

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records *



FIRST COMMITTEE
41st meeting
held on
Tuesday, 23 November 1976
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 41st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

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Distr. GENERAL
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24 November 1976

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

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Mr. HULINSKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): Pursuant to instructions I have received I find it necessary to speak on item 45 of the agenda so that the views of my delegation on this question will be reflected in the records of our Committee at precisely this stage of the discussion.

The two years that have elapsed since the submission by the Soviet Union of the proposal for the conclusion of an international convention which would prohibit military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques has been a period of serious talks on the subject both within the United Nations and at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. The views and proposals of many Governments have been considered, Governments which have expressed a willingness to make a contribution to a solution of this question. With the assistance of qualified governmental experts, difficult questions have been clarified which affect key provisions of the future convention.

On this basis, the Working Group of the CCD in Geneva, with the participation of all members of the Committee, after two months of hard work this year, was able to produce a final draft text of the convention, submitted in the report of the Committee for the consideration of the General Assembly of the United Nations at this session. The work of the Geneva Committee on this question -- and we should realize that the programme of the Committee's work this year was extremely full -- in the view of the Czechoslovak delegation, warrants our commendation. The General Assembly at its thirty-first session should, in our view, with the same business-like approach and constructiveness which was displayed by an overwhelming majority of members of the Geneva Committee, take a decision which would enable the draft convention submitted to be signed by States this very year.

As the report of the Geneva Committee indicates, a number of important provisions of the draft convention have been prepared on the basis of the draft submitted by the Soviet Union in 1974 and the identical drafts of the USSR and the United States submitted the next year. Most of the formulations originally

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proposed for draft articles of the convention have been clarified and supplemented and in addition some further provisions have been included.

For example, article 5 of the draft convention contains some important provisions for the successful settlement of possible controversies arising in connexion with the implementation of the convention by States parties. Every interested State party to the convention can, if necessary, have recourse to a broad range of procedures for resolving any difficulties which arise, from bilateral consultations to the convening of the United Nations Security Council in accordance with its functions under the Charter of the United Nations. At the same time, this article provides for the establishment and functioning of an advisory committee of experts for elucidating the factual circumstances in any given controversy in accordance with the procedure established in the annex to this convention.

Article 3 of the draft convention has been reworded and supplemented; it deals with the co-operation of States with regard to the use of the natural environment for peaceful purposes on the basis of the generally recognized principles of international law, due account being taken of the needs of the developing parts of the world.

It was agreed to include article 8, regarding the convening of a conference of States parties to the convention five years after its entry into force, to review the operation of the convention; agreement was also reached on the question of the procedure for introducing amendments to the convention, contained in article 6.

As is pointed out in the annex to the special report of the Committee on this question, understandings were also arrived at relating to the various provisions of the convention, which might serve as guidance for strict and consistent observance of obligations assumed by all States parties. Of particular importance, in our view, is the agreed understanding of the provisions of articles 1 and 2 of the draft convention.

The Czechoslovak delegation believes that the agreed understanding of the terms "widespread, long-lasting or severe", effects of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques shows that the adoption of the draft convention which has been submitted would be in keeping with the

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attainment of the major goal, which is to prevent for all time artificial modifications of the environment as a means of waging war, causing destruction or using force in international relations. Likewise, we have at our disposal a list of examples of possible ways of affecting nature for military and other hostile purposes, explaining the provisions of article 2 of the draft convention.

The Czechoslovak delegation, which took part in the preparation of the draft convention in the Geneva Committee, entirely agrees with the view that the draft is a detailed and at the same time a balanced compromise, and on the whole, represents a practical means of resolving this question.

Like many other delegations, we believe that the continuation of talks in the forum of the CCD in Geneva, in the present situation, would not lead to an optimum solution, but rather would give rise to the danger of losing the results we have achieved. Along with many other delegations we believe that in talks on questions of disarmament it is very often in the interests of the goal we are seeking to try to arrive at practical compromise measures acceptable to the majority of countries, even where such measures are for the time being only of a partial nature.

Consequently, Czechoslovakia has decided to become a co-sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.5/Rev.1 submitted in this Committee by the delegation of Finland. We consider as unfounded the misgiving which has been expressed to the effect that the adoption of the draft resolution which has been submitted would in some degree legitimize the use of means of influencing nature as an instrument of war or would in some way threaten international security. We believe that the co-sponsors of resolution A/C.1/31/L.4 would be acting in keeping with the need to find a positive solution to this question and to move forward in the field of disarmament as a whole if they did not press for a vote on their draft resolution.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): In the course of the general debate on items on disarmament, a debate that we concluded last Friday, during which almost 100 statements were made, once again stress was laid upon the profound concern expressed by the majority of the Members of the United Nations at the total lack of progress in negotiations to put an end to the arms race, especially in nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

A number of delegations deplore the lack of political will on the part of the great Powers to adopt true disarmament measures. The debate also brought out the dissatisfaction of the international community with the system at present available to our Organization to encourage a thorough discussion of the question of disarmament. Hence, the initiative adopted in Colombo by the heads of Government or State of the non-aligned countries on the convening of a special session of the General Assembly in 1978 to deal with disarmament was given the unrestricted support of almost the entire membership of the First Committee.

Furthermore, the general debate we held proved that among the countries present there is significant dissatisfaction with the work done by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. In fact, to the general unhappiness resulting from the sterility of the work of the CCD in Geneva, has now been added this year the well-founded criticism that the CCD seems determined to devote its best efforts to the discussion of matters which, with great benevolence, we might term secondary in nature.

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In the eloquent statement he made on 18 November, the representative of New Zealand referred to this criticism which, implicitly or explicitly, was voiced by many delegations, some of them members of the CCD, since they felt that the CCD's attention was being diverted from such urgent work as the conclusion of a treaty for the prohibition of all nuclear weapons tests. Again, and more specifically, he referred to the declarations of the representatives of Japan, Sweden and Canada. To those delegations must now be added those of Hungary, Poland, Finland and Ethiopia, among many others who have stated with similar emphasis that the decisions of this Committee should encourage the CCD to concentrate on the most important items on its agenda such as the prohibition of all nuclear weapons tests and the elimination of chemical weapons.

In the light of the foregoing, my delegation would like to make a few comments on the proposals submitted in the course of the general debate by the Soviet Union and the United States respectively concerning the work of the CCD. On 16 November the representative of the Soviet Union referred to the question of the "prohibition of the creation of new weapons and new systems of weapons of mass destruction" and he called the subject "an important and topical one". He then went on to say that it: "embraces the substantial aspect of the whole problem of disarmament and the prevention of war. Talks on this question should be given high-priority attention. We believe that the Committee on Disarmament should step up its work in this field and accelerate the preparation of a new important international agreement." (A/C.1/31/PV.34, pp. 23-25)

At the same time the Soviet representative spoke to the draft resolution which had been submitted a few days ago by his delegation, document A/C.1/31/L.10/Rev.1. When submitting that draft resolution the representative of the Soviet Union called "upon all delegations to support it".

Since the Mexican delegation would like this year as last year to support the initiative of the Soviet Union, I will venture to suggest some slight changes in the afore-mentioned draft resolution. First of all, where the third preambular paragraph says "taking into account" we would prefer it to say "taking note of" the report of the CCD. Secondly, in the fifth and last preambular paragraph we would prefer the following wording: "Taking note also of the suggestions on this

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question submitted in the course of the present session;". Thirdly, we would suggest that the first operative paragraph be reworded to read as follows: "Requests the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to continue negotiations with the assistance of qualified governmental experts as far as allowed by the consideration of the priority items on its work programme."

I am convinced that agreement by the Soviet representative to the slight changes that we have proposed to his draft resolution would gain for it a much greater support. Were our suggestions to be accepted, the Soviet Union would thus show that it shares the good intentions of the representative of the United States, the other Co-Chairman of the CCD who, at the very beginning of the general debate, expressed the hope that during the next year the CCD "will concentrate on the other important items on its agenda". On this matter I should like to add that although we listened with satisfaction to the statement just quoted of Ambassador Martin, we were the prey of some concern over another statement made by the delegation of the United States by Dr. Ikle, on 18 November. In the course of that statement the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency stated:

"My Government suggests that next year an appropriate forum, such as the CCD, consider an agreement that would prohibit the use of radio-active materials as radiological weapons."

He then went on to point out that the negotiations on that agreement should obviously not interfere with the work to be done on other disarmament matters, and added:

"But feasible arms control steps, such as this, should not go unrealized simply because larger problems have yet to be solved. Such a proposal, if adopted, would address a potentially significant future danger; each arms control agreement that is sound on its own merits can be another positive step toward a safer world." (A/C.1/31/PV.37, p. 41)

With regard to this proposal we should like to make two preliminary observations. First of all, we do not quite understand how that super-Power, having thus far refused to agree to a general agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons, can now advocate a prohibition of the so-called radiological weapons. Secondly, for those who may recall the debate in this Committee during

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the twenty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly, the proposal might be interpreted as an effort to revive a corpse which the CCD itself buried more than five years ago. You will doubtlessly recall that on 16 December 1969, on the initiative of the delegation of Malta, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2602 C (XXIV) whose operative paragraph 1 requested the CCD "to consider, without prejudice to existing priorities, effective methods of control against the use of radiological methods of warfare conducted independently of nuclear explosions".

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A large number of delegations abstained in the vote on that resolution. In explaining his vote at the 1715th meeting of the First Committee, on 9 December 1969, the representative of the United Kingdom, Lord Chalfont, stated:

"My delegation understands very well the concern of the representative of Malta about the possibilities of radiological warfare as distinct from the more familiar forms of nuclear weapons warfare, and also about the possible military applications of the new and expanding technology of lasers. These are very exciting developments in one sense but very forbidding in another and, clearly, we must all, especially those of us who work in the arms control and disarmament fields, keep a very careful eye on the way in which these matters develop ...

"But I do not believe that the question of radiological weapons and the possible military applications of laser technology are going to pose any significant military threat in the very near future ...

"It may be that this will happen in the more distant future, but I think that in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva we already have a very large number of important and urgent issues to which we ought to address ourselves and deal with before we come to expend time, money and resources on these interesting and slightly esoteric concepts of future weapon systems." (A/C.1/PV.1715, p. 7)

Pursuant to resolution 2602 C (XXIV), the CCD took up this question in 1970 and devoted a paragraph to it -- paragraph 26 -- in its annual report to the General Assembly (A/8059), which read:

"Having in mind General Assembly resolution 2602 C, which invited the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to consider effective methods of control against the use of radiological methods of warfare conducted independently of nuclear explosions and the need for effective methods of control of nuclear weapons that maximize radio-active effects, the Netherlands delegation submitted a working paper (CCD/291) on this subject on 14 July 1970. This paper concluded on the basis of available information that possibilities of radiological warfare do exist theoretically, but do not seem to be of much or even of any practical significance; therefore, it is difficult to see the practical usefulness of discussing measures related to radiological warfare."

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The Mexican delegation feels it highly desirable that, in the draft resolutions that this Committee may recommend to the plenary General Assembly, we should not lose sight of the disarmament priorities established by the Assembly. This is particularly important in the cases of matters referred by the General Assembly to the CCD for its consideration. We should resist the temptation of referring to the CCD items that, although possessing a certain importance, are nevertheless, to use the words of Lord Chalfont, "slightly esoteric".

Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran): I should like to begin by noting how greatly encouraged we are by the near-unanimous support received at the last General Assembly session by resolution 3474 (XXX), dealing with the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. We feel that the General Assembly has clearly indicated that it shares the concern and anxiety which has motivated the efforts of the original co-sponsors of this proposal, as well as other countries of the region, to promote the establishment of such a zone in our part of the world.

This preoccupation has not diminished with time. In the first place, the problem of nuclear proliferation has now acquired unprecedented and overriding importance in the field of disarmament. As the world moves increasingly towards harnessing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, the potential military aspects of this technology assume ever-greater significance. Hence, the time is decidedly upon us when we must face squarely the challenge at hand. The manner in which we respond to this challenge will determine whether this technology will redound to mankind's benefit or result in his eventual destruction.

The logic of this consideration is all the more applicable to the region of the Middle East in that the introduction of nuclear weapons into this strife-torn area would constitute a most dangerous aspect of nuclear-weapon proliferation. The implications of such a turn of events would go far beyond the mere spectre of a ruinous arms race. Everyone here is fully attuned to the stark reality of the situation prevailing in the Middle East, and no one can entertain any doubt that the consequences of allowing nuclear weapons into the region would far transcend the peace and security of the immediate area under consideration.

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It is this acute sensitivity to the precarious situation existing in the Middle East that has prompted the delegations of Egypt, Kuwait and Iran to produce a new draft resolution on this subject which I now have the honour to introduce on behalf of the co-sponsors.

The preambular part in essence recapitulates the background to the present resolution and also reflects our grave apprehensions concerning this matter, which I outlined only a moment ago. I should, however, like to draw particular attention to preambular paragraph 2, which refers to the incontrovertible fact that this proposal enjoys a wide measure of support in the region. Given the lack of any substantive progress on this matter, this development is indeed a source of particular comfort to us.

The essentially regional nature of the nuclear-free-zone concept is by now an accepted fact. There is a general awareness by the international community that, in contemplating the establishment of such zones, the particular characteristics, complexities and peculiarities of the region must be taken into account.

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The sixth preambular paragraph is a reflection of this reality. It recognizes the fact that this is an area which has certain unique problems, and this perception reinforces the urgency, as underscored in the same paragraph, of the efforts needed to keep the region free from involvement in a ruinous nuclear arms race.

Given the obvious and intricate complexities which are indigenous to this area, it is apparent that more than a traditional approach to solving a political problem is required -- hence the strong emphasis in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution on further action to generate momentum towards the realization of our objective.

Operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, with the sole exception of paragraph 3 (c), reiterate essentially what was said about these issues in last year's resolution. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to dwell on the circumstances and premises on which the ideas contained therein are based. Suffice it to stress once again that, if we look upon this as a serious undertaking, then it is incumbent upon all the parties concerned to satisfy certain basic requirements. In this connexion, it should be pointed out that, while operative paragraph 4 is a repetition of what was said last year, the responsibility of nuclear-weapon States with respect to this question bears re-emphasizing. During the general debate on disarmament, the danger of horizontal proliferation was stressed by several nuclear-weapon States as the central focus of their concern in this field. Moreover, in some cases, elaborate and far-reaching policies and plans have been outlined to deal with this problem. In our opinion, the seriousness of purpose behind these concerns and policy positions can find an appropriate channel for implementation within the framework of the present proposal which I have the honour to introduce.

Turning to operative paragraph 5, we find that this is a logical outgrowth of what has been stressed in other paragraphs regarding the need for further action in regard to a situation displaying its own peculiar characteristics and complexities. In this particular paragraph we try to address ourselves to one significant dimension of this linkage between the problem at hand and the modalities required to find a solution to it. It was felt that inviting the Secretary-General to undertake the mandate proposed in paragraph 5 would be in keeping with the conviction expressed in operative paragraph 1. In this context, it should be carefully noted that we have deliberately endeavoured to leave full freedom of action to the

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Secretary-General regarding the approach to be taken with respect to his mandate. We have refrained from requesting any report from the Secretary-General, not only to avoid any unnecessary financial burden, but also, and mainly, to allow him the full scope and freedom for manoeuvre required in approaching such an inordinately complex task.

In conclusion, I should like to express my sincere hope that the magnitude of the task in hand will not deter us from pressing ahead, but, rather, will spur us on to new and more determined efforts towards the achievement of our goal, which will prove a benefit not only to our region, but to the world as a whole. It is in this spirit that I commend this draft resolution to the attention of the members of the Committee for unanimous adoption by the General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Iran for his statement, in the course of which he introduced the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.19, submitted by his country as well as by Egypt and Kuwait.

Mr. OGISO (Japan): I asked for the floor to introduce the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.20 concerning the international transfer of conventional arms, which was submitted on 22 November by the delegations of Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Denmark, Ghana, Ireland, Liberia, New Zealand, Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Singapore and Japan.

During the general debate at this session of the General Assembly, and the ensuing debate in this Committee, a number of representatives, including those of Singapore, Nepal, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Canada, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Somalia, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia, Tunisia, Iran and Ecuador, and the representative of my own country, expressed concern over the increase in the international transfer of conventional weapons and the resulting build-up of arms in some States and areas, and emphasized the urgent need to curb or reduce this traffic.

In his statement in the general debate, the Foreign Minister of Singapore, Mr. Rajaratnam, emphasizing the effects on third world countries declared:

"The massive flow of arms to the third world, confronts it with a new danger. It is, first of all, a drain on their economies; but even more important is the fact that it creates a new form of dependence on the great

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Powers which can exploit the third world's dependence on them for arms to manipulate them, to engineer conflicts between them, and to use them as their proxies in their competition for influence and dominance. This may partly account for the tremendous acceleration in the arms race, especially among countries of the third world." (A/31/PV.10, p. 52)

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The Foreign Minister of the Philippines, General Carlos P. Romulo, stated during the debate in this Committee:

"One of the major items not on our agenda concerns the runaway traffic in so-called conventional arms, many of which now involve killing power that is near-nuclear in scope. There was a time when arms traffic consisted of a trickle of cast-off arms of major military Powers. It now comprises not a trickle but a torrent of the most sophisticated and advanced weaponry in today's arsenals, with major Powers competing vigorously as arms salesmen to the world. This is a grave danger. What from experience can we expect the results to be if not sharply increased destructiveness in so-called local wars and the debilitation of nations through an attempt to match weapon for weapon with their neighbours?" (A/C.1/31/PV.22, p. 34-35)

Most of the distinguished representatives who spoke on this question have pointed out that the international transfer of conventional arms, with the resulting build-up in a number of States, will not only increase the danger of local armed conflicts, but will also mean the loss of resources for the economic and social development of the developing world.

In order to respond to this general concern the co-sponsors have come to the conclusion that the General Assembly should approach this issue in a most serious manner.

On the other hand, we are fully conscious of the delicate and complex nature of the international transfer of conventional arms, since the import of conventional arms is closely related to the national security needs of some States. We are fully aware that the answer to such complicated questions cannot be arrived at overnight. However, as has been pointed out by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, Ambassador Dumas, the increasing arms flow, including sophisticated weaponry, into the third world

"is rapidly reaching the point where it may in this area be subsidizing the more industrial countries of both the East and West, and ... indeed it may have reached that point already". (A/C.1/31/PV.35, p. 33)

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbook of 1976 from which the representative of Trinidad and Tobago quoted, in 1975 third world arms imports reached the value of \$4,843 billion. The chief

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exporters were the United States, with sales amounting to \$1,769 billion, and the Soviet Union with \$1,652 billion. These two countries' exports accounted for 70 per cent of total sales to the third world. When we examine the global situation, we find that in 1975 the United States and the Soviet Union together accounted for 75 per cent of the world's arms trade. As in the case of nuclear disarmament this brings home to us the major responsibility of the two super-Powers in this matter and it is clear beyond any question that no concrete result can be realistically expected without co-operation from the super-Powers. In this context I would call upon the two super-Powers to be mindful of their responsibility and to co-operate with our present efforts.

In these circumstances it is evident that we should not remain timid and hesitant because of the complex and sensitive nature of the problems involved. The decision which we should take now, therefore, is not whether we should deal with the issue at all, but where to begin. The representative of Singapore, Mr. Tan, was absolutely right when he said:

"It is self-evident in many ways that we should first focus a scintillating beam of light on the subject itself." (A/C.1/31/PV.27, p. 23-25)

The draft resolution before the Committee, document A/C.1/31/L.20, is indeed intended to focus light on this issue and provide a starting point for further United Nations efforts to deal with it.

I now turn to the provisions of the draft resolution.

The first preambular paragraph notes the concern expressed in the General Assembly over the rapidly increasing international transfer of conventional arms and the resulting build-up of national armaments. In this connexion, I wish to make clear our understanding that the words "international transfer of conventional arms" include the trade in conventional arms.

The second preambular paragraph takes account of the necessity for the acquisition of arms by States in exercise of their inherent right of individual or collective self-defence as recognized in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

Some representatives, including the representative of Iran, Ambassador Fartash, touched upon this point in this Committee and stressed the paramount concern of their security. This paragraph would answer the legitimate concern expressed by these representatives.

(Mr. Ogiso, Japan)

The third preambular paragraph is intended to make clear that a study of the question of the international transfer of conventional arms in no way impairs the supreme importance of nuclear disarmament in the field of disarmament and is also intended to show that the curbing of the conventional arms race is necessary for progress towards general and complete disarmament.

The fourth preambular paragraph reflects the general conviction of Member States that the resources which are now being diverted to the production and purchase of conventional arms should be used for the benefit of all countries and the improvement of world economic and social conditions.

Operative paragraph 1 provides that the General Assembly will invite all Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General their views and suggestions on the issue.

Operative paragraph 2 requests the Secretary-General to submit a report containing these communications to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session.

Now, parallel with this step, operative paragraph 3 provides that the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to make a factual study of the international transfer of conventional arms and submit it to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session.

These two steps would provide the starting point for dealing with the issue. I would point out, with regard to the factual study requested in operative paragraph 3, that this paragraph is intended to provide for the gathering of information on the current state of conventional arms transfers, but should by no means be construed as requesting the Secretary-General to submit his opinion. Consequently, I must emphasize that this draft resolution does not provide for any concrete action by the United Nations on this issue.

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We have taken note of the suggestion made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Development Co-operation of Belgium, Mr. Van Elslande, regarding the regional approach to the disarmament question, including the question of conventional arms build-up by regions. Although we feel that it is an interesting and valuable suggestion, and we have no intention of excluding the possibility of such an approach in the future, we do not wish at this stage to confine the approach on this question to the regional one. The draft resolution leaves entirely open the question of the possible concrete steps to be considered after the General Assembly receives the report and the factual study in accordance with operative paragraphs 2 and 3, and does not prejudge the position that any country may take in the further consideration of this question.

Finally, operative paragraph 4, the concluding provision of the draft resolution, would decide to include in the provisional agenda of the thirty-second session an item entitled "Question of the international transfer of conventional arms".

In this connexion, I wish to say that this paragraph would by no means prevent the inclusion of this issue on the agenda of the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament which has been proposed, if the Preparatory Committee should so recommend to the special session.

If I may summarize, the main thrust of the draft resolution is (1) to invite all Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General their views and suggestions on the question of the international transfer of conventional arms, and his report containing this material would be communicated to the General Assembly in accordance with operative paragraphs 1 and 2; (2) parallel with this, to request the Secretary-General to make a factual study of the question as provided for in operative paragraph 3. Here I wish to stress again that the course of action to be taken by the General Assembly on the basis of the report and the factual study by the Secretary-General will remain open and in the hands of the Member States.

In closing, I appeal, together with other co-sponsors, to the distinguished delegates to give their support to the draft resolution so that it may be adopted by the greatest possible majority.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Japan for his statement in the course of which he introduced the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.20, submitted by the delegation of his country and 12 other delegations.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation would like to make some points about draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.16 submitted by the Soviet Union on 19 November of this year with regard to the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. As we know, the General Assembly on the proposal of the USSR approved in resolution 3478 (XXX) the idea of concluding such a treaty and called on all nuclear-weapon States to enter into negotiations not later than 31 March 1976 with a view to reaching agreement on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests with the participation of a group of non-nuclear-weapon States.

The Soviet Union expressed readiness to do this. Unfortunately, other nuclear-weapon Powers have not given their consent to negotiations. The said resolution provided for the participation in the talks of 25 to 30 non-nuclear-weapon States. Twenty-six non-nuclear-weapon States have expressed agreement to participate in such negotiations.

We are firmly convinced that the General Assembly should make extra efforts so that the question of calling a halt to all nuclear-weapon tests can be set in motion once again. This task, and this has been confirmed in many statements at the Assembly, remains a crucial one in the field of disarmament. The solution to this problem would facilitate a reduction of the arms race and further ease international tension.

In previous statements, the Soviet delegation has set forth in detail its views in favour of the idea that it is necessary to intensify efforts to conclude an agreement on the complete and general prohibition of tests. In particular, certain proposals have been submitted relating to control over the observance of a comprehensive agreement, that is, the question which for a long time was used as a way of complicating the solution of prohibiting tests.

We continue to believe that national means are sufficient for effective

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

control over observance of the agreement. Nevertheless, in the interest of early progress in this matter, the Soviet Union has expressed its readiness to agree to the working out of a compromise basis for an understanding when the principle of voluntariness in the taking of decisions is observed, that is, in regard to the detection on the spot of the relevant circumstances.

This proposal, as has been shown by the discussion, gave rise to a certain amount of interest. Certain delegations in their statements expressed the hope that it would be further explained and made more concrete. In the light of this hope that was expressed, we are circulating a revised text of what was proposed in 1975 by the Soviet Union, which is a draft treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Article II of this supplemented draft, as a new paragraph 3, has the following further developed provision, and I quote:

"In case a State Party to this Treaty has doubts regarding the nature of a seismic event that occurred in the territory of another State Party to this Treaty, it has the right to raise the question of carrying out an on-site inspection in order to ascertain the true nature of that event. The State Party to the Treaty that raised this question must cite appropriate grounds in support of the necessity of carrying out the inspection. The State Party to the Treaty which is the object of doubts regarding its compliance with the Treaty, recognizing the importance of this question, may take a favourable position regarding the carrying out of an inspection in its territory, provided it finds the grounds convincing, or it may take another decision. Such an inspection shall be carried out according to rules established by the inviting State Party."

The text of the draft treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests with the new paragraph of article II contained in it has been circulated in document A/C.1/31/9. We hope that it will be circulated this very day.

The Soviet delegation is convinced that the new proposal will create the necessary conditions for beginning concrete business-like negotiations with a view to reaching agreement on a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. Of course, all nuclear States should be parties to such a treaty, and draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.16 is directed to this end. It contains a new appeal to all nuclear-weapon States to proceed as soon as possible with negotiations on the concluding of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, with the participation of non-nuclear-weapon States. It also requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to provide the necessary assistance in such negotiations. It further proposes to include in the provisional agenda of the thirty-second session of the General Assembly an item entitled "Conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests". The Soviet delegation wishes to express the hope that members of the First Committee will give the broadest possible support to this draft resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement, in the course of which he introduced the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.16.

I have no more speakers for this morning. Before adjourning the meeting I should like to inform the Committee that Bahrain, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates have become co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.19; that Egypt and Sierra Leone have become co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.11; and that Sierra Leone, in addition, has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolutions in documents A/C.1/31/L.7/Rev.1 and A/C.1/31/L.13.

I should like to inform the Committee furthermore that tomorrow, at the morning meeting, I intend to put before it for decisions the following draft resolutions: the one in document A/C.1/31/L.11, relating to item 50 on the agenda pertaining to the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament; second, the one in document A/C.1/31/L.13, relating to item 36 concerning chemical and bacteriological weapons; and, third, the one in document A/31/29, relating to item 39 on the agenda concerning the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

Also, as I indicated at the 37th meeting of the Committee, on Thursday last, I should like to suggest to the Committee that we set as a deadline for submitting draft resolutions Tuesday, 30 November, a week from today, at 6 p.m., and, furthermore, that the deadline for introducing draft resolutions be set as Wednesday, 1 December, at 6 p.m. That should give ample time for all those delegations who intend to submit draft resolutions to do so and also to introduce them.

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

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.