



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

First Committee

23rd meeting

Thursday, 26 October 2000, 10.30 a.m.
New York

Official Records

Chairman: U Mya Than (Myanmar)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Agenda items 65 to 81 (continued)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman: As I mentioned at the Committee's meeting yesterday, Wednesday, 25 October 2000, today the Committee will continue to take action on the draft resolutions that appear in informal working paper No.2/Rev.1 following the sequence indicated: cluster 1, nuclear weapons, A/C.1/55/L.16; cluster 4, conventional weapons, A/C.1/55/L.44; cluster 5, regional disarmament and security, A/C.1/55/L.35; cluster 6, confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments, A/C.1/55/L.12; cluster 7, disarmament machinery, A/C.1/55/L.3/Rev.1, A/C.1/55/L.5, A/C.1/55/L.9, A/C.1/55/L.13, A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2, A/C.1/55/L.17, A/C.1/55/L.23, A/C.1/55/L.24, A/C.1/55/L.26 and A/C.1/55/L.33.

Before the Committee proceeds with the introduction of revised draft resolutions, I should like to call on the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, to make a brief statement.

Mr. Dhanapala (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): The Department for Disarmament Affairs from time to time receives from the public numerous petitions addressed to the United Nations appealing for international peace, security and

disarmament. There is no reporting mechanism within the United Nations disarmament machinery. I believe, therefore, it is my responsibility to inform the Committee of appeals addressed to it from the world community of civil society.

Within the framework of observing United Nations Disarmament Week, over 50 members of the Japan Council against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, Gensuikyo, travelled across the Pacific Ocean to New York to present to the United Nations the appeal from Hiroshima and Nagasaki for a total ban on and elimination of nuclear weapons, together with more than 100 million signatures they had collected for that appeal. For the information of delegations, copies of the appeal have been placed at the back of the room.

The Chairman: I call now on those delegations wishing to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Ngoh Ngoh (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): My delegation has taken the floor in order to introduce an amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.34, entitled "Regional disarmament", which is contained in document A/C.1/55/L.53. The amendment is intended to enhance the effectiveness of the draft resolution by requesting all States to communicate to the Secretary-General of the United Nations information on regional disarmament efforts and initiatives and the establishment of confidence-building measures carried out by regional and subregional organizations. The idea is to give the Committee better information about these efforts and to facilitate coordination by the Secretary-General, as well as to facilitate the implementation and

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strengthening of these initiatives through appropriate assistance from the Secretary-General to the regional and subregional organizations.

Regional disarmament and world disarmament are complementary. Any new impetus given to regional disarmament can only have a beneficial effect on world disarmament and thus on peace and international security. The efforts deployed in this area by regional and subregional organizations therefore deserve to be better known and supported by the international community. In Africa the Southern African Development Community and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) stand out in this area. ECOWAS in particular established a Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons. This year the Economic Community of Central African States adopted the protocol instituting the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa. Other deserving efforts are also being made, in particular with regard to the implementation in Latin America of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials. As the regional seminar organized in Jakarta on 3 and 4 May 2000 demonstrated, other efforts have also been carried out. We could also mention the efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and others.

Finally, I should like to point out that the draft amendment that we have the honour to present is very much in line with the objectives of cluster 5, regional disarmament, for the medium term, from 2002 to 2005, which the Committee considered last week. Consequently, I should like to call on all delegations to support the draft amendment and the draft resolution as a whole, so that they can be adopted by consensus.

The Chairman: If no delegations wish to make general statements or comments on draft resolutions contained in cluster 1, nuclear weapons, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", was introduced by the representative of Egypt at the Committee's 19th meeting, on 20 October 2000.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Bar (Israel): Israel joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", as it has done in the case of corresponding draft resolutions for the past 20 years, notwithstanding substantive and important reservations regarding certain elements in the draft resolution.

The policy of Israel has always maintained that the nuclear issue, as well as all regional security issues, conventional and unconventional, should be dealt with in the full context of the peace process. Israel supports the eventual establishment of a mutual, verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East that should also be free of chemical and biological weapons, and their means of delivery. Israel believes that the political realities in the Middle East mandate a practical, step-by-step approach. We should begin with modest confidence-building measures, followed by the establishment of peaceful relations and reaching reconciliation, and possibly complemented by conventional and non-conventional arms control measures. This process could eventually lead to more ambitious goals, such as establishing a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction.

As the international community has recognized, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone should be based on arrangements freely arrived at by all States of the region concerned. Israel believes that such a zone can be established only through direct negotiation between the States of the region after they recognize each other and have established full, peaceful and diplomatic relations between them. It cannot be

established other than by the parties themselves, nor can it be established in a situation where some States maintain that they are in a state of war with each other and refuse in principle to maintain peaceful relations. In this context, it should be recalled that in the Middle East, unlike in other regions in the world where nuclear-weapon-free zones have been established, there is a continuing threat against the very existence of one State in the region, Israel. This has a critical impact on the region's ability to establish such a zone.

The consensus we have maintained over the years reflects a delicate compromise that all the parties have managed to live with. This year a genuine effort was made by both Egypt and Israel to introduce new agreed language into the draft resolution. Eventually it was agreed to present the same language as in previous years. I can only speak on behalf of Israel and say that my delegation demonstrated a constructive approach during these deliberations. We feel that is a good example of how confidence could be built. Moreover, it is a key element for preserving consensus in the future.

The Chairman: We now come to cluster 4. If no delegations wish to make general comments or statements on draft resolutions contained in cluster 4, conventional weapons, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44. I call first on those representatives wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): The delegation of Egypt has asked for the floor for the purpose of presenting an explanation of its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction".

At the outset we wish to highlight that Egypt is considered to be one of the countries most affected by landmines and unexploded ordnance. The continued existence of more than 22 million landmines scattered over 288,000 acres of Egyptian territory causes serious concern to the Government of Egypt. Although the Egyptian Government supports the humanitarian objective that inspired the conception of the Ottawa Convention, it sees the Convention as failing to address some pressing concerns. These concerns are summarized in the following two points.

First, the Convention does not provide a binding legal framework that recognizes the responsibility of the countries that plant and deploy landmines in the territories of other States and hence does not provide for commitments by those States to clear the landmines. Furthermore, the Convention does not deal adequately with, or provide assistance for, landmine clearance.

Secondly, the Convention did not take into consideration the legal rights of States for self-defence, as stipulated in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, and the valid need to legitimately use anti-personnel landmines when no other financially feasible alternative exists. This matter is of utmost priority for States that have extended and otherwise unprotected borders that are vulnerable to terrorist infiltration, arms, explosives smuggling and drug-trafficking.

As in previous years Egypt will, during the fifty-fifth session, continue to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution on this subject.

Mr. Lee Kie-cheon (Republic of Korea): My delegation wishes to explain its position on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44 before the voting. The Republic of Korea shares the humanitarian concerns of the international community about the human suffering and tragic casualties caused by the irresponsible and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines. In this vein, we have supported and made contributions to several United Nations-led mine action programmes.

However, the issue of anti-personnel landmines has not only humanitarian but also security aspects. Anti-personnel landmines still remain a legitimate minimum national defence requirement for some countries throughout the world. The Republic of Korea is at present unable to adhere to the Ottawa Convention. We also wish to stress that the Republic of Korea uses anti-personnel landmines only in a specifically limited area of the demilitarized zone. For that reason, anti-personnel landmines pose few safety concerns for civilians in our country, unlike the situation in other areas.

At the same time, there are parallel mechanisms to control anti-personnel landmines that could ensure the universal participation of all States. For one, my Government declared an indefinite extension of its moratorium on the export of anti-personnel landmines in 1997 and since then has implemented it faithfully. Furthermore, this year we plan to accede to the

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its amended Protocol II. We also support the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the treaty banning the transfer of anti-personnel landmines.

This draft resolution, in operative paragraph 1 in particular, fails to address all these concerns. Therefore, my delegation will abstain.

Mr. Itzhaki (Israel): My delegation wishes to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction".

Israel supports the ultimate humanitarian goal of the Ottawa Convention, aimed at eliminating the consequences of the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines. Towards that end Israel has begun taking concrete steps to lessen the proliferation and harmful effects of anti-personnel landmines in the Middle East and beyond. Israel has joined several international initiatives that share that aim. Only recently Israel ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices, as amended in May 1996, and therefore joined the sponsors of the draft resolution on the CCW contained in document A/C.1/55/L.50.

Israel is actively participating in the mine awareness project launched by the United Nations Children's Fund in Angola. Israeli volunteers are involved in the project, through direct, hands-on teaching of the population about mine awareness and enriching the wider educational system in this area. In addition, Israel has contributed to the financial needs of this important project. Additionally, in July 1994 Israel enacted a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel landmines. Last year we announced our decision to renew the moratorium until the year 2002. We are also considering favourably a permanent arrangement that will extend the moratorium indefinitely.

Israel supported the General Assembly's call for a moratorium and hopes to contribute to an agreement banning all transfers of anti-personnel landmines. Along those lines, Israel ceased all production of such landmines. We hope that all our neighbours will enact a similar moratorium. Israel supports a gradual regional process in which each State in the Middle East will

strive to reduce the indiscriminate use of landmines and move towards the eventual goal of a total ban. We believe that the best way to achieve this lies along the path of future regional cooperation. Israel has adopted this gradual approach because it is still required to resort to defensive operations against terrorists to prevent attacks on its civilians. Therefore, we remain unable at present to support the immediate enactment of a total ban on landmines because they remain necessary to ensure the safety of our troops and civilians. I would emphasize that the use and quantity of landmines are restricted and their use remains strictly within the constraints set by the amended Protocol II of the CCW.

For the reasons I mentioned earlier, Israel cannot lend its support to the draft resolution and therefore will abstain.

Mr. Abubaker (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction", the draft resolution does not actually require the elimination of these weapons, and so we plan to abstain.

The Chairman: If no other delegation wishes to speak, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction", was introduced by the representative of Norway at the Committee's 19th meeting, on 20 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/55/INF.2. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Mauritius and Turkmenistan. The programme budget implications of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/55/L.52.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Azerbaijan, China, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Micronesia (Federated States of), Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44 was adopted by 127 votes to none, with 22 abstentions.

The Chairman: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes or positions on the draft resolution just adopted.

May I first appeal to representatives to switch off their cellular phones so that we can keep order in the conference room. The Committee is in the midst of voting and its work should not be hampered in any manner.

Ms. Mendis (Sri Lanka): The Sri Lankan delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44, which has just been adopted. My delegation voted in favour, as on past occasions, in appreciation of the humanitarian objectives of the Convention banning anti-personnel mines. However, the Government of Sri Lanka is not yet in a position to accede to the Convention on account of essential national security considerations.

Mr. Samsar (Turkey): As we have done for the past two years, we would like once again to share with the members of the Committee the considerations that led my delegation to cast a “yes” vote on the draft resolution entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction”, A/C.1/55/L.44.

Turkey is fully conscious of the human suffering and casualties caused by the irresponsible and indiscriminate use of mines. We attach importance to the mine-ban Convention and consider that it is one of the major achievements of the international community towards the elimination of anti-personnel mines. Nonetheless, the security situation around Turkey is distinctly different from that which the proponents of the Ottawa process face. This unique security situation has prevented us from acceding to the Convention so far. However, our commitment to the goals of the Convention was made known by our participation as an observer at the First and Second Meetings of the States Parties to the Convention.

Turkey, in order to fulfil its commitments with regard to the objectives of the Convention, put into effect a national moratorium banning the sale and transfer of anti-personnel mines in January 1996. It was extended in 1998 until the year 2002. Furthermore, we have initiated a number of contacts with some neighbouring countries for the establishment of special regimes in order to keep our common borders free from anti-personnel mines. In this regard, an agreement was

concluded in March 1999 between Bulgaria and Turkey. Demining activities are due to start very soon. We have proposed similar projects to Greece, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and hope to finalize these projects successfully as well.

Mr. Thu (Myanmar): I should like to explain my delegation's decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44, relating to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Myanmar is not a State party to the Ottawa Convention, nor did it participate in the Ottawa process, but we respect the decisions of the countries that have signed and ratified the Ottawa Convention.

In principle, Myanmar is in favour of banning the exportation, transfer and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines, but at the same time we believe that every State has the right to self-defence. It is essential that every State should be able to exercise the right of self-defence when its national security and supreme interests are at stake. We recognize that the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines is causing death and injury to innocent children, women and men. The easy availability of landmines is the main reason behind those tragedies. One important way in which we could prevent them is by addressing the issues of illicit trafficking and indiscriminate use of landmines by non-State actors. In our opinion, a sweeping, total ban on anti-personnel landmines is not yet a practical and effective measure under prevailing circumstances. We believe that the proper place to discuss the problem is at the Conference on Disarmament. For these reasons my delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44.

Mr. Teo (Singapore): Singapore's position on anti-personnel landmines has been clear and open. My country supports and will continue to support all initiatives against the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines, especially when they are directed at innocent and defenceless civilians. In this regard, in May 1996 Singapore declared a two-year moratorium on the export of anti-personnel landmines without self-neutralizing mechanisms, and in February 1998 Singapore extended that moratorium to include all manner of anti-personnel landmines, not just those without self-neutralizing mechanisms, and extended the moratorium for an indefinite period. At the same time, along with several other countries, Singapore firmly

believes that for any State, legitimate security concerns and the right to self-defence cannot be disregarded. A blanket ban on all types of anti-personnel landmines might therefore be counterproductive since some countries need to use anti-personnel landmines for their defence and security.

Singapore supports international efforts to resolve humanitarian concerns over anti-personnel landmines. We will continue to work with members of the international community towards finding a durable and truly global solution.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): As in past years we abstained in the voting on the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction", A/C.1/55/L.44. We fully share the humanitarian concerns over the damage done by the indiscriminate and irresponsible use of mines. For that reason we have always supported the prohibition of their use against innocent civilian populations and in internal conflicts. All international transfers of these arms should also be banned. However, they continue to be a necessary, legitimate means of defence for many countries, particularly developing countries, which do not have sufficient resources for alternative means of defending themselves. As in past years, the draft resolution prepared this year does not portray an adequate balance between humanitarian issues and legitimate concerns for national security relating to mines.

For 40 years Cuba has suffered from the constant policy of aggression and hostility of another country, which is the largest military and economic power in the world. We cannot abandon the use of mines for defending our sovereignty and territorial integrity. At the same time, we continue to support all efforts to eliminate the horrible consequences for the civilian populations of many countries resulting from the indiscriminate and irresponsible use of landmines.

Mr. Mukul (India): My delegation would like to set forth its position on the issue of anti-personnel landmines and the reasons which led it to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction".

India remains committed to the objective of a non-discriminatory, universal and global ban on anti-personnel landmines through a phased process that addresses the legitimate defence requirements of States while ameliorating the critical humanitarian crises that have resulted from the indiscriminate transfer and use of landmines. We believe that a phased approach commends itself as a confidence-building process enabling States, especially those with long borders, to safeguard their legitimate security needs. The process of the complete elimination of anti-personnel mines will be facilitated by addressing the legitimate defensive role of anti-personnel landmines for operational requirements under the defence doctrines of the countries concerned, through the availability of appropriate, militarily effective, non-lethal alternative technologies that can perform cost-effectively the legitimate defensive role of anti-personnel landmines.

We would support negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a ban on transfers of anti-personnel landmines on the basis of a mandate that reflects the interests of all delegations. India has been an active participant in the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons process and has ratified all its Protocols, including amended Protocol II, on landmines.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Pakistan's position on anti-personnel landmines was elaborated in our general statement. Pakistan was one of the earliest adherents to the United Nations Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW). That Convention includes the Protocol on restrictions governing the use of anti-personnel landmines.

Even before the Convention came into existence, Pakistan had a record of strict observance of humanitarian laws during armed conflicts. These rules were later embodied in the Convention and its Protocols. Our adherence to the Convention and its Protocols was therefore without hesitation or delay.

Unfortunately, Pakistan has a long border and lives under the constant threat of the use of force, particularly by a sizeable land force deployed against us. We are therefore constrained to have resort to anti-personnel landmines in our posture of self-defence. We believe that at this moment the international community could usefully focus on universal

adherence to the new Protocol II of the CCW, because we believe that Protocol will lead to the resolution of almost all the humanitarian problems that have resulted from the widespread and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines.

Secondly, the international community, especially those nations in a financial position to do so, must support an invigorated programme to eliminate landmines which were laid in the past and which are responsible for thousands of fatalities each year. We regret the inadequacy of the financial and other resources devoted to mine clearance. Pakistan will continue to make in-kind contributions to regional and global demining efforts.

Thirdly, we believe that the Conference on Disarmament could also take some steps to promote progress towards the ultimate goal of prohibiting anti-personnel landmines without jeopardizing the security of States, steps such as a ban on exports of anti-personnel landmines. Pakistan has in place an effective moratorium on the export of anti-personnel landmines.

Given our defence posture and the approach I have outlined, my delegation was constrained to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution, while appreciating the noble motives and objectives that inspired the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mr. Baiedi-Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran shares the sentiments of States adhering to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction with regard to removing the immediate threat posed by landmines, particularly against innocent civilians. The great number of landmines used irresponsibly by military and armed factions during civil wars, which took place as a consequence of the disruption of stability in certain particular regions of the world, claimed a great number of innocent lives, particularly among women and children. This situation is not acceptable and we welcome every effort to stop this trend.

The landmines Convention, although far from a conclusive and comprehensive response to this tragedy, may be considered to be a move to have some effect, particularly in certain regions of the world. The Convention, however, for understandable security reasons, has not been received with enthusiasm in other regions of the world. Landmines traditionally continue to be the sole effective means of ensuring the minimum

requirements of security of borders in many countries with long land borders. Countries such as mine, with long borders and no possibility of monitoring the extensive sensitive areas with established and permanent guard posts or effective warning systems, are still dependent on landmines. Because of these security considerations my country could not join in support of this draft resolution and abstained in the voting on it.

But the landmines process is an evolving one, and complementary efforts need to be pursued. My country appreciates that alongside the efforts to ban landmines some efforts, however limited, should be made to explore new alternatives to landmines which, while having the same effect, would not pose any threat to civilians. In the meantime, the observance and strengthening of standards to limit the use of landmines are necessary. My country strongly observes the established rules and regulations on limiting landmines to certain particular places on borders and takes all precautionary steps to keep civilians completely away from the minefields.

International efforts are also necessary to speed up mine clearance activities within the United Nations system. My country, faced with millions of landmines laid in its territory during past years, has a particular interest in this area. We are encouraged by the recent initiatives to increase awareness and international cooperation in the field of mine clearance. Much of course remains to be done, and we hope for more tangible and practical endeavours to assist all States in mine clearance activities.

The Chairman: We now come to cluster 5. If no delegations wish to make general statements or comments on draft resolutions contained in cluster 5, regional disarmament and security, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.35. I call first on those representatives wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

Mr. Mukul (India): My delegation has asked for the floor to explain its position before the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.35, entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels".

In 1993 the United Nations Disarmament Commission adopted consensus guidelines on regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security. Therefore, we are not convinced that this draft

resolution, in particular operative paragraph 2, which calls on the Conference on Disarmament, a forum for negotiation of disarmament instruments of global application, to consider the formulation of principles that can serve as a framework for regional agreements on conventional arms control, has any productive value. A reference is made in the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution to conventional arms control in South Asia. India has security concerns that cannot be confined to what is referred to as "South Asia". The narrow definition of the draft resolution does not fully reflect the security concerns in South Asia and adopts an approach that is far too restrictive. These reasons have also been spelt out in the past and, accordingly, my delegation will be casting a negative vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

The Chairman: The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.35.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.35, entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels", was introduced by the representative of Pakistan at the Committee's 17th meeting, on 18 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.35 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/55/INF.2. In addition, Ukraine has also become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran

(Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

India

Abstaining:

Bhutan

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.35 was adopted by 145 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Benin informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their votes or positions on the draft resolution just adopted, we shall now proceed to cluster 6.

If no delegations wish to make general comments or statements on draft resolutions contained in cluster 6, confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.12.

If no delegations wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.12, the Committee will now take a decision

on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.12. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.12, entitled “Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa”, was introduced by the representative of Burundi at the Committee’s 21st meeting, on 23 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.12 are listed in the draft resolution itself. The programme budget implications of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/55/L.51.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.12 have expressed the wish that the draft resolution be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.12 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their votes or positions on the draft resolution just adopted, we now come to cluster 7. I first call on delegations wishing to make general statements or comments on draft resolutions contained in cluster 7, disarmament machinery.

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): My delegation wishes to make a few remarks concerning draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.33, entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”.

When the draft resolution was introduced to the Committee by my delegation, I recall making some comments regarding some editorial corrections to be incorporated in operative paragraph 4, line 2 on page 2 of the draft resolution. My delegation points out that the correction in line 2 should read: “as well as to international governmental and non-governmental organizations” and then the paragraph continues as set out. I hope these corrections will be reflected in time.

The text before us is the result of negotiations among the sponsors and other interested delegations, which were conducted before the draft resolution was submitted. Certainly the draft resolution contains a few new elements when compared with last year’s resolution, in view of the reality that member countries wished to be reflected in this year’s draft resolution. In

particular I wish to mention that additional operative paragraph 6, which reads

“*Appreciates* the generous offer of His Majesty’s Government of Nepal to bear the operational cost of the Centre for it to function from Kathmandu”,

is the result of the strong commitment by the people and the Government of Nepal to have the Centre operationally functioning in Kathmandu as soon as possible.

In this respect my delegation hopes that the Committee will adopt this non-controversial, constructive and forward-looking draft resolution by consensus, as has occurred in similar cases every year.

Mr. Salazar (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): A year after the Centre recommenced its activities, and considering the vast range of activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in Lima, which are supported by a broad conceptual framework for peace, draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.17, which was introduced by Belize, as Chairman of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, expresses its satisfaction at the positive effect of the collective decision that allowed those activities to be carried out. I hope that the draft resolution will have the full support of the Committee.

With the relaunching of the Centre, the Department for Disarmament Affairs has extended one of the arms of the Organization to our region. The Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development has a well-known general mandate, but I should like to emphasize its promotion of the transfer of information on military matters, other confidence-building measures, assistance to member States in multilateral negotiations on disarmament and efforts to foster regional promotion of disarmament, including nuclear disarmament. We believe that the mandate has been propitious and highly beneficial to the region, in particular with a view to preparations for the important negotiations on disarmament and arms control which are to take place soon.

This year the draft resolution refers to the activities carried out by the Centre. In particular it invites the States of the region to propose items for inclusion in its agenda and to become increasingly active in the Centre. Thus, the work of the Centre will

provide a response to the requests and objectives of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and to their own particular characteristics within the broad range of security and development activities.

Finally, we welcome the fact that a number of countries have expressed interest even though they are outside the region. We appreciate their offers of support and material so that the Centre can continue its activities.

The Chairman: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.3/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.3/Rev.1, entitled “Twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research”, was introduced by the representative of France at the Committee’s 21st meeting, on 23 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.3/Rev.1 are listed in the draft resolution itself. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malta and Slovenia.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.3/Rev.1 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.3/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.5.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.5. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.5, entitled “Report of the Conference on Disarmament”, was introduced by the representative of Bulgaria at the Committee’s 12th meeting, on 12 October 2000.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.5 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no

objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.5 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.9.

If no delegations wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.9. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.9, entitled "United Nations Disarmament Information Programme", was introduced by the representative of Mexico at the Committee's 17th meeting, on 18 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.9 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/55/INF.2. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Malaysia and New Zealand.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.9 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.9 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no delegations wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13*. I call first on those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): As has been done traditionally, Cuba will join the consensus on the subject addressed in draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13, entitled "United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services". Within the United Nations system there are probably very few fellowship programmes that set such a clear example of the specific results that can be achieved when resources are used to train public officials, in particular officials from developing countries. However, I have taken the floor not only to recognize the results of the fellowship programme, but also to express the Cuban Government's concern about a regrettable event that

occurred this year in the fellowship programme, which is still located in New York.

According to the original plan of the programme for this year, at the end of their stay in New York the fellows were supposed to carry out a study visit to New Mexico, United States, followed by a visit to Washington. However, the Government of the United States took the decision not to allow the Cuban fellow who was participating in the programme this year to visit New Mexico and Washington. A similar decision was taken with regard to the fellows from two other countries. This meant that the group could not carry out these study visits to New Mexico and Washington as planned, and the original fellowship programme therefore had to be reduced to barely one week.

Cuba feels that it is unacceptable to continue these absurd discriminatory practices that defy reasonable explanation and directly affect the training of future disarmament experts from many countries represented here in this room. Such an attitude runs counter to the excellent attention offered by Switzerland, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany and Japan to all the fellows when they visited those countries.

In the case of Cuba, such unilateral practices by the United States are not limited to the fellowship programme. I will cite only one recent example. Because of an unexplained delay in granting visas, which were requested well in advance on the basis of rules established by the Government of the United States itself, two members of the Cuban delegation to the First Committee for this session, who had to come from our capital, were able to join in the work only when it was already well under way. Cuba reiterates its firm rejection of this type of practice and calls upon the Government of the United States to meet its obligations as a host country.

I would like to conclude by thanking the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13 for having presented a corrected version of the text which takes into account our concerns with regard to operative paragraph 4, and we hope that in future the United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services can continue to carry out their work without regrettable incidents that in no way whatsoever contribute to the attainment of its objectives.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Once again we would like to voice our full

support for the United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services. This important programme has enabled many students from different countries of the world to benefit from the experience and expertise available in many developed countries and to learn about their positions on these important issues. It is the duty of all countries to be totally transparent and objective in providing these services, irrespective of the countries the fellows come from. However, unfortunately, we note that the host country, the United States of America, did not authorize the fellows from Syria and two other countries to visit according to the programme that had been prepared within the United Nations Secretariat, despite the prior agreement of the United States to the programme prepared by the United Nations. My delegation considers there is no justification for that kind of discriminatory position. It is contrary to the objectives of the fellowship programme, and such actions are contrary to the commitments and responsibilities of the host country vis-à-vis the United Nations. We would voice the hope that the host country will cooperate with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and take the necessary steps to ensure there is no recurrence of such incidents or practices in future.

In conclusion, I would like to voice my appreciation to the countries that prepared draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13. We fully and completely support the draft resolution.

The Chairman: The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13*.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13*, entitled “United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services”, was introduced by the representative of Nigeria at the Committee’s 20th meeting, on 20 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13* are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/55/INF.2. In addition the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: India, Myanmar and Indonesia.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13* have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.13 was adopted.*

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2. I call first on those representatives wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

Mr. Ngoh Ngoh (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): My delegation wishes to speak in explanation of its position on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2, entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa”. The Centre has done a significant amount of work despite inadequate resources, in particular its work on the implementation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Moratorium on small arms and light weapons. We endorse draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2, particularly the provisions stating that the Centre must be given the necessary resources to strengthen its activities and implement its programmes. We will happily join the consensus on the draft resolution, as we have done with similar draft resolutions in past years.

Mr. Mounghara-Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Like the representative of Cameroon, I should like to speak on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2, entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa”. As my delegation said during the general debate, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa is a very useful body for Africa in that it encourages the adoption of confidence-building measures and arms limitation at the regional level. In this way it promotes sustainable harmonious development. We would like to express our support for operative paragraphs 2 and 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2. Those paragraphs speak about the need for financial support for the Centre to help it to work effectively and carry out its work programmes, which are so helpful to Africa. My delegation, therefore, will join the consensus on the draft resolution.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2, entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and

Disarmament in Africa”, was introduced by the representative of Lesotho at the Committee’s 19th meeting, on 20 October 2000, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.14/Rev.2 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.17.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.17. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.17, entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean”, was introduced by the representative of Belize at the Committee’s 20th meeting, on 20 October 2000, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.17 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.17 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no delegations wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.23.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.23. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.23, entitled “Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament”, was introduced by the representative of South Africa at the Committee’s 18th meeting, on 19 October 2000, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.23 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.23 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.24.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.24.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.24, entitled “United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament”, was introduced by the representative of South Africa at the Committee’s 18th meeting, on 19 October 2000, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.24 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.24 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no delegations wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.26.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.26.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.26, entitled “Report of the Disarmament Commission”, was introduced by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the Committee’s 17th meeting, on 18 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.26 are listed in the draft resolution itself.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.26 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.26 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.33.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken, we shall now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.33. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.33, entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”, was introduced by the representative of Nepal at the Committee’s 18th meeting, on 19 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.33 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/55/INF.2. In addition, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

Moreover, I should like to draw the attention of delegations to some editorial changes in operative paragraph 4. In line 2 the word “government” should be replaced by the word “governmental” and the word

“non-government” should be replaced by the word “non-governmental”.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.33 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.33, as orally revised, was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call upon those delegations wishing to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Al-Hassan (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.33, entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”. We are in that region, and we approve of the recent steps taken to continue the functioning of the Centre. We wish to express our appreciation to Nepal for its hosting of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. We also commend what has been done by the King of Nepal to bear the expenses of the Centre. At the last meeting of the Committee my delegation said that it hoped the Centre could begin functioning as soon as possible because it focuses not just on one part of the region but covers the entire region and deals with all issues. My delegation therefore wishes to lend its full support to the draft resolution that has just been adopted. We would like action to be taken swiftly so that the Centre can begin functioning. As I have said, we greatly appreciate the part played by the King of Nepal in helping to facilitate this.

The Chairman: The Committee has completed its consideration of and action on draft resolutions for this morning.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.