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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the First Committee (A/46/666)]

46/29. Comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty

The General Assembly,

Recalling previous resolutions which identify the complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and a comprehensive test ban as one of the basic objectives in the field of disarmament,

Convinced that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought,

Welcoming the improved relationship between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America and their consequent announcements of significant measures, including unilateral steps, which could signal the reversal of the nuclear arms race,

Welcoming also the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed on 31 July 1991, and expressing the hope that it will be followed by agreement at an early date on further cuts in strategic nuclear arsenals,

Recognizing the ratification of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests, 1/ signed on 3 July 1974, and the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes, 2/ signed on 28 May 1976, together with their protocols,

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/9627), annex II, document CCD/431.

2/ The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook, vol. I: 1976 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.IX.2), appendix III.

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Noting the decline, in comparison with previous years, in the number of nuclear tests conducted in 1990,

Convinced that an end to nuclear testing by all States in all environments for all time is an essential step in order to prevent the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapons and their further proliferation and to contribute, along with other concurrent efforts to reduce nuclear arms, to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons,

Noting also concerns expressed about the environmental and health risks associated with underground nuclear testing,

Convinced also that the most effective way to achieve an end to nuclear testing is through the conclusion, at an early date, of a verifiable, comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that will attract the adherence of all States,

Taking into account the undertakings by the original parties to the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water 3/ to seek to achieve the early discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time and also noting the reiteration of this commitment in the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 4/

Noting with satisfaction the work being undertaken within the Conference on Disarmament by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, and in this context welcoming the second technical test concerning the global exchange and analysis of seismic data,

Recalling that the Amendment Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water was held in New York from 7 to 18 January 1991,

1. Reaffirms its conviction that a treaty to achieve the prohibition of all nuclear-test explosions by all States in all environments for all time is a matter of priority which would constitute an essential step in order to prevent the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapons and their further proliferation, and which would contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament;

2. Urges, therefore, all States to seek to achieve the early discontinuance of all nuclear-test explosions for all time;

3. Reaffirms the particular responsibilities of the Conference on Disarmament in the negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, and in this context urges the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban in 1992 with an appropriate mandate;

3/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 480, No. 6964.

4/ Ibid., vol. 729, No. 10485.

4. Requests the Conference on Disarmament, in this context, to intensify its substantive work on specific and interrelated test-ban issues, including structure and scope and verification and compliance, taking also into account all relevant proposals and future initiatives;

5. Urges the Conference on Disarmament:

(a) To take into account the progress achieved by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, including the experience gained from the technical test concerning the global exchange and analysis of seismic data, and other relevant initiatives;

(b) To continue efforts to establish, with the widest possible participation, an international seismic monitoring network with a view to developing further a system for the effective monitoring and verification of compliance with a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty;

(c) To investigate other measures to monitor and verify compliance with such a treaty, including on-site inspections, satellite monitoring and an international network to monitor atmospheric radioactivity;

6. Urges:

(a) The nuclear-weapon States to agree promptly to appropriate verifiable and militarily significant interim measures, with a view to concluding a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty;

(b) Those nuclear-weapon States which have not yet done so to adhere to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water;

7. Calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session on progress made;

8. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-seventh session an item entitled "Comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty".

65th plenary meeting
6 December 1991