

REPORT
OF THE *AD HOC* COMMITTEE
ON THE INDIAN OCEAN

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY - THIRD SESSION
SUPPLEMENT No. 29 (A/33/29)



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NOTE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By resolution 32/86 of 12 December 1977, the General Assembly renewed its invitation to the great Powers and other major maritime users of the Indian Ocean that had not so far seen their way to co-operating effectively with the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to enter with the least possible delay into consultations with the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean in pursuance of paragraphs 3 and 4 of General Assembly resolution 3468 (XXX) of 11 December 1975; decided that, as the next step towards the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean, a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean be convened in New York at a suitable date, which other States not falling within this category, but which had participated or had expressed their willingness to participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, could attend; requested the Ad Hoc Committee to make the necessary preparations for that meeting; renewed the general mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee as defined in the relevant resolution; and requested the Ad Hoc Committee to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session a full report on its work.

2. The Ad Hoc Committee reconvened on 10 April 1978 and held eight formal meetings (A/AC.159/SR.52-59) as well as a number of informal meetings at United Nations Headquarters between that date and 29 September 1978.

3. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/86, the membership of the Ad Hoc Committee was enlarged by the addition of five members: Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, Greece, Mozambique and Oman. As a result, the composition of the Committee is now as follows: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen and Zambia.

4. The elected officers of the Ad Hoc Committee served as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Biyagama Jayasena Fernando (Sri Lanka);

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Wisber Loeis (Indonesia);

Rapporteur: Mr. Henri Rasolondraibe and his successor,

Mr. Jacques Solo Rason (Madagascar).

II. CONSULTATIONS WITH THE GREAT POWERS

5. In accordance with the Ad Hoc Committee's decision taken at its 39th meeting on 18 April 1977, the Chairman of the Committee continued his consultations with the great Powers principally concerned, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, with a view to ascertaining the status of their bilateral talks regarding their military presence in the Indian Ocean and in order to discuss with them the co-operation they would give the Committee in the discharge of its functions.

6. At the Committee's 54th meeting on 25 September 1978, the Chairman reported on the results of his consultations with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America. At the request of a number of delegations the Committee decided that the Chairman's report should appear in the Committee's report in extenso.

7. The following is the text of the Chairman's report on his consultations:

"There had been proposals put forward by the great Powers for an agreement aimed at limitation of their military activities in the Indian Ocean as set out in the note dated 21 December 1977 relating to the talks between the great Powers. At that time it was reported that the talks were positive and both sides shared the view that achieving such an agreement would be in their mutual interests and would also further the relaxation of international tensions and strengthen peace and security in the Indian Ocean. Subsequently, on 1 March 1978, the great Powers informed me that there has been a certain measure of agreement on a number of questions, including the desirability of a staged approach beginning with an agreement not to increase current military presence and moving on promptly to negotiations on reduction. However, the present position is at least a temporary set-back to the hopes we had as of March 1978.

"The last communication received was a note, delivered by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on 1 March 1978, containing a text agreed upon by the two sides, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This note covered talks held between the two sides at Berne from 7 to 17 February 1978. The text of the note which was conveyed to the Ad Hoc Committee is contained in document A/AC.159/SR.52. As you may recall, the last sentence of the note stated 'The date of subsequent meetings of the two delegations will be fixed by mutual agreement'.

"The Group of Non-Aligned States, many of whom are littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, met at the level of Foreign Ministers at Belgrade from 25 to 30 July. The situation in the Indian Ocean and the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace adopted by the General Assembly in 1971 (resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971) was among the subjects upon which they deliberated. And, in considering that subject, they also reviewed the state of the bilateral talks between the

United States and the Soviet Union. And, from the Declaration of the Foreign Ministers' meeting at Belgrade I quote the part dealing specifically with those bilateral talks:

'While noting that the talks aimed at limitation of their military presence in the Indian Ocean have been initiated by the great Powers, the Conference emphasized their limited scope and nature as they did not go far enough towards meeting the objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The Ministers also expressed disappointment over the fact that even in these limited talks there was an apparent lack of progress. They called upon the great Powers to enlarge the scope of their talks and to enter into negotiations with the littoral and hinterland States with a view to fulfilling the objectives of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 2832.' (A/33/206, annex I, para. 139).

"During the discussions concerning this subject in the Political Committee at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries, I received, in my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, several inquiries from Member States as to the present status of the bilateral talks between the United States and the USSR. I notified them that, as far as I was informed, there had been no talks since the bilateral talks held from 7 to 17 February 1978. Great disappointment was expressed at the fact that these talks had not been held for such a long period of time. I agreed to convey these expressions of concern to the two sides.

"I met with the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union on 21 August 1978, and the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States on 22 August 1978. I apprised them of the contents of the Belgrade Declaration pertaining to the Indian Ocean, and the bilateral talks in particular. I also conveyed to both of them the expressions of concern on the part of several non-aligned States, at the lack of progress in the bilateral talks. The Deputy Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union, with whom I discussed this subject, explained his country's views. And on 14 September 1978 he conveyed in a note the following views of his Government, which I quote:

'In continuation of the talk which we had in August we would like to point out the following:

'As long as bilateral United States-USSR talks followed their normal course, a certain progress was achieved and there were reasons to look forward to further constructive development of this matter. Despite the fact that many questions remained unresolved, the degree of progress made at the talks attested to the feasibility of an agreement on:

- (a) The "freezing" of military presence of the USSR and the United States in the Indian Ocean at the level of recent years;
- (b) Refraining from the deployment of strategic forces in the Indian Ocean;

- (c) Negotiations on reduction of military presence and military activities of non-littoral States upon coming into force of the agreement on the "freezing".

'This was worthwhile progress. And only due to the position taken by the United States, which one-sidedly suspended the talks and refused to fix even an approximate date for their resumption, further progress was not possible until now.'

"The Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States, with whom I discussed this subject, said that he would transmit to his capital what I had conveyed to him. And subsequently, on 22 September, the United States Mission informed me of its position, which once again I quote:

'President Carter has recently reiterated United States interest in an Indian Ocean arms limitation agreement.

'The United States continues to believe that such an agreement would promote peace and stability in the region and would be in the interest of all States concerned. We believe this view is shared by many members of the Committee.

'Unfortunately recent events in the region, not caused by the United States, have resulted in a slowdown in the course of the negotiations.

'The United States believes it important that while the talks are in progress both the United States and the Soviet Union exercise restraint in their military activities in the region. This would have a positive impact on the course of the negotiations.

'For its part the United States remains committed to the goals of the negotiations. We are keeping the situation under careful consideration and will seek to resume the talks when the circumstances are appropriate.'

"Thus, there is an obvious set-back in the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. I hope this would be temporary and talks between them would be resumed at an early date in accordance with our commitment to this problem."

8. Commenting on the Chairman's report, one member stated that the countries and peoples of the Indian Ocean region urgently desired the establishment of the Indian Ocean peace zone. The work in the Ad Hoc Committee, however, had proceeded very slowly - the fundamental obstacle lay in the rivalry and expansion of the two super-Powers in that region. The "so-called" bilateral negotiations on limiting their military forces in the Indian Ocean region were "just another form of intense rivalry", and "a fraud aimed at deceiving and diverting" world public opinion. The development of events over the past year had further proved this. In particular, the Soviet Union had greatly accelerated its pace in carrying out aggression and expansion in the region. It had resorted to both hard and soft tactics, using every possible trick to infiltrate, subvert, interfere in and control the Horn of Africa, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf areas, seriously threatening the sovereignty, independence, peace and security of the countries

concerned. Social imperialism was the most destructive factor to the peace and security of the Indian Ocean region. The realization of the goal of establishing the Indian Ocean peace zone required the condemnation of and opposition to the rivalry and expansion of the two super-Powers in the region.

9. Referring to the bilateral talks, another member stated that the talks between the two great Powers could be attributed, at least in part, to the pressure exerted on them and the climate created following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI) and subsequent resolutions. Unfortunately, those talks had been suspended and had not been conducted in a manner best calculated to achieve their purpose. If the littoral and hinterland States were not involved, the full weight of their opinion could not be brought to bear on the negotiations. Another limitation was that the inter se concerns of the countries involved in the talks had had more influence than the concerns of the Indian Ocean States. The non-aligned countries had mentioned that the scope of the talks was limited and designed to stabilize the military presence rather than to eliminate it. The delegation further pointed out that it was drawing attention to the nature of those talks because of the implications they had for the timely and early convening of the meeting, and in order that the meeting might proceed expeditiously in preparing for the conference.

10. Another delegation said it had welcomed the initiation of the talks. This was a major step forward. The delegation hoped that the talks could lead to measures contributing ultimately to the realization of the objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The delegation regretted the circumstances which had led to the suspension of those talks.

III. PREPARATIONS PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPHS 3 AND 4
OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 32/86

11. At its 52nd meeting on 10 April 1978, on a proposal by Sri Lanka, supported by other delegations, the Committee decided to request its Chairman to transmit a letter to all members of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, soliciting their views concerning a suitable date for the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States as well as suggestions regarding its duration, purpose, provisional agenda or any other aspects which might be considered to be relevant. Accordingly, such a letter was transmitted to the members concerned, on 28 April 1978. Replies to the Chairman's letter were received from the following countries: Australia, Burma, China, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen. (For the substance of the replies, see annex.)
12. With regard to the date of the Meeting, the majority of views indicated that the preferred date for the Meeting was 1979.
13. During the course of the Committee's deliberations on this subject at its session in September 1978, several delegations expressed their preference for holding the Meeting in mid-1979. Other delegations emphasized that in taking a decision regarding the date, it was necessary to ensure that sufficient time would be available for adequate preparations.
14. In their replies to the Chairman's letter of 28 April, as well as during the Committee's deliberations, various delegations addressed themselves, among other issues, to those dealing with the purposes and agenda of the proposed Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States.
15. With respect to the purpose of the Meeting, there seemed to be a wide measure of agreement that the primary purpose of such a meeting should be to harmonize the views and positions of the littoral and hinterland States and to obtain a common understanding on the course of action to be followed in implementing the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. Several delegations particularly emphasized this view.
16. One member, in addition, stressed that the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States should have as its primary purpose the elaboration of measures required to establish a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. These measures should cover the following elements: (a) elimination of great Power rivalry and military presence from the Indian Ocean; (b) prohibition of nuclear weapons from the Indian Ocean and the territory of its littoral States; and (c) arrangements to ensure a climate of security and peace within the Indian Ocean region.
17. Another member recalled that the 1971 Declaration owed its origin to the Lusaka summit meeting of the non-aligned countries, 1/ which took this initiative

1/ Third Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lusaka from 8 to 10 September 1970.

in pursuance of one of the fundamental principles of the non-aligned countries, namely, that countries belonging to the region should not get involved in big Power rivalry and should not become members of the alliances and pacts conceived in the context of such rivalries. It was also important that the basic purpose of the Declaration, that is, elimination of the threat posed to the security of the littoral and hinterland States by big Power presence and military rivalry, should be the main focus while preparing for the Meeting and the Conference. Any attempt to introduce extraneous matters into the preparatory work or the work of the Committee itself would detract from the main purpose of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The members of the Committee had a common problem, and their first priority should be to face that problem. If they became involved instead in their inter se differences and conflicts they would lose sight of that common problem. They would thus be responsible for the perpetuation of the threat to their security, and would enter an area of wide controversy and debate. Although the delegation was sensitive to the other factors that determined peace and security in the region, it felt that there were other forums for the discussion of those matters.

18. Whereas a number of delegations referred to the question of the agenda of the meeting in only general terms, some delegations elaborated on specific issues.

19. One delegation stated that the preliminary Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States should endeavour to secure the acceptance of the Declaration by all nuclear Powers and all major maritime users of the Indian Ocean and that, to that end, the Ad Hoc Committee should explore the possibilities of drawing up in outline form a programme of action to serve as a working paper of the preparatory meeting with a view to eventual endorsement by the Conference on the Indian Ocean.

20. Another delegation observed that the agenda of the Meeting should include a review of the main developments of the proposal to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace since it was first mooted at the United Nations in 1971. In addition, there should be a discussion of a programme of action to implement the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, including the special obligations of the littoral and hinterland States. Furthermore, the Meeting should decide on the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean not later than 1980.

21. One member envisaged that the preliminary Meeting would have to devote itself, among other things, to defining in more precise terms the Indian Ocean zone of peace concept, its scope and delimitation, the obligations and responsibilities of the littoral and hinterland States as well as those of the great Powers and major maritime users of the Indian Ocean and to considering ways and means to promote conditions of security so as to strengthen the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States in the area.

22. At the Committee's 52nd meeting on 10 April 1978, the Ad Hoc Committee received a suggestion from the delegation of Indonesia that the Committee consider the possibility of establishing a working group, or a standing group of the Committee which, between meetings of the main Committee, could monitor developments and keep members informed accordingly, provide analytical information for the guidance of the members to facilitate decision-making on relevant issues and perhaps render assistance in the preparatory work for the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States.

23. Supporting the Indonesian proposal, the view was expressed that there was

considerable merit in the establishment of a standing group which, among other things, would also have the task of preparing the agenda for the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States.

24. After a considerable discussion on the subject, the Committee, at its 55th meeting on 26 September 1978, decided that during the preparatory process as well as while the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States was in session, informal working groups could be set up for this purpose when necessary

IV. OTHER MATTERS

A. Expansion of the Committee's Bureau

25. At the Committee's 52nd meeting, on 10 April 1978, the delegation of Indonesia made a proposal that the Committee consider the enlargement of its Bureau by the appointment of an additional vice-chairman, with a view to ensuring the smoother functioning of the Committee. On a suggestion from Pakistan, the Committee decided to fill the post of the additional vice-chairman from among the African States members of the Committee. In that context, a number of delegations expressed their views regarding the criteria of equitable geographical distribution and held the view that they saw practical value in the suggestion that the additional vice-chairman should come from an African State. At its subsequent meeting, on 25 September 1978, the Committee decided that the additional vice-chairman should be elected from among members of the African group of countries and that the Chairman of the Committee should consult the Chairman of the African group regarding a candidate for the post and report back to the Committee accordingly. The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee was informed that as soon as a decision was taken, it would be transmitted to the Committee. Accordingly, the Committee decided that the election of the additional vice-chairman would be deferred until the Committee received the appropriate communication from the African group.

B. Letter from the Chairman

26. At the Committee's 55th meeting on 26 September 1978, the Committee decided to request its Chairman to send a letter to the littoral and hinterland States concerned, urging them to communicate their views expeditiously on the relevant aspects of the proposed Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean.

C. Addition to the list of littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean

27. As regards the list of littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, Djibouti, Comoros and Seychelles were added to the list contained in annex 1 to the Ad Hoc Committee's 1973 report to the General Assembly. 2/

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/9029), annex I, para. 5. See also ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/10029), para. 29.

V. RECOMMENDATION OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE
ON THE INDIAN OCEAN

28. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean unanimously recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean
as a Zone of Peace

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, contained in its resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, and recalling also its resolutions 2992 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 3080 (XXVIII) of 6 December 1973, 3259 A (XXIX) of 9 December 1974, 3468 (XXX) of 11 December 1975, 31/88 of 14 December 1976, 32/86 of 12 December 1977 and S-10/2 of 30 June 1978,

Encouraged by the continued support extended to the Declaration by the Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Havana from 15 to 20 May 1978, 3/ and by the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade from 25 to 30 July 1978, 4/

Reaffirming its conviction that concrete action in furtherance of the objectives of the Declaration would be a substantial contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security,

Deeply concerned at the intensification of great Power military presence, conceived in the context of great Power rivalry, leading to an increase of tension in the area,

Considering that the continued military presence of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean, conceived in the context of great Power rivalry, with the danger of a competitive escalation of such a military presence, gives greater urgency to the need to take practical steps for the early implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace,

Considering also that the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean requires co-operation among the regional States to ensure conditions of peace and security within the region, as envisaged in the Declaration, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the littoral and hinterland States,

Further considering that at its special session devoted to disarmament, it noted the proposal for establishing the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, taking into

3/ See A/33/118.

4/ See A/33/206.

account the deliberations of the General Assembly and its relevant resolutions the need to ensure the maintenance of peace and security in the region. 5/

Noting that talks were initiated between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America regarding their military presence in the Indian Ocean, and that the two countries have kept the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean informed of the current situation concerning these talks,

Regretting, however, that the talks are suspended,

Recalling its resolution 32/86, in which it decided that a Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean be convened in New York at a suitable date,

1. Urges that the talks between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America regarding their military presence in the Indian Ocean be resumed without delay;

2. Renews its invitation to the great Powers and other major maritime users of the Indian Ocean that have not so far seen their way to co-operating effectively with the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean to enter with the least possible delay into consultations with the Committee about the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace;

3. Takes note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee 6/ and in particular section III concerning the steps taken towards making the necessary preparations for holding a Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean;

4. Decides to convene a Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean in New York from 2 to 13 July 1979, as the next step towards the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean for the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace as contained in General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), such States being listed in the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth, 7/ thirtieth, 8/ and thirty-third sessions, 9/ and decides that other States not falling within this category, but which have participated or have expressed their willingness to participate in the work of the Committee, could attend, upon the invitation of the Committee;

5/ Resolution S-10/2, para. 64 (b).

6/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/33/29).

7/ Ibid., Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/9029), annex I, para. 5.

8/ Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/10029), para. 29.

9/ Ibid., Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/33/29), para. 27.

5. Decides that the Ad Hoc Committee, performing the functions of a preparatory committee, will make the necessary preparations for convening a Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States and that the Committee will set up informal working groups for this purpose when necessary;

6. Requests the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States to submit its report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary provision, including the essential background information, relevant documentation and summary records or, as required, verbatim records, as necessary, for the Meeting referred to in paragraph 4 above, and to continue to render all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Committee, including the provision of summary records;

8. Renews the general mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee as defined in the relevant resolutions;

9. Requests the Ad Hoc Committee to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session a full report on its work.

ANNEX

Substantive parts of replies to the letter dated 28 April 1978 from the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee

AUSTRALIA

Australia supports the convening of a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean as the next step towards holding a conference on the Indian Ocean. The meeting should arrive at a consensus on essential issues if a comprehensive basis for agreement at a full-scale conference with the great Powers and the major maritime users is to be reached. Adequate preparation prior to the meeting, therefore, is necessary and the meeting itself should take place not before mid-1979.

The tasks of preparation for the meeting should be conducted by the Ad Hoc Committee itself. For this purpose it could convene as a preparatory committee and determine the precise timing, duration and agenda for the meeting. To enable preparations to be thorough, it would be desirable for the Ad Hoc Committee to hold two sessions as a preparatory committee in the first half of 1979.

BURMA

The matter has been transmitted to the authorities in Burma for their attention.

CHINA

China has always supported without reservation any practical measures conducive to the realization of an Indian Ocean peace zone. Therefore, China fully supports the idea of holding a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean. With regard to the date, provisional agenda etc. for the said meeting, it is hoped that an agreement can be reached through friendly consultations among the littoral and hinterland States concerned.

ETHIOPIA

(a) A meeting of the littoral and hinterland States to be held in New York at an early date is a necessary step towards the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean. The central objective of the preparatory meeting should be to find ways and means of establishing a basis for agreement which would ensure the full implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

(b) An important development related to the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace has been the commencement of discussions between the USSR and the United States, the outcome of which could constitute a significant measure

for the full and complete implementation of the Declaration. The preliminary meetings of the littoral and hinterland States should, therefore, endeavour to secure the acceptance of the Declaration by the nuclear Powers and major maritime users of the Indian Ocean. To this end, the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee should explore the possibilities of drawing up, in outline form, a programme of action to serve as a working paper for the preparatory meetings with a view to eventual endorsement by the conference on the Indian Ocean.

(c) In our view, the duration and similar other aspects of the meeting could be decided upon after an agreement has been reached on the provisional agenda.

INDONESIA

Since the Indian Ocean was declared a zone of peace by General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), understanding and support for the objectives of the Declaration have increased, as reflected in the voting on past resolutions. In the light of these developments, the momentum generated should be transformed in such a way by the littoral and hinterland and other States concerned towards positive steps in the implementation of the Declaration.

In this connexion, the primary purpose of the meeting would be to harmonize the views and positions of the States concerned and to adopt guidelines or principles which would lead to the implementation of the Declaration.

Furthermore, my delegation is of the opinion that the agenda for the meeting should be flexible in order to reflect the purposes of the meeting.

It is the opinion of the Government of Indonesia that the meeting scheduled to be held in New York might be convened around the middle of 1979. A period of about three weeks would seem to be sufficient for the duration of the meeting.

JAPAN

My delegation supports the convening of a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean. However, it remains convinced that ample advanced preparations are needed to ensure the success of such a meeting and that, as a first step, the littoral and hinterland States concerned should work out an agreement on a suitable date for the convening of the proposed meeting, its purposes, provisional agenda and other relevant aspects. My delegation hopes that such an agreement can be reached among the littoral and hinterland States concerned.

KUWAIT

Any date would be suitable for a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean provided that it does not conflict with the work of important bodies such as the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament or the ordinary session of the General Assembly. The duration could be one week. The purpose of the meeting should be to resolve all issues pertaining to the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean. The provisional agenda could be formulated during the first session of the meeting.

MALAYSIA

My Government fully supports the convening of this preliminary meeting. We consider it to be a useful opportunity for the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean not only to take stock of recent developments in the area, but also to harmonize our views on all aspects in regard to the modalities for the implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The adoption of a common position on the various issues would certainly be very helpful in preparing for wider consultations with the big Powers and major maritime users of the Indian Ocean towards achieving the goals of the Declaration.

We envisage that the preliminary meeting would have to devote itself, among other things, to defining in more precise terms the Indian Ocean zone-of-peace concept, its scope and delimitation, the obligations and responsibilities of the littoral and hinterland States as well as those of the great Powers and major maritime users of the Indian Ocean and considering ways and means to promote conditions of security so as to strengthen the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States in the area.

Although we see the need for convening this preliminary meeting at an early date, we also do recognize that adequate preparations would have to be undertaken in order to ensure its success. It is for this reason that my delegation is in favour of the meeting taking place in 1979, perhaps in the month of May, for a duration of at least two weeks.

The preparation for this meeting could be entrusted to a smaller standing group or working group of the Committee. My delegation in this connexion sees considerable merits in the proposal submitted by the representative of Indonesia for the establishment of such a standing group which among other things would also have the task of preparing the agenda for the meeting.

As for the membership of this standing group, we are of the view that it should be comprised of members of the Bureau although we envisage that it could also be open-ended. For the purpose of making this group as widely representative as possible, it would be necessary to enlarge the Bureau to include one or two additional vice-chairmen and at the same time to appoint four other members from the Ad Hoc Committee on a regional geographical distribution basis. This would thus bring the total membership of the standing group to eight or nine.

We recognize that further consultations would be necessary regarding the terms of reference and composition of this standing group. At the same time we are also prepared to keep an open mind on other proposals that might be submitted to facilitate the preparations for the preliminary meeting.

PAKISTAN

The meeting of the littoral and hinterland States which is to be held under the terms of resolution 32/86 of the General Assembly should have as its primary purpose the elaboration of the measures required to establish a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. These measures should cover the following elements:

(a) Elimination of great Power rivalry and military presence from the Indian Ocean;

(b) Prohibition of nuclear weapons from the Indian Ocean and territory of its littoral States;

(c) Arrangements to ensure a climate of security and peace within the Indian Ocean region.

The steps required to eliminate great Power military rivalry and presence from the Indian Ocean are, by and large, outlined in the Declaration on this question adopted at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Measures for the prohibition of nuclear weapons would include firstly, a commitment by the nuclear Powers not to establish nuclear bases or introduce or station ships or submarines in the Indian Ocean and secondly, binding commitment by the non-nuclear weapon States bordering the Indian Ocean not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons.

As regards the creation of conditions of security within the Indian Ocean, which has been endorsed in the Programme of Action of the General Assembly's special session devoted to disarmament, a/ the following elements should be considered:

(a) A commitment to the basic principles of the United Nations Charter;

(b) Settlement of outstanding disputes on the basis of principles and the resolutions of the United Nations;

(c) The maintenance of a reasonable ratio in the naval and military forces of the littoral States.

Pakistan is of the view that this meeting of littoral and hinterland States should be held as soon as possible, perhaps in the early spring of 1979.

The participants in the meeting should include primarily all the littoral and hinterland States as well as other great Powers and major maritime users of the Ocean which agree to co-operate in the implementation of the peace-zone proposal in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. However, the question of the participation of States which do not clearly fall within any of the above categories should be left to the discretion of the meeting itself.

SOMALIA

The Government of the Somali Democratic Republic supports the convening of the conference on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. The purpose of the conference should cover: (a) the dismantling of all foreign bases in the Indian Ocean; (b) the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the littoral and hinterland States; (c) the prohibition of nuclear weapons from the Indian Ocean and the territory of the littoral and hinterland States; and (d) the prohibition of great Power rivalry and their military presence in the Indian Ocean in accordance with the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session.

a/ Resolution S-10/2, sect. III.

The Government of the Somali Democratic Republic is of the view that the meeting of littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean should be held as soon as possible. However, the date and venue of the meeting can be agreed upon in consultation with the members of the Ad Hoc Committee. Moreover, the preparations for the meeting should in the Somali Government's view be undertaken by the Ad Hoc Committee itself. But the secretariat of the Committee should be strengthened in order to meet the demand of the situation.

The participants of the meeting should be the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean. However, the question of the participation of States which do not fall within the above two categories should be decided upon by the meeting.

SRI LANKA

As you are aware, Sri Lanka was among the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI) which declared the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. Since then my delegation has watched the reiteration of this Declaration at successive General Assembly sessions with a mixture of satisfaction at the growing support for the concept and a sense of impatience with the slow progress which has been achieved in its implementation in a positive and practical manner. My delegation recognizes that this slow pace has been due mainly to a reluctance on the part of certain major Powers to co-operate with the Ad Hoc Committee in achieving the objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

The resolution adopted at the thirty-second session of the General Assembly, in our view, represents a positive development in that it embodies a decision to convene a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States to be held in New York at a suitable date.

Sri Lanka welcomes the convening of this meeting as an opportunity to reaffirm the fundamental principles of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, an occasion to discuss and obtain agreement among the littoral and hinterland States on the course of action to be followed in implementing the Declaration and to prepare for a conference on the Indian Ocean. My delegation proposes that the meeting of the littoral and hinterland States should be of one week's duration and should be held in the first half of 1979, preferably in May of that year. The level of representation should be no less than of ambassadorial rank. It is proposed that the Ad Hoc Committee should convert itself into a preparatory committee for the meeting and hold discussions on framing the agenda. The agenda of the meeting should include a review of the main developments of the proposal to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace since it was first mooted at the United Nations in 1971. In addition, there should be a discussion of a programme of action to implement the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace including the special obligations of the littoral and hinterland States. Finally, the meeting should discuss the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean not later than 1980.

Sri Lanka is of the view that the success of the proposed meeting of the littoral and hinterland States is vital to the continuing efforts in the international arena to achieve disarmament, peace and stability and pledges to work in co-operation with all other countries towards achieving positive results from the meeting.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has consistently supported the convening of the conference on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. In view of the ever-increasing big Power rivalry in the Indian Ocean, Tanzania views the situation with great concern. It therefore welcomes the convening of a meeting of the littoral and hinterland States as soon as possible.

Tanzania views the proposed meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean as a forum for these States to harmonize their positions and agree on a common approach and stand. This would facilitate subsequent negotiations with the great Powers at a conference on the Indian Ocean whose purpose should be the implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. In this regard an agenda could be drawn up by a small preparatory committee bearing in mind the above purpose of the meeting.

It is suggested that the meeting could last from one to two weeks. A suitable date can be agreed upon in consultation with members of the Ad Hoc Committee. However, it is stressed that the meeting should be held as soon as possible, preferably not later than 1979.

YEMEN

Since no particular date has been set for the aforesaid meeting, I suggest that the meeting be convened in the middle of June 1979 for at least two weeks.

On this occasion, I draw your attention to our reservations which were made at the adoption of the General Assembly resolution 32/86, on paragraph 3 of the resolution, that the Zionist State of Israel would not be a party in any meeting of the Committee.

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