand on 2 June 1988 adopted a Convention on the regulation of mineral resources activities in Antarctica.

(Mr. Katsigazi, Uganda)

The Consultative Parties did not invite the Secretary-General or his representative and they ignored the appeal that a moratorium be imposed on the negotiations to establish a minerals régime until all members of the international community could participate. The Secretary-General has rightly confirmed that he was not invited to the meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties.

My delegation is extremely concerned about what transpired in Wellington, for it was clearly an attempt to undermine and weaken our Organization. It will definitely make our work towards a consensus on the question of Antarctica rather difficult. But we shall not be put off. We believe that wisdom, good sense and fellow-feeling for mankind will prevail over economic expediency.

We are firm in our conviction that the Antarctic is a common heritage of mankind that should be used only for peaceful purposes. Its environmental and ecological integrity should never be violated. The Secretary-General or his representative should always be invited to the meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. The international community is entitled to know about the developments in Antarctica and the proper repository of all such information is the United Nations.

Mr. OKEYO (Kenya): First, may I express my delegation's delight at seeing you, Sir, preside over the affairs of the First Committee, and at the same time give you my delegation's full confirmation that you have our full support and respect for your expertise and competence as a respected diplomat. I am convinced that through you and your chairmanship and due to your vast experience we shall achieve success and productive results on the subject before the Committee.

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

After space - the atmosphere and beyond - the Antarctic, with its more than 5 million square miles surrounding the South Pole, is the most isolated of regions, and humanity's last relatively unexplored frontier. Its lands appear only where the 15,000-foot peaks of mountain ranges break through the ice. The value of that region for scientific research and co-operation, along with its location and its ecosystem, are of such great importance to the entire world community that it is unfair to leave its management in the hands of an exclusive club of a few rich nations.

The record shows that for several years, since 1983, when this item was added to the agenda of the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, many delegations, including my own, have addressed themselves to the scope of obligations and undertakings assumed under the 1959 Antarctic Treaty, which designated the area south of 60 degrees south latitude exclusively for peaceful purposes. It is widely recognized that that Treaty, among other things, prohibits any measures of a military nature. It imposes a ban on nuclear explosions, whatever their nature, and on the disposal of radioactive waste material, thus giving the region an important demilitarized status. The arms-control aspect of the Antarctic Treaty closely links it with other objectives; it truly establishes a foundation for international co-operation in scientific investigation in the area, ensures protection of Antarctica's unique environment, and averts discord over territorial claims.

Kenya fully recognizes and appreciates the deep concern for global stability demonstrated by the original Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty when they devised a way to set aside territorial claims in Antarctica, to convert their national ambitions into a common concern, and to use the area for peaceful purposes only.

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

The major points with which my delegation has difficulties are: first, the non-democratic decision-making process on issues concerning Antarctica; secondly, the lack of negotiations on a universalized mechanism that would make it possible for all nations to share in the benefits to be derived from Antarctica now and in the future; and thirdly, the total disregard of United Nations resolutions calling on Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to impose a moratorium on negotiations to establish a minerals régime for Antarctica.

Before I address these issues I must reiterate that my country recognizes the Treaty's contribution to the encouragement of scientific co-operation. Areas of co-operative study range from the impact of environmental change to research on sea-bed minerals, although this is done by the guarded, secretive courtesy of the States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty.

The Antarctic Treaty itself seems to be discriminatory. Membership is restricted to States with high technological know-how, which can, thanks to their scientific advancement, undertake scientific expeditions in the region. Those countries, as we all know, are predominantly industrialized States. Thus, the Treaty maintains a two-tier membership system, with Consultative Parties as the Treaty's main core; Consultative Parties reserve for themselves the right to determine policies, while the other parties remain peripheral to the system. Even the right to propose a review mechanism is reserved for Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties only. This two-tier membership is extremely discriminatory and offers no benefits to new signatories. Granted that the present régime has that shortcoming, my delegation does not believe that the interests of all mankind can best be served in Antarctica by making the management of the area an exclusive club for a few rich States. There is therefore a need for the international community to address itself to the issue with a view to universalizing the management of the region.

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

On 30 November 1987, the General Assembly, in its resolution 42/46 B, called upon Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty to impose a moratorium on the negotiations to establish an Antarctic minerals régime and to invite the Secretary-General to the negotiations and meetings on that subject. It is utterly regrettable that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties disregarded in toto the international appeal, held negotiations, and adopted on 2 June 1988 a convention on an Antarctic minerals régime, without the presence of the Secretary-General or his representative.

It will be recalled that from the moment the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties considered the need to develop a legal régime governing the possibility of mineral development in Antarctica, they were well aware of the interest that undertaking would generate among members of the international community not signatories to the Antarctic Treaty. The adoption of the Convention - which is a complete replica of the Antarctic Treaty - in such haste was therefore meant not only to pre-empt the initiatives of the world majority but also to frustrate efforts made at the United Nations and in other international forums. Whatever reasons the Consultative Parties may still advance for keeping virtually the entire international community out of the Antarctic Treaty, my delegation strongly believes that participation by the international community is a sine qua non for durable peace and security in Antarctica.

As regards the issue of working out an acceptable arrangement that would universalize distribution of benefits accrued from Antarctica's resources, several factors, some of which I mentioned earlier, are important. First, Antarctica is mankind's last remaining treasure-house, other than the deep sea. With respect to the latter, the concept of the common heritage of mankind has received enormous international support, but this remains unacceptable for Antarctica.

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

Secondly, Antarctica, being the coldest, highest and most wind-blown continent, contains 90 per cent of the world's ice, representing 2 per cent of the world's fresh water, and any significant disturbance of that fragile ecosystem would offset the delicate balance of the world's weather patterns. It has also been established that any uncontrollable exploitation of krill, which forms a vital link in the protein-rich food-chain system in the area could be hazardous to the world. Thus the impact of Antarctica on the world's ecology is of concern to the whole world.

Moreover, of immediate concern to the world is the Antarctic's potential inexhaustible resources, including hydrocarbons, coal, uranium and base metals. At present there is underlying scepticism about the technical or economic feasibility of exploitation in the Antarctic, which calls for more stringently evaluated economic guidelines agreed upon by the whole international community. In recognition of the collective responsibility for environmental protection, and the question of exploitation and exploration rights, the Secretary-General would act as a bridge between the Treaty parties and Member States outside the Antarctic Treaty system. In that way the international community could be involved in Antarctica and also be able to see that its concerns and interests are fairly accommodated.

As an African delegation, we are sensitive - naturally so - to the continued participation of the hideous South African racist régime in the Antarctic Treaty activities. Even more painful was its participation in the recent Wellington negotiations, in total defiance of General Assembly resolution 42/46 A, which specifically called for the expulsion of the racist Pretoria régime from the Antarctic Treaty system.

It is even more mind-boggling that countries regarded as friends of Africa and those known to champion and cherish the cause of democracy, peace, freedom, justice and equality are, directly or indirectly, underwriting apartheid by condoning the

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

membership and participation of the racist régime in their Consultative Party meetings and activities.

It is a cause of great regret that South Africa's participation is allowed to continue.

Finally, my delegation wishes to reiterate its appeal to the Consultative Parties to muster the necessary political courage and take urgent measures to exclude the racist régime of South Africa from participation in meetings of the Consultative Parties at the earliest possible date.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.82 and A/C.1/43/L.83 under agenda item 70, "Question of Antarctica".

I shall first call upon those members of the Committee who wish to introduce the draft resolutions. I shall then call upon those delegations wishing to make statements, other than in explanation of vote or position. Subsequently I shall call on those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken on the draft resolutions.

Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia): I have the pleasure and privilege to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82, on the question of Antarctica, on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

I regret to inform the Committee that once again consensus has not been possible. Although developments since our deliberations on this item last year, particularly the adoption of the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities, did not contribute to a convergence of views, we had hoped consensus could still be achieved. Unfortunately, that was not possible, given the divergence between the positions of the Treaty parties and the non-parties.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

In the consultations we reiterated the clear preference of the majority of the international community for the opening of the Treaty system, recognizing its positive aspects while seeking universalization and full participation in the management of Antarctica for the common benefit of all mankind.

Mindful of the known positions of the Treaty parties, and in an effort to move towards consensus, the sponsors of the draft resolution were restrained in their choice of language, while reiterating the fundamental principles underlying the position of the non-party States. It is perhaps unrealistic that the Treaty parties chose to make a breaking point on the expression of regret in paragraph 2 that the Treaty Parties have gone ahead and adopted the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities. In adopting that Convention, the Treaty parties chose to disregard the calls contained in General Assembly resolutions 41/88 B and 42/46 B for the imposition of a moratorium on negotiations to establish a minerals régime until such time as all members of the international community can fully participate in such negotiations.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

The sponsors of the draft resolution find it difficult to understand the reluctance of the Treaty Consultative Parties to invite the Secretary-General or his representative to all meetings of the Treaty Consultative Parties and for the Secretary-General to report on his evaluations thereon. We believe the Secretary-General's involvement to be the most pragmatic and expedient manner for the non-treaty parties to begin to participate and feel involved in the process of managing the Treaty system.

The preference of the General Assembly in the past few years for equity, accountability and universal participation in the management of this vast continent has clearly been pronounced. While it may take time to realize that preference, a reversal of the trend is unlikely. My delegation therefore appeals to the Treaty Parties seriously to reconsider and to seek ways and means of making it possible to return to the path of consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82 is basically built upon the text of General Assembly resolution 42/46 B adopted by the General Assembly last year. The preamble reaffirms the conviction of the non-treaty parties that Antarctica should continue for ever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and the principle that the international community is entitled to information covering all aspects of Antarctica and that, therefore, the United Nations should be made the repository for all such information. It also reaffirms that the management, exploration, exploitation and use of Antarctica should be conducted in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in the interests of maintaining international peace and security and of promoting international co-operation for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

Operative paragraph 1 expresses the General Assembly's conviction that any minerals régime on Antarctica, in order to be of benefit to all mankind, should be negotiated with the full participation of all members of the international community.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

Operative paragraph 2 expresses the Assembly's deep regret that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have proceeded with negotiations and adopted a Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities, in total disregard of the call for a moratorium on negotiations in resolutions 41/88 B and 42/46 B.

Operative paragraph 3 reiterates the Assembly's call upon the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to invite the Secretary-General or his representative to all meetings of the Treaty parties.

Operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 are repeated from last year's resolution and are self-explanatory.

The sponsors of the draft resolution have exerted every effort to avoid confrontation. The text has been carefully drafted in reasonable language, reiterating fundamental concerns of the international community. We are confident that the Committee will adopt the draft resolution, as it has similar draft resolutions in the past. We appeal for the vote to be clear. Let the vote be a message that there is serious and widespread reservation with regard to the Convention on the minerals régime and that there should be no ratification of that Convention.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon the representative of Iran for an explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.82 and A/C.1/43/L.83.

Mr. MASHHADI (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran will vote in favour of draft resolutions A/C.1/43/L.82 and A/C.1/43/L.83. I should like to reiterate here that preservation of the very fragile ecosystem in Antarctica is an extremely important issue, since it is the common heritage of mankind.

(Mr. Mashhadi, Islamic
Republic of Iran)

In my delegation's view any measure outside the framework of the United Nations with regard to Antarctica does not enjoy universal validity and, as the United Nations General Assembly notes, the States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty should act according to United Nations resolutions and decisions and the Secretary-General should be invited to attend their meetings.

Further, on the basis of recognized principles governing resources considered to be the common heritage of mankind and with due regard to the fact that Antarctica, as one of those resources, has a substantial effect upon the world environment, we call upon those States to co-ordinate their activities and measures with the United Nations for the preservation of that natural environment.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon the representative of Australia, who has asked to make a statement on behalf of the States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. COSTELLO (Australia): The Antarctic Treaty Parties deeply regret that this is the third session of the General Assembly at which it has not proved possible to arrive at consensus on the issue of Antarctica.

The continued failure to achieve consensus on the question of Antarctica is a matter of concern for the General Assembly because that approach is the only realistic basis for dealing with the item in the General Assembly.

The Treaty Parties continue to believe that consideration of Antarctica by the General Assembly should proceed only on the basis of consensus and of full regard for the integrity of the Antarctic Treaty and the continuing successful operation of the Antarctic Treaty system. It is regrettable, therefore, that the proponents of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82 remain unwilling to take the necessary steps to recognize that and to achieve consensus.

(Mr. Costello, Australia)

We must now address the draft resolutions before the Committee. In order to leave no doubt of their view that the question of Antarctica should continue to be handled only on the basis of consensus, the Treaty Parties will not participate in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82. In the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.83 the Treaty Parties will reflect their views on the draft in ways that do not prejudice their position on the integrity of the Antarctic Treaty. Most will not participate.

(Mr. Costello, Australia)

I request a roll-call vote on each of the draft resolutions. As I indicated earlier, a number of Member States will indicate that they are not participating in the voting. I ask that the records of this Committee indicate explicitly that those Members chose not to participate in the voting.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82. This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Malaysia at the 46th meeting of the First Committee, held on 22 November, and is sponsored by the delegations of Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

A roll-call vote has been requested.

A roll-call vote was taken.

Cameroon, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: None

Abstaining: China, Fiji, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Turkey, Venezuela

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82 was adopted by 77 votes to none, with 7 abstentions. * **

*During the course of the roll-call vote the following members announced that they were not participating: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iceland, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malta, Mongolia, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam

**Subsequently the delegations of Cameroon, Canada, Ecuador and the Netherlands advised the Secretariat that they had intended not to participate; the delegation of Swaziland had intended to vote in favour.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.83. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Zaire on behalf of the Group of African States at the 45th meeting of the First Committee, on 22 November.

A roll-call vote has been requested.

A roll-call vote was taken.

Austria, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: None

Abstaining: Côte d'Ivoire, Ireland, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Portugal

Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.83 was adopted by 89 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.* **

*During the course of the roll-call vote the following members announced that they were not participating: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

**Subsequently the delegation of Ecuador advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Swaziland had intended to abstain.

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

Mr. VELASCO (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Peru voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.83, submitted by the delegation of Zaire. In so doing, the Government of Peru thought it was strengthening the appeal to the international community to ensure that the Government of South Africa would put an end to the inhuman and unjust system of apartheid. Therefore, our vote in favour did not mean that we were calling into question the rights and obligations flowing from the Antarctic Treaty.

Mr. FISCHER (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Uruguay did not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.83 for the same reason as applied in the case of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82 - that we felt that the functioning of the Antarctic Treaty was governed by the Treaty's own provisions, in accordance with the principles of international law applicable to Treaties. Some of the provisions in the draft resolution were incompatible with that multilateral international instrument, to which my country is a Consulting Party. However, we wish to place on record that that does not mean that Uruguay is in any way indifferent or insensitive to the reasons behind the draft resolution. Uruguay categorically rejects the racist régime of South Africa, a position we have always maintained and still uphold in our pronouncements and in our conduct in the relevant international forums.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. The Committee will follow the procedure I outlined at a previous meeting.

Mr. DAVAREDE (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Australia, speaking on behalf of all contracting parties to the Antarctic Treaty, has accurately reflected my country's position on this item. We do not

(Mr. Daverede, Argentina)

wish to prolong this debate or reopen issues already discussed. But we must refer to the statement of a delegation which expressed its astonishment, as it did in the general debate, that one Member State feels it is linked to Antarctica by its sovereignty, its history and its contiguity.

In this connection, I wish to point out that the existence of territorial claims on Antarctica is a fact recognized by all States, and therefore should surprise no one. Indeed, the report of the Secretary-General, prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/77, begins the chapter on the juridical and political aspects of Antarctica by referring to the question of sovereignty and in particular to all the existing claims, among them that of my country, which is based not only on territorial contiguity but on other sound legal titles. These claims are safeguarded by the Antarctic Treaty, which in article IV preserves our rights, as well as the legal position of those who do not recognize rights of sovereignty in Antarctica, thus removing, as the representative of Australia said, the potential for territorial disputes.

Many delegations have recognized in their statements that the Treaty has preserved peace in Antarctica. To ignore the principle enshrined in article IV of the Treaty, concerning territorial claims, would in no way contribute to the attainment of this noble objective, shared by the international community.

Mr. LEWIS (Antigua and Barbuda): Antigua and Barbuda subscribes to the practice of not going in for naming names, but a country has identified itself, a country with which we have excellent relations, a neighbour of ours at the United Nations and a country with which we exchange good and supportive contributions.

In the Australian statement this morning there was a reference to sovereignty, in which the representative of Australia stated that if minerals activities ever took place in Antarctica they would do so within a system that protected the Antarctic from environmental threats and guarded against a revival of disputes over

(Mr. Lewis, Antigua and Barbuda)

sovereignty. Those words were most encouraging, and we were prepared to accept the statement as a reality, given our previous concerns and admitted surprise about sovereignty, contiguity and history. To the best of our knowledge, the international community has not recognized the Treaty, and the claimants themselves have not accepted the concept of sovereignty in regard to Antarctica. We know that the Antarctic Treaty makes no reference to claims based on any of the terms I have mentioned - sovereignty, history and contiguity. Therefore, we felt compelled to express our concerns.

Antigua and Barbuda is, however, encouraged by what we have heard in the statement made in exercise of the right of reply, and look forward to the day when the right of the non-Consultative Parties to be regarded as genuine partners and not distant cousins in Antarctica is fully realized.

We are encouraged, because we believe that there is an effort to move towards acceptance of our position, even though at present we are still disheartened by the insistence on claims to Antarctica.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus concluded our work on agenda item 70,

"Question of Antarctica".

Tomorrow, in accordance with our programme of work and timetable, the Committee will begin its general debate, consideration of and action on draft resolutions under agenda items 71, 72 and 73, related to international security. The list of speakers for the general debate, consideration of and action on draft resolutions under those items will be closed on Wednesday, 23 November, at 6 p.m. I therefore urge delegations to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

I should also like to urge those delegations wishing to submit draft resolutions under agenda items 71, 72 and 73 to make every effort to meet the deadline of Friday, 25 November, at 6 p.m.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.