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*Chairman: Mr. Agha SHAHI (Pakistan).*

**AGENDA ITEM 103**

**The strengthening of international security (*continued*)  
(A/7654; A/C.1/L.468)**

1. Mr. RUDA (Argentina) (*translated from Spanish*): My delegation will comply scrupulously with your request, Mr. Chairman, in the belief that the eloquence of our silence pays a deserved tribute to the capacities and qualities of the distinguished officers of our Committee.

2. The delegation of Argentina regards the proposal by the Soviet Union [A/7654] that the General Assembly discuss at the current session the problem of strengthening international security as well timed, first of all because the proposal has stimulated an important discussion calculated to create an atmosphere in which the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Organization in 1970 can be adequately celebrated.

3. It is well timed also because it is being discussed at a moment when, although there are serious localized conflicts, we seem fortunately to be further and further removed from the era of the so-called cold war. This will no doubt make for an exchange of ideas and for objective, frank and constructive discussions designed to establish international security on sounder bases.

4. To our way of thinking it is quite evident that the spectre of a world-wide conflict has been slowly fading during the last few years; and although it cannot by any means be said that we have achieved on a lasting basis the essential goal of the Organization, namely the maintenance of international peace and security, we must take the utmost possible advantage of the favourable prospect before us to consolidate the fundamental purposes of the United Nations.

5. In these circumstances, the contribution which each of our countries can make to the strengthening of collective security in a disinterested and realistic way will be an essential factor in speeding up the improvement of the international political climate in which we live.

6. But it would be going beyond the limits of realism to fail to point out that in this type of issue what is most important is to secure first and foremost the contribution that the great Powers, particularly those which enjoy the privilege of permanent seats on the Security Council, can and must make. Similarly, we recognize that at this stage in the evolution of the world community, the medium-sized and small Powers too have a duty to add their experience and ideas to the common pool. Argentina, a country of profound peace-loving ideals deeply rooted in its traditions and its history, believes that its views on this item can help in strengthening collective security.

7. Experience has shown that the Charter and its machinery have not been enough to prevent or settle localized conflicts, and that although the danger of a major conflagration has moved into the background on the political scene, other conflicts still persist in various parts of the world. Our obligation is therefore to try to find ways in which the medium-sized and small Powers can also enjoy the peace and security proclaimed in the Charter.

8. The great paradox of recent times is that only the most powerful feel secure, despite the fact that the main goal of the plan outlined at San Francisco was to safeguard the security of the weak. Hence the first concern of my delegation at present in regard to the strengthening of collective security is to stress the obligation incumbent on all of us to make efforts to settle the current conflicts. Not only is it essential to look to the existing structures and methods; it is also necessary to see and to study the reality that surrounds us if we are to find solutions for those conflicts.

9. As we see it, this presupposes a genuine will to peace on the part of States confronted with or affected by situations calculated to endanger the maintenance of peace. Our efforts must be devoted fundamentally to kindling that will to peace in men's minds. Failing that, it will be impossible to resolve the existing conflicts. It would be unfair not to recognize that the great Powers have tried of late to work out formulas for agreement in respect of some of these localized conflicts. But it must also be recognized that their efforts must be exerted with greater political imagination and manifest a genuine desire to see those conflicts settled.

10. Respect for the principles of the Charter must go hand in hand with an iron will to put them into practice. Peace today cannot be a mere pause in disputes between the great Powers; it must be a value applied to relationships between States everywhere. The so-called "balance of terror" is not peace, nor can the term be used for a situation where the only thing preventing a world-wide conflagration is the threat of destruction of the human race, while simultane-

ously conventional armaments are being used to violate the principles of the Organization.

11. Our own concept of peace is a very positive one, implying the absence of threat and fear, and collective safeguards to enable States to develop their institutions in the certainty that weapons will not be used or force or pressure exerted against them.

12. Whether the United Nations can strengthen collective security now depends on the support given to it by all its Members, particularly those which have primary responsibility because of their greater power. But we all have an active part to play, and it would distort the very nature of the Charter and defeat its essential purpose if the position of some States remained that of mere spectators of the primacy of the strategic interests of the great Powers. For us security, like peace, is indivisible.

13. With this expression of our concern that there should be an evident determination on the part of all States to strengthen international security, and this explanation of the role that all of us must play in the task, I shall now pass on to a few remarks concerning the way in which my delegation believes we can help to bring these things about.

14. First of all we believe that ways and means must be found of revitalizing the procedures for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. As was rightly pointed out by the representative of Brazil in his splendid statement of 13 October [1653rd meeting], the Organization, and more specifically the Security Council, has acted largely as a police force in times of international conflict; in other words, its function has been restricted to trying to prevent peace and security from being upset. Its aim has been to maintain order, not to try to settle the dispute.

15. An objective analysis of past experience shows that while in the course of time the United Nations has gradually adapted its procedures and modes of action to the different types of critical situation that have arisen, nothing has been done in the Organization to devise new approaches to peaceful solutions or to improve on the existing ones.

16. True, there has been no world conflict, but there has been an uneasy peace, with arms at the ready. This hard fact suggests that in the matter of the peaceful settlement of disputes the United Nations has not lived up to the hopes placed in it at the time when it was set up. In a general way peace has been maintained, but the sources of conflict have not been disposed of, and the sense of insecurity among States persists. The only way to achieve permanent security is to find permanent solutions to the conflicts that arise.

17. It is not that the Charter's structure has neglected the means of peaceful settlement. On the contrary, they loom large within the system established in 1945 to ensure collective security. The problem is that in the sphere of peaceful settlement of disputes the Charter did not modify the system that obtained before the Second World War. The philosophy of the Charter was based essentially on the prohibition of the use of force in international relations, and that was its major advance, its major innovation in relation to earlier security arrangements. But to complete

the evolutionary process we must move on to a positive stage and try to devise new methods of settling disputes.

18. This new stage, the culmination of 24 years of experience, gives particular importance to the role that the United Nations and regional organs can play in this field of peaceful settlement. The Organization would be fulfilling to the letter the purposes and principles set forth in Chapter I of the Charter if an effort were made to improve the existing methods of finding peaceful solutions or to try to create new ones, or if the climate of confidence that must exist among Governments in regard to these measures could simply be strengthened.

19. In our opinion the conditions are being established for a resumption of the movement of ideas which, particularly at the beginning of the century, gave a fillip to the notion that international conflicts are capable of being solved without the need to resort to the threat or use of force. Following the same principle of supporting ideas that seem to us constructive we agree with other speakers that collective security can and must be strengthened not only at world level but also regionally.

20. It should be pointed out first of all that regional security pacts have generally speaking served a twofold purpose. On the one hand, they have helped to maintain peace in particular regions, and on the other they have given the States in the region a sense of security and protection deriving from the promise of mutual assistance in the face of outside pressures and threats.

21. Thus, recognition of such regional pacts on the basis of the principle of self-defence laid down in the Charter has effectively helped to maintain the security structure on a solid foundation. As the story of San Francisco shows, this was the vital contribution by the Latin American States to the establishment of the new machinery for international security after the Second World War. However, such regional systems of collective security do involve certain difficulties and problems which are worth pointing out.

22. A system of regional collective security must in no way imply a closed shop or rule out the possibility for States parties to such security pacts to have recourse to the world body if they do not find adequate safeguards within the regional scheme. That has been my country's traditional attitude, based on the application of the relevant Articles of the Charter and the regional agreement to which it is a party. This is not the moment to go into the details of the problem, but we do feel we must emphasize that in our view no State can be denied the right to appeal to the Organization if it does not feel its security guaranteed in the regional sphere.

23. Another idea I would like to emphasize, one that seems to us to be of the utmost importance, is that a regional security agreement cannot in any circumstances become an instrument by which a great Power can dominate other States parties to the agreement. A great Power is secure in itself, because of its own strength. A lesser Power can only base its security nowadays on the undertaking by other States to assist it in case of need. The entire purpose may be defeated if great Powers which are parties to such instruments of regional collective security use them for their own ends and to dominate the rest.

24. Collective security, especially at the regional level, must be based on the mutual respect of all the parties as equal partners. Nothing could defeat their purpose more effectively than to be used precisely to create a false sense of security based on the rule of the strong over the weak. We are fully in favour of the strengthening of collective security, but we are also in favour of self-defence for the sovereignty of all States and their right to establish their political and social systems in the light of their own circumstances and their own wishes.

25. Within this framework we are also concerned at the thought of the strengthening of collective security at world level taking place at the expense of the legitimate interests of medium-sized and small States. Among the most manifest proofs of this trend are the agreements reached among themselves by the States possessing the greatest power, and submitted virtually for rubber-stamping to the rest of the international community. We are not trying to ignore the hard fact that at the various levels of international life some are stronger than others. What we are concerned about is the idea of a double standard being established for dealing with the problems that affect us all.

26. Here in the First Committee we said on one occasion that the modern trend is towards disarmament for the disarmed, while those most responsible for the maintenance of peace persist in their armaments policy. We realize that for the great Powers this is the result of international tension, but we realize too that for the small Powers, arms are the reflection of their feeling of helplessness and powerlessness in the state of insecurity in which they find themselves.

27. That is why for my delegation another question very closely linked with the strengthening of international security is disarmament. Although the Argentine Government gives due credit for the efforts made up to now, we are conscious of the fact that the progress made has been incidental and its effect on this fundamental problem of the contemporary world only indirect.

28. It is no exaggeration to say that we have alarming evidence of the destructive capacity created by man and that it is easy to imagine this gloomy picture becoming even more gloomy in the near future as new and more powerful weapons and means of destruction are developed through the astonishing scientific and technical advances of today. In this connexion we need only read the Secretary-General's report of 1 July last on chemical and bacteriological weapons, in which the prospects described are terrifying.<sup>1</sup>

29. No one, surely, can doubt that putting a curb on the arms race will strengthen international security if we seriously want to prevent complex weapon systems from being produced and making the balance of terror even more precarious. We hope, with such vestiges of hope that remain, that serious discussions will start on general and complete disarmament. The international community awaits this move by the countries which bear the primary responsibility for peace-keeping, and for this reason we are glad to hear that on 17 November next at Helsinki the

United States and the Soviet Union will embark on preliminary discussions with a view to curbing the arms race.

30. A century and a half ago, the national security of a State depended exclusively on its individual capacity to equip itself with means of offensive and defensive warfare. The political events of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gradually brought to light the need to set up new security systems of a collective type based on reciprocal guarantees given by States or groups of States in regard to their respective territories and political independence. As soon as that need was recognized, the international community began to seek the most effective means of protecting its members on the basis of collective security and through various world-wide or regional instruments.

31. In the modern world, the idea of collective security is the main factor prompting States to come together in international organizations. For its defence against danger from outside, each State Member of the Organization today relies not only on its own strength and that of its friends and allies but also on the co-operation of all the other States. By its very nature the present system is reciprocal and every one should benefit from the safeguards it affords.

32. At this stage, therefore, we must make every effort to strengthen our collective security. The United Nations was established not simply to reflect world problems but to take action to solve them. Politics is also the art of making possible tomorrow what seems impossible today.

33. Mr. AGUILAR (Venezuela) (*translated from Spanish*): Mr. Chairman, my delegation abides by your decision to dispense with the usual congratulations and tributes paid to the officers. But we must endorse the Committee's good sense in choosing a person of your ability and experience to direct our work. We are also gratified at the election of your fellow officers.

34. Mr. Benites of Ecuador, faithfully interpreting the feelings of the Latin American countries, has already eloquently expressed the grief felt by our Governments and peoples at the death of Mr. Mongi Slim. But our admiration for the distinguished statesman who has just died and the friendship and sympathy we feel for Tunisia prompt us to associate ourselves particularly with the moving and just tribute paid to his memory by the Committee through you, Mr. Chairman, and other speakers at the 1665th meeting last Friday. He was an eminent statesman and a diplomat dedicated to the cause of peace and international co-operation; but he was above all a great patriot who did not hesitate to sacrifice his peace of mind and his freedom for the independence of his country.

35. In the United Nations Mr. Mongi Slim's contribution to the great task of building up a new international society is well known. With his death the Organization and the international community generally have lost one of their noblest and most stalwart figures. We ask the delegation of Tunisia to accept these words of condolence and to convey our sympathy to the Government and people of Tunisia and to the family of the deceased.

36. As other speakers have already emphasized, the question of international security is of special concern to

<sup>1</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24.

the small Powers. The independence of the weaker countries in the past was due rather to their isolation, their poverty, or the tacit or express agreement of rival Powers, than to the respect of the great Powers for their right to create separate and distinct entities in the international community.

37. Recognition of this right only came about in the Americas after a long and bloody struggle. Almost a century elapsed before the majority of the European countries acquired the right. Asia, Africa and the peoples of the Pacific islands and the Caribbean had to wait until the end of the Second World War before their lawful claim to independence was met; and the process of decolonization is not yet completed either there or in other parts of the world.

38. And to tell the truth, this independence has been and still is very relative. If a few small countries of Europe and America were able to preserve their political independence in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, it was because of rivalries among the great Powers. But that shaky independence was limited in practice by the need of the majority of such countries to seek their security in the friendship and protection of one of the great Powers. Inevitably, rival blocs were formed which sooner or later confronted one another on the battlefield.

39. The present situation is unfortunately not very different. The illusion cherished by the States emerging victorious from the Second World War that they could maintain peace and security through the joint action of the five great Powers that were permanent members of the Security Council was short-lived. In due course they reverted to the old system of balance of power, a system potentially even more dangerous to the world because of the appearance and spread of nuclear weapons.

40. World security based on this system depends on the deterrent strength of the nuclear Powers, including the two so-called super-Powers, which possess weapons capable of obliterating every vestige of life from the face of the earth. Carried to its logical conclusion, this leads to polarization and the rebirth of the discredited theory of the division of the world into spheres of influence to which the medium-sized and small Powers would be relegated, not by their own choice but out of geographical and economic necessity.

41. It is argued that this balance of power and division of the world into blocs is a fact of life that makes it necessary to leave the major decisions in the hands of the United States and the Soviet Union, so that everything depends on the easing of tension, and on peaceful coexistence between the two Powers. The role of the rest of the members of the international community, according to this way of thinking, would be that of passive spectators of the dialogue. We cannot of course ignore the fact that in present circumstances the absence of a world conflict does depend on their agreement; but what we cannot admit is that this is the real solution to the problems of peace and security in the world.

42. History teaches us that the contrary is true. The policy of blocs not only did not prevent, but actually brought

about two world wars, to mention only recent events; and while in the last 24 years there has been no war on a world scale, more out of mutual fear of mass destruction than out of a genuine will to live in peace, there have been and are armed conflicts in various parts of the world—bloody wars which in the jargon of the day are described as localized conflicts even though those same super-Powers are directly or indirectly participants in them. These indirect or peripheral confrontations, this testing of the will or strength of the different parties, make peace impossible and potentially could cause a world conflagration.

43. To put it briefly, such peace and security as exist in the world depend almost exclusively on the balance of power between the super-Powers and their will to work together. This policy based on force is complicated by the divergencies of contrasting and apparently irreconcilable ideologies and social and economic systems, especially if the latter are based on convictions which belong almost as much to the religious as to the scientific or practical sphere.

44. Then there is the fact that the maintenance of this uneasy balance requires, as is well known, vast investments in means of attack or defence which scientific and technological advances rapidly render antiquated and un-serviceable. Thus human resources which could be used to eliminate pockets of poverty existing even in highly industrial countries are squandered in unproductive spending. The only solution to these problems of peace and security is a new international order based on law and not on force.

45. The purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, as embodied in a large number of international instruments adopted by the Organization in the 24 years since it was founded are an appropriate basis for establishing this new international order.

46. Thus essential prerequisites for peace and security are: the elimination of discrimination among men, including discrimination based on race, colour, sex, religion, language or social status; in a more general way, the effective enjoyment of human rights; the elimination of discrimination among States based on their size or level of development; co-operation among all nations on the basis of international social justice with a view to promoting universal well-being; and of course respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. The effective application of these principles is the only real basis of international security. That based on the perpetuation of injustice and inequality is an illusion; true peace necessarily implies justice.

47. In the light of all this, the delegation of Venezuela is ready to support any reaffirmation of the principles of the Charter provided it is clear, precise and unequivocal. We join with those delegations which have expressed thanks to the Soviet delegation for its initiative [A/7654] and its contribution to the discussion of this important item. However, after carefully studying the Soviet draft, we have reached the conclusion that as at present worded it is confusing and likely to be misinterpreted, especially in respect of two matters of paramount importance for Venezuela: the function of regional security systems, and the principle of non-intervention. We will concentrate on

these two points, reserving the right to express our views on other aspects of the Soviet draft on another occasion.

48. Venezuela is a party to the 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, also known as the Treaty of Rio,<sup>2</sup> and a member of the Organization of American States. Both have proved useful on various occasions in maintaining peace and promoting coexistence on the American continent. While our regional system is far from satisfactory, it has been gradually improving, and on balance its results have been on the positive side.

49. Thus we have no doubt that regional systems are instruments capable of being used in the cause of peace, with the proviso that they must always function in harmony with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and in conformity with the provisions of the Charter. But like any other instrument, they can be used well or badly.

50. They are used badly when they try to set up a structure calculated to give a country or group of countries hegemony over others. They are used badly when their members are not at liberty to quit the group if they so decide of their sovereign will. They are used badly if their purpose is to ensure that situations involving injustices between or within Member States remain unchanged. They are used badly if their effect is to perpetuate situations at variance with the right of peoples to govern themselves as they think fit and to change their Government or system of government on the basis of the popular will freely expressed.

51. If we are to make an appeal in favour of setting up regional systems of security, my delegation considers it indispensable that it must be formulated with the utmost clarity and not leave any room for doubt as to its interpretation. In particular we want it to be clearly spelled out that whatever the circumstances, whatever excuse or justification may be adduced, individual or collective interference in the affairs of a State is a direct violation of the Charter of the United Nations and a challenge to the very principle of international coexistence. Force can only be used lawfully in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

52. Venezuela considers that one of the essential bases for establishing true peace in the world is genuine freedom of decision on the part of every one of the States making up the international community, it being understood that the term "free will" can properly be used of a State only when it is the result of the will, likewise freely expressed, of the individuals constituting the nation. A regional system will have to be judged, in the final analysis, by whether it promotes and guarantees those freedoms or whether it does the opposite and establishes or perpetuates the domination of certain States by others or, within a State, of the majority by minority groups—political, economic, professional, racial or religious. We therefore find ourselves obliged to oppose firmly any text which indirectly, by implication, by omission or by ambiguity is likely to weaken in any way the full force of the principle of non-intervention.

<sup>2</sup> Signed at Rio de Janeiro on 2 September 1947 (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 21 (1948), No. 324 (a)).

53. We all realize that the proclamation of an international principle or norm is no guarantee that it will be accepted in practice. It frequently happens that the struggle to secure the recognition of a given principle is only a minute part of the struggle to see it actually put into practice; and even when this happens, constant vigilance is needed to prevent its being violated.

54. Hence we are anxious not to be thought of as dreamers, confusing theoretical formulations with their concrete implementation, and thinking that problems are solved by declarations of good intentions. But what we do believe, what seems to us perfectly obvious, is that while the existence of recognized principles certainly does not guarantee the disappearance of abuses, the lack or weakening of principles makes such abuses inevitable. It is for this eminently practical reason that Venezuela feels itself obliged to be particularly vigorous in the defence of these principles.

55. The central theme of all international efforts by the Latin American countries ever since they gained their independence has been the struggle to secure acceptance by the great Powers of the principle of non-intervention; for through the whole of the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth century we were constantly the victims of the abuse of superior strength. The blockading and bombing of Venezuela's ports by European Powers led to the formulation of the Drago doctrine prohibiting the use of force for the recovery of debts, which finally took hold at the beginning of the present century.

56. The absolute principle of non-intervention could not be established in the American continent until 1933, when it was finally recognized by the United States. Before this momentous event took place we had suffered occupation, territorial mutilation and every conceivable kind of abuse involving the use or threat of force at the hands of the major Powers of the time.

57. Thus when we speak of the defence of the principle of non-intervention we are not indulging in oratory or metaphysical speculation. Our scars remind us of what the world was like when brute force held sway, backed up and legalized by what was then called the "international law of civilized peoples".

58. It was only after the Second World War, more than a decade after it had been proclaimed on our continent, that the principle of non-intervention began to gain world-wide recognition. It was not found possible to have the principle explicitly included in the Charter signed at San Francisco, and its express and unequivocal formulation had to wait until 1965 and the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2131 (XX).

59. As it is, the principle has frequently been violated on the pretext of protecting the lives and property of the nationals of the intervening State; on allegedly humanitarian grounds; or in order to maintain, impose or replace régimes or systems of government on the argument that the régimes or Governments in question reflect or do not reflect the wishes and the interests of the people of the State encroached upon. We condemn this and all other kinds of intervention, wherever they may occur.

60. We have part in this debate, Mr. Chairman, in a constructive spirit and without prejudices of any kind, in the conviction that only minds open to frank discussion can lead us in the right direction. We do not fool ourselves into believing that by means of appeals, declarations or resolutions we can solve this complex problem once and for all. Good ideas sometimes take a long time to crystallize and sink home, and nothing facilitates and shortens this process like the dispassionate discussion of the differences which separate people and the common ground between them. In any case, we prefer faith, even naive faith, to sterile scepticism, for sooner or later reason will prevail and mankind will find the ways and means of organizing and establishing a world community based on law and justice.

#### *Organization of work*

61. The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning, I should like to make the following remarks about our programme of work. The Committee will, it is hoped, conclude the general debate on the present item "The strengthening of international security" at tomorrow morning's meeting. At the conclusion of the general debate the Committee should normally proceed with the consideration of the draft appeal submitted by the Soviet Union, contained in document A/C.1/L.468. However, in view of the fact that consultations are going on among delegations concerning the Soviet draft, it is suggested that immediately upon the conclusion of the general debate, the Committee proceed to take up the next item on its agenda. It will return to the consideration of the item on international security as soon as the consultations to which I have referred are completed. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

*It was so decided.*

62. The CHAIRMAN: Accordingly, tomorrow afternoon the Committee will take up the invitation aspects of the question of Korea. It is my hope that we shall be able to conclude that item on Wednesday and be in a position to

take up the next item "Report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor Beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction" on Thursday.

63. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Ceylon): Mr. Chairman, I should like to draw your attention to the suggestion that I made at the very commencement of the meetings of the First Committee [1651st meeting] with regard to the possibility or the necessity of holding a special meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor to consider the proposals that are to come from the Disarmament Committee in Geneva. I understand that those proposals will not be known to the members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor until the end of this month.

64. I would therefore wish to suggest that although the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor is scheduled to meet after the completion of the discussion by the First Committee of the invitation aspects of the Korean item, the Chairman should take into consideration the necessity for interrupting the proceedings of the First Committee on the item related to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor to enable that Committee to meet in order to discuss the demilitarization aspects of the sea-bed on which we expect proposals to come from the Disarmament Committee.

65. The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Ambassador of Ceylon for his statement. I shall bear his observations in mind and I shall be glad to consult with the interested delegations in that regard. I hope to consult with him as to how best we may proceed with the conclusion of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and also enable that Committee to take up for consideration the demilitarization or denuclearization aspects of the sea-bed treaty.

*The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.*