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Chairman: Mr. Andrés AGUILAR M. (Venezuela).

AGENDA ITEM 25

- (a) Question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction, and the use of their resources in the interests of mankind: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction (concluded) (A/8021; A/C.1/L.562-565);
- (b) Marine pollution and other hazardous and harmful effects which might arise from the exploration and exploitation of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction: report of the Secretary-General (concluded) (A/7924; A/C.1/L.562-565);
- (c) Views of Member States on the desirability of convening at an early date a conference on the law of the sea: report of the Secretary-General (concluded) (A/7925 and Add.1-3; A/C.1/L.562-565);
- (d) Question of the breadth of the territorial sea and related matters (concluded) (A/8047 and Add.1, Add.2/Rev.1, Add.3 and 4; A/C.1/L.562-565)

1. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall now call upon speakers who wish to explain their votes after the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/L.562 adopted by the Committee this morning. I shall first give the floor to the representative of France.

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2. Mr. DEJAMMET (France) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation voted in favour of several of the proposed amendments in order to indicate clearly where its preferences lay. We welcome Malta's initiative, which was to say out loud what everyone had been thinking.

3. The majority of the proposed amendments were rejected. We were thus led to adopt a text that is, quite clearly, a compromise document which, though less satisfactory, may pave the way to what is, in our opinion, the essential thing—that is to say, preparation of an international conference on the law of the sea.

4. We were able to vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.562 after the very specific assurances given us by the spokesman of the sponsors. At the 1799th meeting we asked them a clear-cut question on how operative paragraph 6 should be construed. The replies of Peru and the United States helped clear up certain misunderstandings. We now clearly understand that the enlarged Committee is given the specific mandate of preparing draft articles on both the régime and its corollary, that is to say the definition of the international zone. That correction was confirmed by the assurances given at the previous meeting by one of the sponsors, the representative of El Salvador, who stated that the draft resolution granted no categorical priority to the study of the régime.

5. I also think it useful to state that the draft resolution in the form in which it was introduced this morning is more satisfactory than the provisional document circulated yesterday. Its wording now gives rise to fewer difficulties; it is clear that the enlarged Committee is authorized to prepare draft articles on the topics mentioned in operative paragraph 2. But—again as regards paragraph 6—I maintain it is preferable to use the term "equitable sharing by all States" rather than "equitable sharing among all States". This correction would conform not only with the text of the declaration of principles but also with usage as borne out by all the records of the sea-bed Committee.

6. Finally, while voting in favour of the draft resolution, we did not think it necessary to maintain the last sentence of paragraph 3. We really have nothing against the idea expressed there, but do not believe it desirable in a draft resolution to tell the General Assembly of its inalienable right, recognized by all representatives, namely, to adopt any resolution it sees fit when it sees fit.

7. In conclusion, I should like to say that, as my delegation sees it, the subsidiary bodies referred to in paragraph 7 should, when they are to be set up, comprise a sub-committee on the sea-bed and a sub-committee to deal with other aspects of the law of the sea.

8. Mr. HOUBEN (Netherlands): The Netherlands delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution. In so doing, we expressed our unqualified recognition of the importance and urgency of establishing both an international régime for the sea-bed and the ocean floor and a precise and internationally accepted definition of the area in question. Although operative paragraph 6 makes no mention of a definition, we can live with the present language since many delegations, sponsor delegations among them, have observed that the wording of operative paragraph 6 automatically includes the question of the sea-bed limits.

9. Indeed, the reference in operative paragraph 6 to operative paragraph 2, where a precise definition of the area is mentioned as a subject for the conference, provides at least some assurance that the time-consuming and fruitless discussions held in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction on its terms of reference in this respect will not be repeated at the preparatory stage of the conference.

10. We voted in favour of the draft resolution also since the establishment of a maximum limit of the territorial sea, the scope of fishing rights outside the territorial waters, international straits and some problems of marine pollution are now all within the purview of the conference.

11. The Netherlands pledges its full support in contributing to the successful outcome of the conference, which we are confident will be held in 1973, and the result of which we hope will be of prime significance for the international community.

12. We hope to be in a position in the near future to elaborate further—and I refer to the initial proposal by the Netherlands in its reply to the Secretary-General contained in document A/AC.135/1—upon the outline of an international system of control over the economic exploitation of the sea-bed and the ocean floor in the light of the solemn declaration of principles adopted yesterday by such an overwhelming majority in this Committee, a majority which included the Netherlands.

13. Our vote for the draft resolution and the fact that we welcome the convening of the conference for the purposes just mentioned should not, however, be interpreted as indicative of any change in the position of the Netherlands Government as regards the scope of the conference. Throughout the negotiations on the draft resolutions and amendments, we have made it plain that the principles which form the basis of the 1958 Geneva Conventions should in no way be affected and that the changes in the texts of these Conventions should be made only in so far as they are a consequence of both the establishment of an international régime for the sea-bed and the definition of the area. Since operative paragraph 2 of the new draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.562 still includes references to nearly all aspects of the law of the sea, we would not wish our vote for the draft resolution as a whole to be taken to imply our recognizing the need to change the existing law of the sea Conventions altogether. This, in the view of the Netherlands, cannot be the purpose of the conference as decided upon.

14. We have noted with satisfaction that the sponsors of the draft resolution have stressed that those who had difficulty in accepting the broad scope of the conference as defined in operative paragraph 2 should find satisfaction in paragraph 3, which now leaves the "precise agenda" of the conference to be determined by the General Assembly. At the last meeting the representative of Canada, on behalf of all the sponsors, made a further statement of interpretation of the resolution, as we had wished, and subsequently the Netherlands delegation, together with the United Kingdom delegation, did not press for their amendments in document A/C.1/L.563. In the light of that statement, we wish to put on record that it is equally our understanding that operative paragraphs 2 and 6 in no way prejudice the position of any delegation as regards any proposal for the inclusion or non-inclusion of any particular topic of the law of the sea in the preparatory work of the Committee on the sea-bed. On that understanding, which, as we have agreed will be duly reflected in the report of the First Committee, we voted in favour of the draft resolution.

15. We wish to state for the record that we would have no difficulty in accepting all the amendments put forward by Malta and Turkey in document A/C.1/L.564. However, in view of the compromise reached and the interpretation given, we abstained from voting on those amendments.

16. Lastly, with respect to operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, in so far as it refers to the enlargement of the Committee on the sea-bed by the specific number of 39 members, my delegation wishes to reserve its ultimate position, although in our draft amendments in document A/C.1/L.554 we ourselves had placed the number of 39 between brackets. We made it quite clear in our statement last Monday, 14 December—and I refer members to the verbatim record of the 1796th meeting—that all countries with substantial interest in the matter should be given an opportunity to be represented on the enlarged Committee on the sea-bed. The meeting of the chairmen of all geographical groups has meanwhile revealed that this has not been done. As a result there will be, as we understand it, an amendment before the plenary meeting of the General Assembly this afternoon with the intention of establishing a committee of the whole. If this afternoon no agreement is reached among the various groups as to how the figure of 39 should be divided in terms of seats for each geographical group, we shall certainly support that amendment.

17. Mr. JAMIESON (United Kingdom): I should like to explain my delegation's vote this morning in favour of the draft resolution. We willingly acknowledge that the sponsors of that draft resolution had met some of the points my delegation had made in the debate, in particular in adopting our idea that the General Assembly should not try this year to determine a precise agenda for the conference. Nevertheless, my delegation has certain doubts about the text presented to us, doubts arising from one thought only, namely, whether in view of certain ambiguities in the text it represented the best course towards our common objective, an early and successful conference.

18. The clear statement made this morning on behalf of all the sponsors at the 1800th meeting went far enough to allay these doubts to enable my delegation to record a

favourable vote. The broad terms of operative paragraph 2 caused my delegation particular difficulties. In the light of the statement made on behalf of the sponsors, I should like to confirm my interpretation of this paragraph taken in conjunction with paragraph 6, namely, that the broad phraseology of these paragraphs in no way prejudices the position of any delegation as regards any proposal for the inclusion of any particular subject of the law of the sea in the preparatory work for the conference, bearing in mind that the precise agenda of the conference remains for the General Assembly to determine in accordance with operative paragraph 3.

19. Similarly, my delegation has in the past few weeks expressed its views on the questions of priorities, both of the conference and in the preparatory work. We are happy that paragraph 2 establishes no priorities at the conference. But many delegations have drawn attention to the problems that have arisen in the past due to an imprecision in the mandate of the sea-bed Committee. We, for our part, would have been happier to see this imprecision removed by an improvement in the actual terms of the resolution. This could have been effected by adopting either the amendments put forward by the Netherlands and the United Kingdom [A/C.1/L.563] or by adopting the third amendment of those presented by Malta and Turkey [A/C.1/L.564]. Our withdrawal of our own amendments and our abstention on the third Maltese and Turkish amendment were prompted solely by the fact that we had heard a helpful interpretative statement this morning on behalf of the sponsors.

20. In the light of that statement, I wish to confirm my delegation's interpretation of operative paragraph 6 as requiring the sea-bed Committee to address itself to questions of limits, both of the sea-bed and on the surface of the sea, hand in hand with its discussion of the sea-bed régime. I think that the wide support that the third Maltese-Turkish amendment received this morning shows that similar views are held by a great number of delegations here present and, in view of the large number of abstentions, I think one could safely say by the majority of delegations here present.

21. Finally, may I say that my delegation was happy to be able to vote in favour of a draft resolution calling for a law of the sea conference in 1973. We have always felt that it was of great importance to decide now on the holding of a conference and that 1973 was a reasonable date. We now look forward, beyond this resolution, to the serious and constructive preparatory work that will be required to make the success of the conference a reality.

22. My delegation will continue in the sea-bed Committee, as we have done in the past, to lend all our co-operation in the conduct of this preparatory work.

23. Mr. NAVA CARRILLO (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall make a very brief statement. First of all, my delegation wishes to express its sincere appreciation for the effort made by the sponsors of the draft resolution that has been adopted by the Committee.

24. Our position on the matter dealt with in that resolution does not call for additional explanations apart

from those already given the Committee at the 1788th meeting. But in tribute to the effort made, the wide spirit of conciliation that characterized the attitude of the sponsors of the draft resolution, the Venezuelan delegation abstained in the vote on that draft.

25. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation voted for the draft resolution because we are aware that it represents the largest measure of agreement that can be achieved in this Committee, although we continue to feel that an international conference of this scope should have been decided upon in the light of all the interests of Member States, that is to say, unanimously.

26. Despite the clarifications given by certain of the sponsors, my delegation continues to have certain misgivings, and even reservations, as to the exact scope of operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 6. These reservations should be understood in the light of the statements and general comments that I made before this Committee on 1 and 14 December last [1779th and 1796th meetings], which concerned the objectives and the terms of reference both of the conference and of the preparatory Committee.

27. Lastly, these reservations and observations were concretely reflected in the favourable vote we cast for the Turkish and Maltese amendments in document A/C.1/L.564.

28. Mr. OTUATHAIL (Ireland): Mr. Chairman, with your permission I should like to explain my delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.1/L.562 which was put to the vote today, and very briefly also on the other draft resolutions on which we voted yesterday. The Irish delegation has not intervened in the debate on this item up to the present. We felt that our general policy was adequately presented in this Committee last year in our intervention on 6 November 1969 [1679th meeting].

29. On the important question of convening at an early date a conference on the law of the sea, my Government's policy was most recently stated in our reply to the Secretary-General of 21 July 1970, as contained in document A/7925/Add.1. We have favoured the convening of a conference, which in our view should deal with a limited number of topics only, and we specified the régime of the continental shelf, the limits of national jurisdiction thereon, and the régime to be established in respect of the areas outside those limits. We felt, and continue to feel, that to open up for examination the whole law of the sea at such a conference would be unwise and would not be conducive to early progress on the urgent issues as set out in the declaration of principles contained in draft resolution A/C.1/L.544. Nevertheless, we have at the same time indicated that should the majority of the General Assembly desire a conference with a more extensive agenda we would be prepared to participate in such a conference. We would wish, however, to avail ourselves of the opportunity to put forward our views, as necessary, during the preparatory period before the conference.

30. The debate on this question has concentrated on the central matters of the mandate of the conference and the question of priorities, the composition of the preparatory

body, the mandate of the preparatory body and the timing of the conference. It has been our view that in order to have a reasonable prospect of success the conference should have a clearly-defined agenda; if it is to be realistic, it should include the question of limits, and it must be carefully prepared. My delegation has studied closely the various draft resolutions and amendments which were submitted in the past weeks. Naturally, we always hoped that a satisfactory compromise would be worked out between the various points of view and we were happy when you, Mr. Chairman, announced yesterday morning that a compromise had been arrived at.

31. We examined the compromise text as contained in draft resolution A/C.1/L.562 and regret that we found that it still contained defects in particular, in relation to the criteria for the holding of a conference, to which my delegation subscribes. These defects have been outlined by a number of previous speakers. We were grateful, however, for the useful interpretative statement made at the previous meeting by the representative of Canada on behalf of the sponsors, which has certainly clarified matters for the better. Similarly, we welcomed the explanatory remarks made by certain other of the sponsors.

32. In the voting on this question my delegation supported the amendments in document A/C.1/L.564 submitted by Malta and Turkey, which would, in our view, have greatly improved the text of the draft resolution. Although only one of those amendments was adopted, my delegation felt that, despite our misgivings, we could support the draft resolution in the spirit of compromise which has been very manifest in this Committee and in the light of the statement made by the representative of Canada to which I have referred, and also bearing in mind that the draft resolution takes into account, in operative paragraph 2, our conviction that the conference, in drawing up the necessary convention or conventions on the international régime, will include the question of limits.

33. My delegation yesterday voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/L.544 containing the declaration of principles governing the sea-bed and the ocean floor. In common with many other delegations, the Irish delegation had reservations about some of the content of this declaration and about specific paragraphs which do not represent adequately our policy as expressed in our statement in this Committee last year, to which I have referred.

34. We have supported the resolution, however, as representing a compromise probably wholly satisfactory to none, but as the highest common denominator likely to gain wide acceptance in the General Assembly at the present time. We also weighted carefully the words of caution expressed by the Chairman of the sea-bed Committee, Ambassador Amerasinghe, at the beginning of our debate when he stated, in introducing the draft declaration, that wide support could be ensured only through acceptance of the text as a compromise with all its attendant inadequacies, lest any attempt at further refinement could have the effect of disturbing the delicate balance of the entire draft [1773rd meeting].

35. As regards the remaining draft resolutions, we supported draft resolution A/C.1/L.551/Rev.1, on the question

of a study of the problems of land-locked States. We abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/L.543/Rev.1 and Corr.1 because we felt, *inter alia*, that the study and report which that resolution would call for are premature at this point in time.

36. Mr. STEWARD (South Africa): In deference to the pressure of time, my remarks will be limited to the minimum.

37. South Africa's position on the convening of an international conference on the law of the sea was set out in its reply, to be found in document A/7925/Add.1, to the Secretary-General's request for the views of Member States on this question, pursuant to operative paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 2574 A (XXIV). The debate in this Committee has not materially changed our views as set out in our reply, and our vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/L.562 must be regarded as qualified by that reply; it should also be considered as an acknowledgement of the concessions made on the part of many delegations to achieve the compromise reflected in the draft resolution.

38. The draft resolution is by no means satisfactory to us in every respect, as it is not to many other delegations, but it earned our support as representing the highest common denominator of agreement that it was possible to achieve in the Committee.

39. Mr. STATHATOS (Greece): My delegation wishes to state very briefly for the record that it voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/L.562 after having taken note of the statement made by the sponsors to the effect that operative paragraph 2 by no means implies that we shall have to reopen the whole question of the law of the sea. Furthermore, my delegation wishes to make it quite clear that its affirmative vote does not imply that it accepts without reservation the enlargement of the sea-bed Committee by only 39 members, and that, together with a number of other delegations, it is prepared to raise this question before the plenary meeting this afternoon.

40. Mr. BAYÜLKEN (Turkey) (*interpretation from French*): First of all, I should like to express the gratitude of my delegation to those members of the Committee that supported the amendments that we submitted together with the delegation of Malta [A/C.1/L.564]. As we pointed out, the reason for the amendments was to clarify the text originally submitted to us in document A/C.1/L.562. It seems to me that the vote in the Committee clearly indicated that almost a third of the membership of the Committee expressed the desire to have these clarifications made. As will be recalled, my delegation has always emphasized the need to arrive at a consensus in the spirit of compromise and conciliation that we feel should underlie our work in this Committee. We feel that the general view favoured such a consensus, and after taking note of the statements made by the sponsors of the draft resolution, we felt that we could support it. We are convinced that the vital and legitimate interests of all Members will be taken into account and, that all Members of the United Nations will be able to express their views when the enlarged Committee deals with the questions set out in the resolution before us. My delegation is sure that all delegations

that have a vital interest in these matters will be able to contribute to the work of such a Committee. With these expressions of hope and with this confidence we have been able to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

41. Mr. OWADA (Japan): My delegation abstained on the draft resolution for the following reason. This morning, last-minute efforts were made to accommodate the positions of delegations with differing viewpoints. As my delegation stated earlier this morning, we are grateful for those efforts. At the same time it cannot be denied that the draft resolution in its final form contains elements still to be improved upon and leaves much to be desired. In its present form, this is not a text which can commend itself unreservedly to my delegation. However, since the specific points we wished to mention have been made clear in the past, I shall not clarify them further. Nevertheless, my delegation felt it appropriate not to stand in the way of the adoption of the draft resolution, in view of the fact that this was the only text which had the possibility of gaining the support of a majority in this Committee and that there was no realistic possibility of improving it further. For this reason, my delegation abstained in the voting; it did so taking into account especially the statement made by the distinguished representative of Canada on behalf of the sponsors.

42. I wish to add one word concerning the position of my delegation on the amendments proposed by Malta and Turkey [A/C.1/L.564]. It must be clear from what my delegation has been stating in this Committee that it is in full sympathy with the amendments proposed by the distinguished representative of Malta. Our basic position remains the same. Nevertheless, for the reasons I have just explained in relation to the draft resolution itself, and in the light of the explanation given by the distinguished representative of Canada on behalf of the sponsors on the points covered by these amendments, my delegation decided not to take a position which might make it difficult to achieve as wide an agreement as possible. For this reason my delegation abstained on these amendments.

43. I wish to take this opportunity of expressing the determination of my delegation to co-operate fully with all the members of the enlarged sea-bed Committee in our common effort towards the stabilization of the law of the sea in the future.

44. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): There are no more speakers on my list to explain their votes after the vote. However, before concluding consideration of this item on our agenda, I should like to make a statement regarding the composition of the enlarged Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction.

45. In paragraph 5 of the draft resolution adopted at the 1800th meeting this morning and recommended for approval by the General Assembly, it has been decided to enlarge that Committee by adding 39 new members, to be appointed by the Chairman of the First Committee in consultation with regional groups.

46. After having consulted the chairmen of the different groups, I am in a position to announce that, with the

exception of the group of Western Europe and other nations, and taking into account the explanation given by the representative of Norway this morning, agreement has been arrived at to divide the new seats as follows: Africa, 13; Latin America, 8; Asia, 9; Western Europe, 6; and Eastern Europe, 3. In the light of the present membership of the sea-bed Committee, that distribution seems reasonable to me, and I have thus decided.

47. In exercise of the authority vested in me by the Committee, and after having heard the opinions of the different groups, I have also decided to nominate the following States of Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe: from Africa: Algeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Senegal, Somalia and Tunisia; from Latin America: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela; from Asia: Afghanistan, Cyprus, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore and Yemen; from Eastern Europe: Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Hungary and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

48. Unfortunately, I am not in a position at present to announce the names of the six countries of Western Europe that will occupy the seats allocated to that group. On this matter I would add that there seems to be no legal obstacle to those designations taking place after the conclusion of our work, and even after the end of the present session of the General Assembly.

49. Does any delegation wish to speak on this question? If not, I shall consider that the Committee has concluded its consideration of agenda item 25 and thereby the work of the Committee for this twenty-fifth session.

Completion of the Committee's work

50. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): In keeping with tradition, I shall now make a brief statement on what I consider to be the result of our joint efforts during this twenty-fifth session.

51. We were able to consider the 11 agenda items assigned to us by the General Assembly, with only two days' delay, despite the fact that our Committee was unable to meet regularly during the commemorative part of the twenty-fifth session of the Assembly, from 13 to 26 October, and was only occasionally able to meet during the debate on the Middle East question, which took place in the last week of October. I was consistently optimistic, but I can now admit that, during these last two weeks, more than once I feared that we might not be able to end before Thursday or Friday of this week. However, what is most important is obviously not that we end on time or with a slight delay; what really counts when we weigh the work of the Committee is the nature and importance of the agreements achieved. If we use that yardstick, then the work of the Committee during this session has been most fruitful.

52. At the 1797th meeting, which took place on Monday afternoon, 14 December, almost unanimously the Committee adopted a draft declaration on the strengthening of international security. When as we are led to hope, that

declaration is adopted by the General Assembly at its plenary session, that document will be one of the most important adopted at this session.

53. The declaration on the Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations; the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade; the programme of action for the full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples; the Declaration on the Occasion of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations; and, now, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security are surely the best contributions that we have been able to make to the cause of peace in this jubilee year. It would in truth have been unpardonable had we been unable to arrive at a significant agreement on international security at the present session.

54. A duty of gratitude and justice prompts me once again to stress the role played in the preparation of that draft declaration by the members of the informal working group which, with the authorization of the Committee, was constituted under my chairmanship. I must express my particular appreciation—and I think I am speaking for all members of the Committee—to the representatives of Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Ecuador, India, Italy, Poland and Yugoslavia, who comprise the drafting committee, and to its rapporteur and spokesman, the representative of Brazil, Ambassador de Araujo Castro. Those delegations worked untiringly morning, noon and sometimes at night, week after week, imbued with a common desire to achieve an agreement, and animated by a constant spirit of understanding and compromise.

55. In speaking of this important subject, we cannot forget that in the course of the general debate, and within their respective groups, many delegations made positive contributions to the achievement of these results. In point of fact, it was a common endeavour, reflecting a collective political will which augurs well for the future of our Organization.

56. On disarmament matters, the most important decision taken by the Committee this year was doubtless the adoption of the resolution commending the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor, and in the Subsoil Thereof, requesting depositary Governments to open the Treaty to signature and ratification as soon as possible, and expressing the hope that the Treaty will obtain the widest possible adherence. It is true that that Treaty is only a partial and collateral measure, but it is no less true that it is a positive step towards the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international supervision, which encourages the maintenance of international peace, the reduction of international tensions, and the strengthening of friendly relations among States.

57. There is an obvious interest on the part of States in the problems of disarmament, proved by the fact that 78 delegations took part this year in the general debate on those items. In that debate, among other questions, there

was wide-ranging discussion on the proposals made by a number of delegations at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament on the comprehensive disarmament programme and on the problem of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. If the resolutions adopted by the Committee on those points have disappointed those delegations which had hoped to go much further at the present session, they nevertheless open the road to more substantive decisions in the near future. In any case, our discussions and the measures adopted will undoubtedly spur on the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in its activities.

58. With respect to the seven disarmament items on our agenda, the Committee adopted nine resolutions—among which was one on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and its extremely harmful effects on international peace and security, which was adopted by acclamation.

59. With regard to agenda item 25—which, for lack of an official title, I will call “questions of the sea”—yesterday the Committee adopted the very important Declaration of Principles Governing the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor, and the Subsoil Thereof beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction, which concluded that phase of the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction, presided over with such wisdom and ability by Ambassador Amerasinghe, the representative of Ceylon, and also of the work of its Legal Sub-Committee, presided over so methodically, tactfully and diligently by a distinguished representative from Latin America, Ambassador Galindo Pohl of El Salvador. An enlarged Committee with a different mandate will now bear the responsibility of preparing the international régime for the area based upon the principles approved.

60. With regard to the very controversial and difficult subjects touching on the convening of a conference of the law of the sea, if a consensus was not achieved, as we all had hoped, the draft resolution adopted this morning by the Committee, by a wide majority, nevertheless once again reflects the healthy and necessary spirit of co-operation and compromise that has prevailed in the Committee during the present session. If this spirit prevails in the enlarged Committee that will deal with the questions of the law of the sea, we can expect the best of results from the important tasks entrusted to it. These and the other two draft resolutions adopted by the Committee on item 25, after very detailed and thorough discussions, attest to the importance of this subject and the interests involved.

61. Despite the very little time available, the Committee devoted to the examination of item 26 on international co-operation for the peaceful uses of outer space the same number of meetings as it did last year. Unfortunately, little has been achieved in this field where international co-operation and the action of the United Nations is as desirable as it is necessary. The four draft resolutions adopted on the item by the Committee reflect this concern as well as the interests of the Member States in a speedy and adequate solution to the major problems still pending in the field.

62. Finally, the Committee examined the question of Korea and adopted one resolution on that subject.

63. The fact that we have achieved these results, the fact that we have arrived at significant agreements on matters of international security, on disarmament and on the complex questions of the sea, the fact that to all intents and purposes we have finished on time, are doubtless a satisfactory result and due to the work of all delegations, to their sense of duty and their spirit of co-operation. I want to express my thanks to all of you for the confidence shown in me from the beginning and the constant support given to my proposals for the organization of work and the procedure to be applied in the examination of the items on our agenda.

64. The discussions on these organizational and procedural questions were, fortunately, limited to the minimum. This fact in itself shows a genuine desire on the part of the Committee to grapple with the substance of the problems—to hold serious and constructive discussions on the important questions raised in the different items of our agenda without wasting time on lengthy and very often puerile and unedifying debates on procedure.

65. Personally, at all times I have endeavoured to fulfil the commitments I assumed when I accepted both the honour and the responsibility of presiding over this Committee. I can assure you that my proposals and decisions in the course of these months of uninterrupted and at times very tiring work were always inspired by the desire to activate our work, to facilitate negotiations and agreements and to interpret not only the letter but also the spirit of the rules of procedure with the greatest impartiality. I must apologize to you for any mistakes which I might inadvertently have made; and if at any time I have not shown as much patience and courtesy as each and every one of you deserve, I apologize to you and ask you to take into account the fact that little by little the tension and the work of these three months of meetings have sapped my strength.

66. Fortunately, the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Farah, and our Rapporteur, Ambassador Černík, have at all times assisted me in fulfilling my functions. Ambassador Farah happily agreed to preside over the meetings whenever I asked for his co-operation, and this allowed me to encourage and assist the negotiations which have made possible some of the agreements arrived at. Ambassador Černík was with me constantly in the meetings of the Committee and at informal meetings, sharing responsibility with me happily. The advice and counsel of these distinguished colleagues with all their experience as well as their constant support have been of invaluable assistance to me. I have also had the privilege of having with me and being able to count on the expert and amiable counsel of the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Kutakov, the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Chacko, the outstanding personnel of the Committee, Mr. Rochine, Mr. Gaillard, Miss Segarra, Mrs. Pierce and Miss Rosario.

67. I also wish to express my thanks to the members of the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs of the United Nations who have assisted us in dealing with the different subjects, and also the interpreters, the verbatim reporters, the press officers, the conference and documents officers, the sound engineers and the guards. We must also not forget the very many other international civil servants, the translators, the typists, the telephone operators, among

others, who made it possible for this Committee to work efficiently.

68. Mr. NKUNDABAGENZI (Rwanda) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the delegations of the African Group and my own delegation, I have the honour and privilege of expressing to you our great appreciation for the remarkable way in which you have guided the proceedings of this important Committee during the course of this historic session.

69. Since the questions studied in this Committee have been extremely delicate, we have, in the course of the debate, benefited from your broad experience of international affairs, your outstanding qualities as an informed diplomat who unites a sense of fine differences of meaning, of equity and moderation with a perfect knowledge of the rules of procedure, respect for all opinions expressed and the necessary authority to promote compromise.

70. To be sure, solutions to the political and security issues that this Committee deals with every year are still remote; the fact remains that every step forward is something of which Member States must be proud. This step we have just taken, after patient and enlightened study, covers a series of important problems of the utmost meaning for the future of mankind. We are proud that under your enlightened guidance the First Committee has done such fruitful work, and on behalf of our Group I should like to congratulate you.

71. We should also like to associate with this deserved tribute to you the Vice-Chairman, our friend and colleague, Ambassador Farah, whose competence and dynamism are so well known and appreciated by every member of the Committee. We also wish to pay tribute to the Rapporteur, our friend and colleague, Ambassador Černík, for the accuracy and brevity of his reports.

72. We are also happy to express our great appreciation to the Secretariat staff from whom we have always received untinted dedication and total co-operation. We should also like to thank quite particularly all the interpreters who have devoted themselves whole-heartedly to their work without which it might have perhaps been impossible for an Assembly whose members speak different languages to work properly.

73. And since the year 1970 is now drawing to a close, Mr. Chairman, and a new year is about to begin, I should like to take this opportunity of expressing to you and to all delegations the best wishes of the African Group.

74. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for your very kind words.

75. Mr. DE PINIES (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of a considerable number of countries of Western Europe and of other States, among which of course, I do not include Norway, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Rapporteur, all the officers of the Committee and the Secretariat for the outstanding work that you have done in the course of the present session of the General Assembly during which you have directed the work of this Committee with so much ability.

76. Mr. President, you have made a detailed analysis of the success achieved by the Committee. It is for this reason that we wish to congratulate you and express our own satisfaction with ourselves by saying that if this twenty-fifth anniversary session has not been as fruitful as we would have desired, at least in the First Committee we can have the satisfaction of knowing that we have accomplished such important matters which, in order not to delay our work, I shall not enumerate, but which were previously and meticulously listed by yourself.

77. May I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year. At the same time, our gratitude goes to the President for all the courtesies that he extended to our group, excluding, of course, Norway.

78. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Spain for his kind words.

79. Mr. DE ARAUJO CASTRO (Brazil) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of 23 delegations of the Latin American group, I wish to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our heartfelt appreciation and profound admiration for the way in which you have presided over the work of the First Committee during this historic twenty-fifth session. In the fulfilment of your duties you have reflected and symbolized the best political and legal traditions of Latin America upholding the ideals of freedom and justice in international relations.

80. The diplomatic and political imprint that you have brought to bear during this session has allowed us to achieve solutions in the different questions that had been allocated to us. You have ennobled and exalted the name of Venezuela, your great and noble country, and as I said, you have lived up to the best of our traditions. We are all extremely grateful to you. Rarely has the First Committee tackled subjects of such great or crucial importance for the community of nations. There have been times in the past when we devoted ourselves almost exclusively to subjects unconnected with land discussing outer space and the sea-bed. This year we have had the opportunity of debating and considering the problems of the surface of the earth and holding a lively debate on the problems of peace and international security.

81. The very important Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security that we adopted on Monday last created a new right: a right to security, that is very dear to the smaller countries. The affirmation of the right to security, as the germ of a new emergent right to international security, would be sufficient to highlight the work of the First Committee as a fundamental contribution to universal peace. The declaration stresses international security as the heritage of all nations with equal sovereignty of rights and obligations and is a formal rejection of all the theories of the power politics and spheres of influence, since it reaffirms the equality and sovereignty of all States, independently of their geographical situation, size and population.

82. For all these reasons we are extremely grateful to you, Sir, for your constant efforts, your absolute impartiality, your indefatigable spirit of diplomacy and for the perseverance with which you were able to circumvent the dif-

ficulties that beset us. You can be sure, Mr. Chairman, that the Latin American countries are proud of you as Chairman of the First Committee and we are aware that under your guidance the Committee has gone back to its basic tasks: the tasks of peace and security.

83. We are convinced that all efforts to detract from the political aspects of the Organization are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Charter of San Francisco for we cannot resign ourselves exclusively to deal with secondary tasks. We are happy to see that we are returning to the ideals of the Charter and that that return is under your guidance, Mr. Chairman, when the United Nations is establishing, as we said, a new right: the right to security.

84. Our appreciation is addressed to our Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Farah, our Rapporteur, Ambassador Černík, the representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kutakov, and to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Chacko, all of whom have effectively and devotedly contributed to the happy conclusion and success of the work of the First Committee.

85. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish warmly to thank the representative of Brazil for his extremely kind words.

86. Mr. AL-ATTAR (Yemen) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. Chairman, as we complete our work, it is a pleasant duty and an honour for me to express to you and to the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat, on behalf of the delegations of Asia and of my delegation, our deep appreciation for the tremendous work you have done in the Committee. With what mastery, Mr. Chairman, have you directed our proceedings and prepared the ground for a number of draft resolutions! I have in mind particularly the efforts you devoted to the preparation and the co-ordination of the draft resolution on the strengthening of international security, and on the draft resolution and declaration concerning the sea-bed.

87. You have thus once again demonstrated your great skill, your great intellectual mastery and your legendary courtesy. The dedication and the wisdom which you constantly displayed during these long months remain an example to us all. I am particularly happy to express my sincere appreciation, without any taint of flattery, because I know you from the time you came to represent your country here. The fact that we occupy neighbouring seats has given me the opportunity to appreciate your intellectual attainments, in a word, your grand personality. Furthermore, you represent, like me, a country in what is called "the Third World," namely, where countries have problems of development, all of which is another factor that has strengthened our co-operation within this Committee.

88. Once again, Mr. Chairman, please accept our expression of gratitude and thanks, and, in advance, our best wishes for the future.

89. Mr. KHANACHET (Kuwait) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. Chairman, in conveying to you the congratulations of the Arab Group, I should have liked to have been able to speak to you in Arabic, a language which for eight

centuries was that of your ancestors in your country of origin, which was Andalusia and which is now called the Iberian peninsula or Spain. Failing that, I have chosen French, since I am unable to use your own language, one which a great French writer called the most beautiful and noblest of languages. So allow me to address you in French, which is also a Latin language and one that has earned its spurs in diplomacy.

90. Mr. Chairman, the way in which you have presided over the work of this Committee has been exemplary, because of the wisdom, the clarity, the courtesy and the decisiveness you have shown whenever necessary. Thanks to those qualities, you have steered the ship successfully, without difficulties and without damage, to a safe haven.

91. We have passed through moments when each of us was reaching the end of his patience. Yet you were never in such straits. With your smile, your alertness and your understanding of human relations, you have always had the intellectual skill that has earned our admiration. As far as affection and friendship are concerned, I can assure you that you have won a most favoured place in all our hearts. That favoured place you have won through the great human qualities you have shown.

92. On behalf of the Arab Group, I should like also to express our thanks and our gratitude to the members of the Bureau and to all the members of the Secretariat who have given us assistance which has allowed us to achieve the success that we have been able to attain.

93. In conclusion, let me merely say: "*Merci*" in French, "Thank you" in English "*muchas gracias*" in Spanish, "*choukren*" in Arabic.

94. Mr. SMIRNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*translated from Russian*): Mr. Chairman, the delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic on behalf of the group of socialist countries would like to express to you our gratitude for the able, efficient and smooth manner in which you directed our Committee's work.

95. Many flattering words were said about you when you were elected Chairman. Today we can say that you have not only justified the confidence placed in you but have shown that you deserve higher praise still, and we wish to express our appreciation to you.

96. Under your guidance, the Committee considered important issues and achieved a great deal during this anniversary session of the General Assembly. The Committee approved the historic Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, which will have major significance for the cause of peace. It adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof. The Committee supported the preparation of a convention on the prohibition of the production of both chemical and bacteriological weapons and called upon the Governments of nuclear-weapon States to halt the nuclear arms race without delay and suspend all tests and to halt the development of offensive and defensive nuclear-weapon systems. The Committee also adopted a number of other decisions.

97. The Vice-Chairman, Mr. Farah of Somalia, and the Rapporteur, Mr. Černík of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, also contributed to the success of the Committee's work. They performed their duties extremely well, and we wish to express to Mr. Farah and Mr. Černík our appreciation of the valuable contribution they made to the Committee's work.

98. We wish also to thank the Under-Secretary-General Mr. Kutakov, the Secretary of the Committee Mr. Chacko and his assistants, the interpreters and all the others who contributed to the Committee's successful work.

99. Mr. BENITES (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): After the representative of Brazil has spoken on behalf of the countries that usually meet as the informal Latin American Group, my words would seem superfluous, were it not for a reason which I shall explain in a few moments. Before doing so, I wish to express great satisfaction at having heard the Chairman of our Group, Mr. de Araujo Castro of Brazil, express himself with such fluency in Spanish, for, as far as we are concerned, the tongue is the evidence of the spirit, and Spain left us a spirit of which pride and honour are the main features. I am most happy that, despite the fact that in that group we may have had divergent views, he did not exclude anyone, he spoke on behalf of all, for there are moments when we cannot speak only on behalf of those who think as we think but on behalf of those who feel as we feel, and everybody in this room feels the respect we owe you, Mr. Chairman, and the gratitude we wish to express. This is part of our pride and honour which I want to state clearly.

100. Mr. Chairman, the reason why I have asked for the floor is that I was the last Latin American Chairman of this Committee before you honoured us by becoming Chairman this year. Because I am fully aware of the difficulties of that post, because I have lived through the anxieties and know how disturbing and frightening the work can be, I speak as one who has felt it in his own flesh and I want to say that you have carried out the work so tactfully, intelligently and courteously that you have earned our greatest admiration.

101. Another reason why I have great satisfaction and which led me to ask for the floor, Mr. Chairman, is that I wish to thank you for having allowed me to form part of that small working group that prepared the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. Although my personal contribution was modest, I believe that this is one of the fundamental documents of the United Nations, because of the work done by the other seven members. Perhaps in this Committee there has been only one other document of analogous importance, and that was the declaration on the inadmissibility of interference in the domestic affairs of States. In other Committees' declarations such as those on human rights that have been approved during the present year may have been important, but the work of this Committee will be linked to your name through one of the most important declarations in the history of the United Nations.

102. I shall conclude, Mr. Chairman, by again telling you how I admire the way you combine courtesy—I might say the social strength of a smile—and a firm bearing; how well

and how intelligently you have been able to get down to essentials in guiding our work. Despite your short experience in the United Nations you have been able to bring to the task exemplary diplomatic sagacity.

103. Since you are from Venezuela, a sister Republic, the same flag flies over us both. We have a common history, we have shared the same glories and troubles. I felt I should express my admiration and that of my country for you, one of our brothers by tradition and history.

104. I would extend my delegation's appreciation to all the officers of the Committee and all members of the Secretariat.

105. Mr. YOST (United States): The United States delegation could not let the final meeting of this Committee pass without expressing its admiration and gratitude for the manner in which you, Mr. Chairman, have presided over our deliberations.

106. Not only have we had an unusually heavy and complicated agenda at this session, but the time normally available has been severely abbreviated by the commemorative session and other factors. Nevertheless, with a rare combination of skill, persistence and patience, you have kept us to our task. Not only have we completed our agenda but, as you have just noted, we have achieved solid results that will have a significant effect upon the future.

107. We also extend our thanks to the other officers of the Committee, the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur, and express our gratitude for the very able job done by the Secretariat, the Secretary, the conference officers, the verbatim reporters and last, but not least, the interpreters, without whose labours we could accomplish nothing.

108. We wish all members of the Committee and of the Secretariat without exception relaxing holidays and a happy New Year.

109. Mr. SEN (India): Mr. Chairman, I speak as a representative of the non-aligned group. Ambassador Lusaka is not here, and an Asian tribute has already been eloquently paid by the representative of Yemen. I include in my tributes not only all the countries of the non-aligned group but all those not included in other groups. The doors of the non-aligned group are always wide open.

110. Mr. Chairman, many tributes have been paid to you, all of them well deserved. Sometimes I think pleasure can be as taxing as pain, and therefore I shall not tax the patience of the Chair or members of the Committee. I shall merely say that we associate ourselves with all the tributes that have been paid to you, to the Secretariat, and to the other officers of the Committee. Like previous speakers, we wish them a very good holiday and great success in the years to come.

111. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to express my wholehearted appreciation to all its members, especially those who addressed the Committee this afternoon, personally or on behalf of the groups they represent, for the very kind words they have addressed to me and to the Secretariat.

112. Since many Committee members will be returning home or leaving New York for the holiday season, I would now wish all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.