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Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 124 (continued)

CONCLUSION OF A WORLD TREATY ON THE NON-USE OF FORCE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
(A/31/243; A/C.1/31/L.3)

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the first speaker for this afternoon's meeting I should like to make two suggestions to the Committee concerning the organization of work. First, I intend to close the list of speakers in the general debate on the item under consideration tomorrow, Wednesday, at 5 p.m. Second, I intend to close the general debate itself on Friday morning, 29 November.

As the Committee may recall, we have allocated 10 meetings to the consideration of this item, so if we finish the general debate on Friday morning we shall have Friday afternoon in which to take a decision on the draft resolution, and then we shall finish our work on this item within the time allocated to it.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees with my suggestions.

It was so decided.

Mr. KOMATINA (Yugoslavia): We welcome the item on the non-use of force, included on the agenda at the initiative of the USSR, which makes it possible to examine one of the most important problems of the present-day world. The threat and use of force is a very complex problem with which the world Organization is faced in its efforts to maintain peace and security in the world. This complexity is all the more evident as the forms of threat and use of force in relations between States and peoples are extremely varied; they are applied in many ways, direct or indirect, frequently concealed, and sometimes hardly perceptible and discernible. Our debate will enable us not only to identify the causes and forms of threat and use of force, but also to determine the course of the action to be undertaken by the international community, primarily through the United Nations, with a view to eliminating this phenomenon and bringing international relations into harmony with the Charter of the United Nations.

(Mr. Komatina, Yugoslavia)

The non-aligned countries have devoted particular attention ... both at their conferences and in their joint actions ... to the prohibition of the use of force in international relations, as one of their primary objectives and principles on which a stable and democratic world order should be founded. They have been constantly drawing attention, in particular, to the discrepancy between the prohibition of the threat or use of force ... enshrined in Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations ... on the one hand, and the frequent use of force in international practice on the other. In this respect, regarding the substance of the matter, it is almost irrelevant that, more recently, the use of force has been taking the form of various indirect and covert actions rather than direct use of military force. The effects are often the same, if not even more serious. The non-aligned countries have not limited their course of action merely to condemning the use of force morally and politically or elaborating legal principles, but have also initiated and conducted concerted actions aimed at eliminating the causes of the use of force and the threat of armed conflicts. In this sense, the principal objective of the non-aligned countries has always been to oppose any form of use of force and to struggle for the preservation of peace in global, regional and bilateral frameworks. Owing to the interdependence of the contemporary world and of the indivisibility of peace, it is not possible to ensure universal peace and security if ... even in the remotest corner of the globe ... force is used against the freedom and independence of other peoples, regardless of form and of the motives of a political, economic, security or ideological nature, advanced to justify such use.

Although every case of threat or use of force cannot be ascribed to the same protagonists or motives, their causes can nevertheless be identified by a few common denominators. Viewed in the light of history ... apart from the cases when force has been really used for self-defence or national liberation ... force has been most frequently used for imperialist conquests of foreign territories, for exploiting the natural resources of other countries and peoples, for dividing the world into spheres of interest, or for acquiring strategic advantages in the struggle for supremacy. Also, it is well known that the use of force has, in the past, provided a basis for alliances and directories of great Powers to become a dominant factor in international relations. A single common aim has, however,

(Mr. Komatina, Yugoslavia)

always been pursued, namely, the subjugation of other peoples, establishment of relations of dependence, prevention of the emancipation of peoples and countries, and imposition of solutions and foreign models of social development -- in brief, suppression of the freedom and independence of peoples and countries.

As the non aligned countries have been pointing out all along -- and this was clearly confirmed and elaborated at the Fifth Conference of non-aligned countries in Colombo -- bloc policy embodies reliance on force, the concept of maintenance of international order through balance of power, polarization of countries round blocs, because rivalry and struggle for influence are imminent in bloc policy.

As I have already mentioned, the forms of threat and use of force, which we mention below, are varied and are becoming ever more diversified:

The possibility and danger of the classical form of aggression are undiminished. Such aggression takes the form of attack by the military forces of one State against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of another State;

The occupation of territories of other States, and even annexation of foreign territory by force, the establishment and maintenance of military bases in foreign territories are not only widely practised, but attempts are made to justify such practices by invoking the obsolete concept of security and, sometimes, even by open expansion. Such policies are based on the most brutal violation of the rights of peoples and of fundamental human rights in occupied territories, on the forcible changing of the cultural life and demographic character of occupied territories through massive expulsions of populations and other measures of denationalization and assimilation. A particular form of such a practice is the policy of bantustanization, which is directed against the national unity and territorial integrity of peoples enslaved by the system of racial discrimination and apartheid.

Colonial domination and the denial of the right of peoples to self-determination amount to a permanent use of force against oppressed peoples, a question with which our Organization has been dealing constantly.

Interference and intervention in the internal affairs of other States are assuming ever more dangerous forms as one of the more frequent forms of use of force. In the pursuit of this policy, a wide range of direct and indirect, brutal and subtle methods are used -- through State organs, semi-private and public

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institutions, political groupings, transnational corporations or media of mass communication -- such as economic aggression, various forms of subversion and destabilization, undermining of constitutional systems and of economic and political stability, threatening of territorial integrity, of national and political unity and so on -- all of which threaten the security and independence of States as well as peace in certain regions and in the world at large.

The phenomenon of terrorism, especially State terrorism, and the use of mercenaries represent more recent methods of interference in internal affairs and of the use of force -- both of these phenomena are aimed at preventing the struggle for national liberation and are directed against the consolidation of the independence and free development of States and peoples.

(Mr. Komatina, Yugoslavia)

What causes greatest concern is the fact that the protagonists of intervention and interference in internal affairs are endeavouring to legalize this dangerous practice in the name of so-called "higher" interests in the various areas proclaimed to be of "vital" interest to them.

- The arms race, which is assuming alarming proportions, constitutes a form of use of force of global dimensions, as it is actually aimed at preserving the existing system of international relations, where force plays the role of a primary factor and where endeavours are made to impose upon militarily weaker countries a state of permanent subordination.

- Efforts to preserve the existing system of international economic relations -- based on inequality, exploitation and the holding of two thirds of mankind in a state of dependence -- are also founded on the elements of force. In fact, such a system is maintained by means of constant threats and often by the use of various forms of force and pressure for the purpose of preventing sovereign disposal of natural resources, of securing raw materials and sources of energy to the benefit of economically developed and militarily powerful countries and, generally speaking, in order to prevent the participation of developing countries, on a footing of equality, in the international division of labour.

- The failure to solve crises, their aggravation and the creation and fomenting of new foci of crises are also an expression of policy based on force; tension and instability are thereby maintained in many regions of the world, exerting permanent pressure on the countries of those regions.

There are, of course, many other forms of use of force. I have enumerated only some of them, with the object not only of drawing attention to their causes and protagonists but also of indicating steps conducive to their elimination.

There is no doubt that international agreements concluded through or within the framework of the United Nations represent important initiatives and steps towards the limitation or elimination of the use of force. The relaxation of tensions -- détente -- constitutes, in this regard, an important contribution, even in its present limited form. My country, together with other non-aligned and peace-loving countries, has been insisting on the peaceful settlement of disputes, doing its utmost to bring about peaceful solutions even at moments when the use of force in international relations seemed unavoidable. At a time of profound changes

(Mr. Komatina, Yugoslavia)

in the world, when there is a powerful upsurge of emancipation encompassing all spheres of international relations, peace and active and peaceful coexistence cannot be fully achieved only through détente and negotiations, even if all States participated in them. It is essential, in this regard, besides the conclusion of treaties to this effect, to have a determined orientation and to take appropriate action to create new international relations, whose foundations have been laid down in the Charter and subsequently further developed through international practice -- in the first place, through the activity of non-aligned and like-minded countries. This means that the threat and use of force can be completely eliminated only through the establishment of a new system of international political and economic relations ensuring, among other things, the following:

- the building of peace on the basis of equal security for all peoples and respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries and their right to free national and social development;
- the universalization of détente by extending it to all areas of international relations and by solving major international problems on the basis of universal application of the principles of active and peaceful coexistence, with the participation of all countries, this being not only a moral right but also an indispensable condition for safeguarding peace and security;
- the elimination of all forms of dependence and exploitation imposed by the forces of imperialism, colonialism, foreign domination and hegemony;
- discontinuance of the arms race and acceleration of the process of general and complete disarmament as well as the withdrawal of foreign troops and the elimination of foreign military bases from foreign territories;
- the overcoming of bloc divisions and the preventing of attempts to divide the world into spheres of interest;
- strict implementation of the decisions of the United Nations and respect for the principles of the Charter which have been further elaborated in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, the Definition of Aggression, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and other instruments of international co-operation;

(Mr. Komatina, Yugoslavia)

- the strengthening of the United Nations as a universal instrument of international co-operation and cessation of the practice of bypassing the United Nations in the solving of international problems;
- the establishment of the new international economic order based on respect for the legitimate interests of all countries, and of the developing countries in particular;
- the solving of crises and the elimination of hotbeds of conflict in keeping with the legitimate interests of peoples, primarily of those directly concerned; the ending of occupation and the refusal to accept faits accomplis achieved by aggression;
- the liquidation of colonialism, racism and apartheid, and respect for the right of all peoples to self-determination;
- respect for human rights, both individual rights and rights deriving from the fact of belonging to ethnic groups and other minorities;
- the cessation of all forms of foreign interference in internal affairs for any reasons or motives whatsoever.

In this way, and through the efforts of the international community, force can be eliminated from international relations. Because, as long as the practices of aggression, occupation, interference in internal affairs, exploitation, monopolies, the arms race, the division of the world into blocs and unequal relations persist, it will not be possible to eliminate the use of force. Therefore, every effort in that direction must go hand in hand with practical action to bring about a substantive change in international relations. The Fifth Conference of non-aligned countries in Colombo has offered a concrete and comprehensive programme in this respect, to which my country fully adheres. This Conference laid down a platform for struggle against all protagonists of force in international relations. The basic premises for this are the development of mutual co-operation and solidarity among non-aligned countries and self-reliance based on the readiness and constant preparation of every country to defend its freedom and independence.

We have spoken so far about the prohibition of force used in relations among States for subjugating other States or peoples or maintaining the current status quo based on monopoly and privileges -- briefly, for maintaining the system based on force. It goes without saying that the struggle of peoples for independence,

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freedom, equality and development has not only obtained international legitimacy, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, but also enjoys our full support. There is no right more important than the right to free life. In their struggle for this right, peoples can resort -- in keeping with the Charter -- to armed struggle.

We attach great importance to this debate and we are certain that the consideration of this problem cannot be completed at the present session. As regards the draft world treaty submitted by the Soviet delegation -- and contained in the annex to document A/31/243 of 28 September 1976 -- my delegation feels that it is a very important document having long-term implications. Therefore, we are studying it carefully and we will submit our observations and proposals at a later stage.

In view of the fact that a complex problem is involved, we believe that it is not possible, at present, to adopt any definitive decisions; nor should the debate be closed, all the more so as useful suggestions and new ideas may still emerge. In the opinion of my delegation, it is indispensable to maintain this item on the agenda and to call upon Governments to submit their proposals and views on this important problem, so as to make it possible to chart, on the basis of them, an adequate course for United Nations action in the forthcoming period.

Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic): The proposal of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, which was explained by the Foreign Minister of the USSR, Andrei Gromyko, in his general statement in the general debate and which was also explained in detail by the First Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR, Vasily Kuznetsov, in this Committee, has placed in the focus of our attention in this Committee one of the key issues of international development. It deeply affects all areas of international relations. The obligation to refrain from the use or threat of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of States, and indeed in any other way incompatible with the purposes of the United Nations, is the corner-stone of lasting peace. The conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would decisively promote the attainment of a situation in the world in which war would be once and for all banished from the life of our peoples, and a situation where all disputes which arose would be resolved by means of negotiation in the light of the mutual interests involved. The German Democratic Republic immediately welcomed the proposal of the USSR.

Our people, in the light of the bitter experience of the Second World War, which was launched by German imperialism, is utterly determined to do everything in its power to protect peace, and the German Democratic Republic has joined the community of sovereign States resolutely determined to participate actively in efforts aimed at preventing another world war. I would like to add to this that the geographical location of the German Democratic Republic is particularly propitious to an understanding of the significance of the preservation of peace and the prevention of any resort to force in international relations.

In a few weeks time we shall be marking the thirtieth anniversary of the announcement of the verdict of the Nuremberg International Tribunal. It branded aggressive war as a crime against humanity and prescribed condign punishment for the major ringleaders of fascist genocide. If in the years before the Second World War there had existed a world treaty on the non-use of force, we are firmly convinced that this at least would have made it much

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Republic)

more difficult for German imperialism to commit aggression, and this is something which should not be forgotten when today we come to consider this draft resolution. Furthermore, it is our view that there are grounds for belief that the changes in the international situation have to a very large extent made it possible today to achieve compliance with such a far-reaching agreement. In the last 30 years it has been possible to prevent a new world war, and this is something which is valued particularly highly by the peoples of Europe. However, in the course of the same years, numerous military confrontations between States have occurred entailing considerable human and material losses. It is therefore particularly important, indeed essential, to conclude a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, because by so doing we will be promoting the elimination of still existing hotbeds of tension and will be attempting to prevent the outbreak of new international military conflicts.

The proposal of the USSR is a logical continuation of the far-reaching initiatives of the socialist States, designed to begin the process of détente and its development, to consolidate this process primarily by measures in the military sphere and to extend the process of détente to the whole world. The obligation of States not to have recourse to force or the threat of force against other States is as it were the very hinge of political détente. The treaty which would confirm such an obligation and would include further guarantees for compliance with it, would strengthen trust among States, and would thus create even better conditions for the purposeful materialization of détente. We believe that a favourable approach towards political détente, as the only sensible alternative to military confrontation, should, as a matter of course, include support for a world treaty on the non-use of force.

Characteristic of the process of détente as a whole is the fact that it is to the advantage of all peoples and is not detrimental to any State; but if we are to talk of any kind of detriment or harm, this relates only to those circles which out of self-interest, or a desire for political domination, are still viewing war as a means of oppression and exploitation of other peoples.

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Recognition of the fact that political détente is to the advantage of all peoples has already been confirmed in practice. Assertions to the contrary are obviously in contradiction with the facts. What can be said about the process of détente as a whole can also be applied to the implementation of the proposal under consideration here. It would certainly strengthen international security, and this would of course be in keeping with the interests of all States, regardless of their social and economic systems, or the size of their territory or populations. In particular, it would strengthen the security of small States.

The German Democratic Republic believes that a further improvement in the international situation and equality of rights in international economic relations are not mutually exclusive, but are in fact indissolubly linked. We therefore share the view of many representatives who have emphasized, in the course of this session of the General Assembly, that the establishment of a new international economic order based on strict respect for State sovereignty, non-intervention in internal affairs of other States and the right of peoples to self-determination, would significantly contribute to ensuring world peace.

The aspiration towards the establishment of international economic relations based on equality of rights necessarily includes the struggle for the creation of guarantees against the use of force in international relations. The tremendous efforts that the peoples who have freed themselves from colonialism are making in the interests of their social and economic progress would be futile if it were not possible to secure international peace on a stable basis.

We should bear in mind that to this very day economic interests serve directly or indirectly as grounds for threats or even the actual use of armed force. Consequently guarantees should be established to render sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of States inviolable. That is the sense in which we understand the following statement in the economic declaration adopted in Colombo:

"The elimination of foreign aggression, foreign occupation, racial discrimination, apartheid, imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism and also all other forms of dependence and subjugation, interference in internal affairs, domination and exploitation are crucial to the economics of Non-Alignment." (A/31/197, p. 57)

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

The conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would not be a mere repetition of existing obligations undertaken by States. It would be a confirmation and further clarification of those obligations. Still better conditions must be created to ensure genuine compliance with the principle of the prohibition of aggression, as laid down in Article 2 (4) of the United Nations Charter.

I do not want to anticipate, I do not want to become involved in a detailed discussion which will no doubt take place; but I should like to point to some favourable consequences that would flow from such a treaty.

First, the prohibition of aggression in Article 2 (4) of the United Nations Charter would once again be unreservedly confirmed as a binding legal norm, jus cogens.

Secondly, the obligation on States to eschew aggression would also include the prohibition of support and encouragement for the use of force against other States. Experience has shown with sufficient cogency the great significance of such a measure.

Thirdly, the prohibition of the use of force would be directly linked with the prohibition of the use of all forms of weapons.

The requirement for the prohibition of the use of all forms of weapons is, in our view, an essential conclusion deriving from the use of so-called conventional weapons in military conflicts since the Second World War. Of course, there has always been a veiled danger of nuclear war, which unfortunately has not yet been eliminated. But we should remember that in the course of the arms race conventional weapons have been perfected. In terms of their effect, they are coming ever closer to being weapons of mass destruction. The inclusion of nuclear weapons in the ban, presupposing the participation of all nuclear States, would considerably enhance the security of States that do not possess such weapons.

The partial agreements already concluded in this area have created pre-conditions which permit us to assume the success of a universal ban on the use of all forms of weapons in international relations. Along with the direct effect on the banning of the use of force, such a step would serve as a very important incentive to the conclusion of other treaties in the area of limiting armaments and of disarmament.

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(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

Circles which have an interest in the arms race would find it considerably more difficult to justify the production and stockpiling in their military arsenals of an ever growing quantity of weapons of all types.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic trusts that the thirty-first session of the General Assembly will support the idea of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. We take into account in this the broad consensus which already exists with regard to the obligation in principle upon States to refrain from the use of force, something reflected in many international documents. I should like to name here first of all, the prohibition in Article 2, paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter, the prohibition of aggression. The resolution unanimously adopted at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly on the definition of aggression is likewise of special importance. The principles of Bandung and the political declaration adopted in Colombo testify to the will of the participants to develop international relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence, thus excluding the use of armed force for the settlement of international problems.

The principle of the renunciation of the use of force has, in the Final Act of Helsinki, as indeed it should have, the highest priority. The Final Act adopted in Helsinki lays down the non-use of force not only as an obligation on States Parties in relations among themselves but also makes it a general rule of conduct in international relations. It thus acknowledges that the non-use of force is not only of fundamental significance for Europe but also something that should be affirmed in other parts of the world besides. The inclusion of a universal treaty would enable all peoples to enjoy the same advantages as already exist in Europe, and this is all that is meant by the extension of political détente to the whole world.

A world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would be an outstanding contribution to the strengthening and implementation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and to the democratization of international relations. It would not entail any change in any of the provisions of the United Nations Charter. Thus, the right to individual or collective self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, would still be safeguarded. Our joint efforts, however, should be directed towards a change in the international situation which would remove the need for having recourse to this right. Aggression in all its forms should be eliminated, so that the peoples would not be obliged

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

to defend their very existence and their fundamental rights by recourse to arms. However, as long as the consequences of aggression still exist and the right to self-determination is being suppressed by terror and violence, the peoples of the world must have the possibility of defending themselves by all available means; that is their undeniable right.

The World Treaty on the Prohibition of the Use of Force is a comprehensive draft which concerns the interests of all peoples. It would be advisable to enable States to study this draft further and here account should be taken of the fact that conditions have never been so favourable for a decisive step towards the elimination of aggression and the use of force in international relations. It is not enough, however, to state in general terms one's attachment to that principle. We also need readiness to create the necessary international instrument for its effective implementation. Therefore, the German Democratic Republic warmly welcomes the proposal of the USSR and supports its implementation.

We note with satisfaction that the initiative of the USSR has met with broad international response and is playing an increasingly important role also in bilateral talks between States. For example, the joint communiqué issued upon the visit to the Somali Democratic Republic in October of this year by Willi Stoph, Chairman of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic. That states:

"The German Democratic Republic and the Somali Democratic Republic view disarmament and the struggle for the cessation of the arms race and the limitation of armaments as one of the key problems of the day. They are in favour of convening a world disarmament conference, the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon testing, the prohibition of the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction and the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations."

On the occasion of the recent visit to Finland by the Foreign Minister of the German Democratic Republic, both sides likewise declared themselves in favour of the universal renunciation of the use of force.

We are convinced that the meetings of this Committee itself will serve to extend and intensify the conviction that the proposal of a conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would be in keeping with the desire of the peoples of the world for peace and international security and

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

would serve the fundamental interests of all States. This would at the same time be an important contribution to its implementation.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic supports the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union in document A/C.1/31/L.3 and wishes the German Democratic Republic to be included as a sponsor.

The CHAIRMAN: I have noted that the German Democratic Republic wishes to be included in the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.3. I have been requested to announce that in addition to those States which earlier announced their intention to become sponsors, namely, Mauritius and Bulgaria, which did so yesterday and the German Democratic Republic, which we have just heard, the following States have been included in the list of sponsors of the resolution: Cyprus, India and Poland.

Mr. ORTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish):

This week the First Committee is considering an item aimed at the development of one of the basic principles that is at the very root of the political and juridical structure of our Organization.

The principle of refraining from the threat or use of force is enshrined in paragraph 4 of Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, as it was in the Covenant of the League of Nations. Its logical corollary, paragraph 3 of that same Article, embodies the principle of the peaceful settlement of international disputes, a principle to which Argentina is especially attached and which it has upheld and implemented throughout its independent life.

However, we must emphasize that no prohibition is operative in itself unless backed by the will of the States to which it is addressed. A comparison between the provisions of the Charter and the international history of the last 31 years bears out this assertion without the least shadow of doubt. The world has witnessed only too often the unlawful use of force as an instrument to impose policies contrary to the will of the States against which that force was used. It was not, therefore, without reason that the General Assembly, the democratic organ par excellence of the international community, should have reiterated that the principles of the Charter continue to be a permanent goal and should have adopted resolutions calling for their practical implementation.

May we recall, inter alia, the contents of resolution 290 (IV), entitled "Essentials of peace" adopted in December 1949, wherein the Assembly called upon every nation to comply with the principle of the non-use of force and to refrain from any acts aimed at impairing the freedom, independence or integrity of any State, or at fomenting civil strife and subversion in other countries, as well as to agree to international control of atomic energy which would make effective the prohibition of nuclear weapons. The 27 years that have elapsed since the adoption of that resolution do not, unfortunately, prevent their content from continuing to be fully valid and reminding us of the difficulty of developing and implementing these principles of the Charter.

The present initiative of the Soviet Union warrants careful consideration and constructive evaluation, by reason both of the delicate nature of the subject and of its close connexion with other proposals already before the international community for consideration.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

The concern thus evidenced should facilitate the search for formulas that will reconcile and mould into appropriate solutions the various divergent positions on the subject. The delegation of Argentina is prepared to consider them within a broad context aimed at the establishment of an effective system of collective security whose ultimate goal should be the global realization of the purposes and principles governing the very *raison d'être* of the United Nations. In making these preliminary remarks, we wish to place on record our appreciation of the efforts of the Soviet delegation in this field over the years.

Mr. AL-SHAIKHLY (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): The peoples of the world have in the past suffered numerous tragedies as a result of the revival of the policy of the use of force in international relations. Mankind has sacrificed much in order to face the direct and indirect consequences of the threat or use of force. The fact that two world wars have taken place in one generation which have killed millions of human beings and inflicted incalculable moral and material damage is the clearest evidence of the consequences of the policy of the use of force in international relations. The results of the use of force in the past were not confined to the direct impact of wars but went beyond that. Most of the grave international problems facing our world today, such as the problems of under-development, imperialism, colonialism, discrimination, apartheid, the usurpation of homelands, the occupation of the lands of other States -- all these, in one form or another, result from the policy of the use of force in the past.

Like any other phenomenon in our changing world, the use of force has developed and assumed new forms which were imposed by the changed circumstances brought about by the escalation of popular struggle against colonialist régimes and the growth of national liberation movements in the world. In spite of these developments, one thing remained unchanged -- namely, the policy of the use of force for purposes of aggression was and still is the method resorted to by imperialist and colonialist Powers in their desperate attempt to check the march of liberation and progress and continues to be a threat to international peace and security and an obstacle to the progress of peoples.

(Mr. Al-Shaikhly, Iraq)

Aware of these facts, the Charter of the United Nations laid down, among other principles, the principle of the non-use of force in international relations for purposes of aggression and made this a basic condition for the establishment of an international order that would help the world to avoid the consequences of a new destructive war. The Charter was not the last important international document embodying this principle. The principle was included in many other international documents, including a number of General Assembly resolutions, particularly the Declaration adopted at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly and the definition of aggression.

In spite of the provisions of the Charter regarding the non-use of force for purposes of aggression and for the occupation of lands, the conquest of peoples and their eviction from their homeland, force is still resorted to in contemporary international life and it still constitutes an indispensable instrument of foreign policy for some countries and racist entities. This situation has led to a marked deterioration in international relations and has greatly worsened the arms race. It has also exposed international peace and security more than once to grave dangers. This situation is exacerbated still further by the increased possibility of nuclear confrontation, the consequences of which can in no circumstances be overlooked.

In many areas of the world, we find flagrant examples of the use of force for aggressive and racist purposes. In our Arab area, the tragedy of the people of Palestine is a clear example of the use of force by zionism supported by world imperialism in order to impose an abhorrent form of settler colonialism in Palestine. The use of force has led to the eviction of the indigenous population from their homelands and their replacement by foreign racist Zionists. Nor were the Zionists content with evicting the Palestinian people and usurping their lands; they have also committed one aggression after another on the neighbouring Arab countries and have used masked aggression in order to interfere in the internal affairs of some other countries. All this was done in order to consolidate the basic Zionist aggression and to change the conditions in our Arab area in a way that would serve the plans of aggressive racist zionism by creating new faits accomplis that are designed to divert attention from the original crime -- namely, the usurpation of the land of Palestine and the eviction of the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Al-Shaikhly, Iraq)

In southern Africa, the peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe are suffering from constant aggression perpetrated by the two racist régimes in South Africa and Rhodesia. Some other neighbouring African countries, such as Angola, Mozambique and others, are also exposed to continued aggression and threats carried out by racist régimes.

In Indo-China we find another example of this where the people of that area were exposed to the most violent form of aggression and foreign invasion supported by modern destructive weapons and perpetrated by the rulers of the United States. As the peoples of Indo-China have strived in the just struggle against the forces of American imperialism the will of the peoples of South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Palestine would also triumph in their struggle against the forces of racist aggression. In this sphere, it is incumbent on the international community, which has suffered a lot in the past, to take the initiative by condemning the aggressor and depriving him of the outcome of his aggression by all possible means. It is also necessary to try to remedy the conditions from which struggling people suffer and to give all possible moral and material assistance to African and Palestinian national liberation movements. The move of the international community to support people struggling for freedom and self-determination and the resultant elimination of hotbeds of tension in the world and putting an end to the use of force in any way not compatible with the purposes and objectives of the United Nations is in itself an effective contribution to the consideration of international peace and security.

The foregoing remarks underline the importance of concluding a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations and the need that all parties be fully committed to its basic principles. The Iraqi delegation has studied the note dated 28 September 1976 and addressed to the Secretary-General by His Excellency the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union and the draft world treaty annexed to that letter, document A/31/243.

We have also listened to the valuable presentation made by the first deputy of the Foreign Minister of the USSR at the outset of the Committee's discussion of this item. The delegation of Iraq, which considers the principle of the non-use of force in international relations as a corner-stone of its foreign policy,

(Mr. Al-Shaikhly, Iraq)

welcomes the initiative taken by the Soviet Union in demanding the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the thirty-first session concerning the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, and the Iraqi delegation would like to make the following preliminary remarks on this subject. First, we think that the spirit of the Soviet proposal is fully in keeping with the provisions of the Charter, particularly paragraph 4 of Article 2, as well as with a number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, particularly the Declaration adopted at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly and the definition of aggression. The Soviet proposal moreover reaffirms the numerous declarations adopted by the non-aligned movement, particularly the two Declarations adopted in Algiers and Colombo by the Fourth and Fifth Summits of Non-Aligned Countries. Secondly, it is a great source of relief to listen to the statement of the representative of the Soviet Union and his clear affirmation of the fact that the preliminary draft presented by the Soviet Union would not affect adversely the right of States to self-defence, whether individually or collectively, as provided for in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and that it would not prejudice the right of peoples and States to use force in order to fight aggression and restore their occupied lands. Furthermore, he has reaffirmed that the proposal is mainly based on the definition of aggression agreed upon by the United Nations. Moreover, the affirmations of the proposed treaty would not restrict by any means the right of peoples who are suffering under the yoke of colonialism or racism to resist by all possible means at their disposal this colonialism and liberate themselves. This trend meets with our full approval. Thirdly, at the time when we welcome these important assertions we think that it is necessary that they should be integrated in the draft treaty in a clear and unequivocal manner.

The delegation of Iraq supports the draft resolution presented to the Committee by the delegation of the USSR and contained in document A/C.1/31/L.3. Under the provision of the first operative paragraph of this draft the Government of the Iraqi Republic is going to study the Soviet draft treaty in the light of our discussions here in the First Committee during this session. We shall express our remarks and viewpoints to the Secretary-General at the appointed date.

The CHAIRMAN: As no other representative wishes to speak at this time I shall adjourn the meeting. Before doing so, however, I should like to appeal to representatives to be in their seats punctually tomorrow and the day after tomorrow as we have a great number of speakers remaining and are obliged to utilize fully the time available to us.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.