

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

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 29 (A/34/29)



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NOTE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By resolution 33/68 of 14 December 1978, the General Assembly urged 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; renewed 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 regarding the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace; decided 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 Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), such States being listed in the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth, 1/ thirtieth 2/ and thirty-third sessions, 3/ and decided 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; decided that the Ad Hoc Committee, performing the functions of a preparatory committee, would make the necessary preparations for convening the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean and that the Committee would set up informal working groups for this purpose when necessary; requested the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to submit its report to the Assembly at the thirty-fourth session; renewed the general mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee as defined in the relevant resolutions; and requested the Ad Hoc Committee to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session a full report on its work.

2. The Ad Hoc Committee met from 12 to 16 February, 12 to 16 March and 14 to 23 May 1979 to undertake preparatory work for the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, and from 3 to 19 October in a regular session, and held a total of 19 formal meetings (A/AC.159/SR.60-78) as well as 22 informal meetings at United Nations Headquarters during 1979.

3. The Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean held its session between 2 and 13 July 1979 at United Nations Headquarters and adopted its report 4/ containing the Final Document of the Meeting, embodying, inter alia, the recommendations of the Meeting, for submission to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/9029), annex I, para. 5.

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

3/ Ibid., Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/33/29 and Corr.1), para. 27.

4/ Ibid., Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 45 (A/34/45 and Corr.1).

4. The membership of the Ad Hoc Committee is as follows:

Australia	Madagascar
Bangladesh	Malaysia
China	Mauritius
Democratic Yemen	Mozambique
Ethiopia	Oman
Greece	Pakistan
India	Somalia
Indonesia	Sri Lanka
Iran	United Republic of
Iraq	Tanzania
Japan	Yemen
Kenya	Zambia

Panama attended meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee as an observer.

5. The elected officers of the Ad Hoc Committee were the following:

Chairman: Mr. Biyagama Jayasena Fernando (Sri Lanka);
Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Wisber Loeis (Indonesia) and
Mr. Hipolito Patricio (Mozambique);
Rapporteur: Mr. Henri Rasolondraibe (Madagascar).

6. In accordance with the Ad Hoc Committee's decision on 10 April 1978 to enlarge its bureau by the appointment of an additional Vice-Chairman, the Committee at its 75th meeting, on 3 October 1979, elected, by acclamation, Mr. Hipolito Patricio (Mozambique) to fill the post of the additional vice-chairmanship.

II. WORK OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE PERFORMING THE FUNCTIONS OF A PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

7. Pursuant to paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 33/68, the Ad Hoc Committee, performing the functions of a preparatory committee for the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, met at United Nations Headquarters in three preparatory sessions from 12 to 16 February, 12 to 16 March and 14 to 23 May 1979. 5/ During these three sessions the Committee held 15 formal and 18 informal meetings. In addition the Ad Hoc Committee established several working groups which met during the sessions as well as intersessionally.

8. The Ad Hoc Committee discussed all the relevant aspects of the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, including the purpose of the Meeting, the provisional agenda, the rules of procedure, the question of participation, the Final Document, as well as other issues which were considered to be relevant. The proceedings of the plenary meetings, including the views expressed by delegations, are contained in the summary records of the Ad Hoc Committee (A/AC.159/SR.60-74).

5/ For a full report of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, performing the functions of a preparatory committee for the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, see A/AC.199/1.

9. After extensive deliberations during the course of the preparatory work, the Ad Hoc Committee recommended to the Meeting for its adoption a provisional agenda (A/AC.199/2) and provisional rules of procedure (A/AC.199/3) and for its consideration a draft resolution embodying a draft Final Document of the Meeting (A/AC.199/4).

10. Furthermore, in the course of its preparatory work, the Ad Hoc Committee took decisions (see A/AC.199/1) on the following matters:

(a) Languages of the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean;

(b) Participation at the Meeting;

(c) Level of representation;

(d) Co-ordination and liaison functions of the bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee.

III. WORK OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE AT ITS REGULAR SESSION

11. The substantive recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly are set out in draft resolutions A and B proposed for adoption by the General Assembly, as contained in section V of this report.

A. Date and venue of the Conference on the Indian Ocean as called for in General Assembly resolution 33/68

12. The Ad Hoc Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly convene a conference on the Indian Ocean during 1981 at Colombo, Sri Lanka, for the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace as contained in Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI).

B. Expansion of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean

13. The Ad Hoc Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly:

(a) Enlarge the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean by the addition of new members to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee;

(b) Invite the permanent members of the Security Council and major maritime users of the Indian Ocean referred to in paragraph 12 (c) of the report of the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, that have not yet done so, to serve on the expanded Ad Hoc Committee.

C. Question of preparation for the Conference on the Indian Ocean, including consideration of appropriate arrangements for any international agreement that may ultimately be reached for the maintenance of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, as referred to in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI)

14. The Ad Hoc Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly request the Ad Hoc Committee:

(a) To undertake the preparatory work for the convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean, including consideration of appropriate arrangements for any international agreement that may ultimately be reached for the maintenance of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace as referred to in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI);

(b) To hold its preparatory sessions at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at least two such sessions, including the final one, in Mauritius.

IV. CONSULTATIONS WITH THE GREAT POWERS

15. 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.

16. At the 71st meeting of the Committee, on 14 May 1979, the Chairman reported that, as requested by the Committee, he had continued consultations with the United States and the Soviet Union and had urged them to resume their bilateral talks. He further reported that on 10 May 1979, the Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union had communicated to him the views of his Government as follows:

"1. The Soviet Union has been a consistent supporter of military détente everywhere in the world and in the region of the Indian Ocean in particular, and approaches with understanding the idea of creating a peace zone in the Indian Ocean. The achievement of an agreement between the USSR and the United States on the question of limitation and subsequent reduction of military activities in the Indian Ocean would contribute to the realization of this idea.

"However a year ago the United States suspended the Soviet-American bilateral talks and until now has avoided reaching an agreement on the date of their resumption. At the same time, the American side has tried to link artificially the question of the resumption of the talks with developments elsewhere in the world.

"Such a stand of the United States makes it impossible to talk in definite terms with regard to the prospects of these talks.

"The Soviet side in the course of the past year has more than once put forward concrete proposals concerning the timing for the resumption of the talks but in every instance it was confronted with a negative response on the part of the United States.

"The Soviet Union as before is prepared in a responsible and concrete manner to continue the Soviet-American talks on this question. The position of the USSR is completely in accordance with the recent resolution of the thirty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, which contains an urgent call to resume without delay the talks between the USSR and the United States concerning their military presence in the Indian Ocean.

"2. As the Mission of the USSR has already informed the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, the Soviet Union will express its views on the situation in the Indian Ocean and on the Soviet-American talks in that regard at the opening session of the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean. Besides that the Soviet Union would be ready to participate as an observer in the whole course of the Meeting."

17. At the same meeting, the Chairman also reported that on 11 May 1979, the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States had communicated to the Chairman the views of the United States as follows:

"1. That the United States Government has not yet discussed the resumption of bilateral talks on the Indian Ocean arms limitation with the Soviet Union.

"2. The United States expects that this matter would come up during the projected summit meeting for signature of the SALT agreement.

"3. The United States hopes that it would be possible to reach an agreement to resume the talks."

18. At the Committee's 75th meeting, on 3 October 1979, the Chairman further reported on the results of his recent 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.

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

"The General Assembly of the United Nations and many other international conferences have expressed their regret for the suspension of the talks and repeatedly urged that the talks should be resumed without delay. In the joint communiqué of the meetings of President Carter of the United States and President of the Presidium of the USSR, Leonid Brezhnev, issued on 18 June 1979 at Vienna (A/34/414, annex), the two sides agreed that their respective representatives will meet promptly to discuss the resumption of the talks on questions concerning arms limitation measures in the Indian Ocean. I have made repeated inquiries regarding the resumption of talks and on many occasions I have also urged on your behalf that the talks should be resumed without delay. I regret to inform you that the talks have still not been resumed."

The Chairman stated that the representative of the USSR had sent him the following letter:

"The position of the Soviet Union with respect to the results of the Meeting of the Indian Ocean States, of which these States were recently informed, remains unchanged. This position is well known to you. Our approach to the substance of the problem of the zone of peace in the Indian Ocean has been explained in detail in our statements on the above-mentioned Meeting and also during the discussions with you.

"The Soviet Union supports the idea of turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace and generally considers positively the principles of the establishment of such a zone, which have been worked out by the Meeting. But on the way to practical co-operation between the Soviet Union and the Indian Ocean countries there are certain difficulties in this question, emerging from the position of the Indian Ocean countries. These difficulties arise from the use by the Indian Ocean countries of the thesis of the so-called 'great Power rivalry' in the Indian Ocean as a source of military tension in the area, which is factually untrue and unobjective with regard to the Soviet Union.

"At the present time, the key question is to eliminate this obstacle to our co-operation during the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly. It depends to a large extent on you, as the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, as well as on the representatives of other littoral and hinterland States.

"As far as the consultations are concerned, the Soviet side always welcomes them and believes that it would be useful to conduct such consultations on the question of transforming the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace at a later stage and with regard for the results of the consideration of this question in the General Assembly.

"Undoubtedly, the representatives of the Soviet delegation will be ready to maintain contact with you on this matter at the session.

"The Soviet Union is certainly in favour of implementing the idea of turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. The Soviet Union is actively working for an early resumption of the Soviet-American talks on the limitation and subsequent reduction of military activities in the Indian Ocean, talks which were interrupted through no fault of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is willing to resume talks at any time."

The Chairman stated that the representative of the United States had sent him the following letter:

"The United States is continuing to consider carefully whether it should participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. As we have stated in the past, our support for an Indian Ocean zone of peace depends on the characteristics of the proposed zone. The Final Document of the July Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States contains language, particularly with respect to great Power presence in the Indian Ocean, that the United States cannot accept. Furthermore, the document itself was adopted without

consensus, a move which casts doubt on the usefulness of the present approach the Committee is adopting.

"We remain committed to the preservation of the independence, sovereignty and integrity of the States of the Indian Ocean area. In this spirit, we will continue our careful consideration of the Committee's invitation.

"As regards the bilateral talks with the Soviet Union, (1) the United States would like to avoid confrontation with the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean; (2) as a result of the Vienna Summit, there was a meeting of the heads of delegation in July to discuss the question of bilateral talks; we suggested that the heads of delegation should have a follow-up meeting in the fall of this year."

The Chairman further stated:

"While urging that the bilateral talks which appear to be of limited scope should be resumed, I would wish to suggest that in conformity with repeated General Assembly resolutions the opportune stage has now been reached for consultations between the great Powers and other maritime users of the Indian Ocean and this Ad Hoc Committee."

20. Comments of members of the Ad Hoc Committee, including those concerning the Chairman's report on 3 October 1979, appear in the summary records of the Ad Hoc Committee (A/AC.159/SR.75-78).

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

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

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

A

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, S-10/2 of 30 June 1978 and 33/68 of 14 December 1978,

Encouraged by the continued support extended to the Declaration by the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Havana from 3 to 9 September 1979, 6/

6/ See A/34/542.

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 tenth special session, devoted to disarmament, it noted the proposal for establishing the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, taking into account its deliberations and its relevant resolutions and the need to ensure the maintenance of peace and security in the region, 7/

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 still remain suspended,

Encouraged by the holding of the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, which provided an opportunity for the further harmonization of the positions of the littoral and hinterland States,

1. Takes note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean 8/ and the report of the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean; 9/

2. Takes note with satisfaction of the issues on which the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean succeeded in harmonizing a common position;

3. Expresses the hope for the early implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace as contained in General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI);

7/ General Assembly resolution S-10/2, para. 64.

8/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/34/29).

9/ Ibid., Supplement No. 45 (A/34/45 and Corr.1).

4. 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 and that the parties should refrain from any activity prejudicial to the implementation of resolution 2832 (XXVI);

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

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

7. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to render all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Committee, including the provision of summary records.

B

The General Assembly,

Recalling the recommendations contained in paragraphs 34 and 35 of the report of the Meeting of Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, 9/

1. Decides to enlarge the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean by the addition of new members to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee;

2. Invites the permanent members of the Security Council and major maritime users of the Indian Ocean referred to in paragraph 12 (c) of the report of the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean that have not yet done so to serve on the expanded Ad Hoc Committee;

3. Decides to convene a Conference on the Indian Ocean during 1981 at Colombo, Sri Lanka, for the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace as contained in General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI);

4. Requests the Ad Hoc Committee to undertake the preparatory work for the convening of the Conference, including consideration of appropriate arrangements for any international agreement that may ultimately be reached for the maintenance of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, as referred to in paragraph 3 of resolution 2832 (XXVI), and to hold its preparatory sessions at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at least two such sessions, including the final one, in Mauritius;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary provision for the Conference, including the essential background information, relevant documentation and summary records, and to render all necessary assistance to the expanded Ad Hoc Committee, including the provision of summary records and interpretation in the languages of the General Assembly, as required.

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