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ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN SOUTH ASIA

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/44/50/Rev.1.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 7 December 1988, the General Assembly adopted resolution **43/66**, the operative part of which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

...

"1. Reaffirms its endorsement, in principle, of the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia:

"2. Urges once again the States of South Asia to continue to make all possible efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia and to refrain, in the mean time, from any action contrary to this objective;

"3. Calls upon those nuclear-weapon States that have not done so to respond positively to this proposal and to extend the necessary co-operation in the efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia:

"4. Recruests the Secretary-General to communicate with the States of the region and other concerned States in order to ascertain their views on the issue and to promote consultations among them with a view to exploring the best possibilities of furthering the efforts for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free **zone** in South Asia;

"5. Also reauests the Secretary-General to report on the subject to the General **Assembly** at its forty-fourth session;

"6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session the item entitled 'Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia'."

2. Pursuant to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the resolution, the Secretary-General submits herewith the replies received thus far. Other replies related to the item will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II, REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

CHINA

[Original: Chinese/English]

[17 April 1989]

1. The Chinese Government supports General Assembly resolution 43/66. It endorses, in particular, the following points contained in the resolution: the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world is one of the measures that can contribute effectively to the objectives of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and general and complete disarmament, and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, as in other regions, will assist in the strengthening of the security of the States of the region against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. China appreciates the statement made by the leaders of the South Asian countries on the assurance not to procure or produce nuclear weapons and to devote their respective nuclear programmes exclusively to the promotion of the economic and social development of their peoples,

2. The Chinese Government has always respected and supported the demand of the countries to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in the light of the actual conditions of their respective regions. It is China's consistent position that the nuclear-weapon States should respect the demand and proposition of these countries, respect the status of the nuclear-weapon-free zones and undertake corresponding obligations. The Chinese Government has declared in explicit terms that it has undertaken not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

MALDIVES

[Original: English]

[3 May 1989]

1. The Republic of Maldives reiterates its view that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace would contribute substantially to achieving the objectives of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, global nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. Therefore, the Republic of Maldives attaches great importance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia.

2. The Republic of Maldives believes that the establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones will not only reduce tension, but also enhance stability, mutual trust and confidence among States of a region. The concept of establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia dates back to 1974 and resolutions have been adopted by an overwhelming majority in the successive sessions of the General Assembly.

3. The Republic of Maldives appreciates the efforts of the Secretary-General in soliciting the views of various countries of the region and other concerned States on the subject in accordance with the mandate given under paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 43/66. However, the Republic of Maldives views with concern the fact that no more than five States have responded to the request of the Secretary-General, while 116 States voted in favour of the resolution.

4. The Republic of Maldives feels that tangible results cannot be achieved in view of the poor response from States and suggests that the efforts of the Secretary-General must now be directed towards the realisation of the second part of paragraph 4 of resolution 43/66, namely, to promote consultations among various States with a view to exploring the possibilities of furthering the efforts for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. The Republic of Maldives feels that in order to reach a general consensus on this important subject, consultations among States of the region are of prime importance and a prerequisite.

5. The Republic of Maldives also welcomes, in principle, the idea of convening a conference on the subject under the auspices of the United Nations. However, in view of the political realities of the region of South Asia, sufficient time and consultations are essential to narrow down the differences of opinion that exist among the States of the region, and the Republic of Maldives feels that it is still premature to consider specific proposals for a United Nations conference or proposals for the conclusion of bilateral or regional test ban agreements in South Asia.