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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 58th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

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

AGENDA ITEM 33 (concluded)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY:
REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The CHAIRMAN: Before the Committee proceeds to take action on the draft resolutions before us I should like to announce that Mauritius has become a co-sponsor of draft resolutions A/C.1/31/L.41 and L.42.

I now call on the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs to make a statement.

Mr. SHEVCHENKO (Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs) (interpretation from Russian): In connexion with the fact that at yesterday's meeting of the Committee, questions were put on document A/C.1/31/L.43, I should like, on behalf of the Secretariat, to make the following statement.

The document was received by the Secretariat before the deadline established for the submission of draft resolutions -- in other words, before 6 p.m. on Wednesday, the deadline that had been set by decision of the Committee. Unfortunately, for technical reasons, the issuing of the document was delayed. If, in this connexion, certain delegations have encountered some difficulties, I wish to offer our apologies for this technical contretemps.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Ireland on a point of order.

Mr. CRAIG (Ireland): I should like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for his statement on behalf of the Secretariat which, of course, I fully accept. I note, however, that in his comments he did not refer to my remarks in relation to the fact that the number of the draft resolution, L.43, did not appear in yesterday morning's Journal. I wonder if he could make some comments on that

(Mr. Craig, Ireland)

matter because in my now four years' experience of the United Nations in the Fourth and First Committees I have often experienced occasions where for technical reasons there have been difficulties in issuing draft resolutions rapidly and in all official texts. But in all these cases that I am aware of, the number of the draft resolution, if it was submitted the night before, did always appear in the following morning's Journal.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Under-Secretary-General.

Mr. SHEVCHENKO (Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs) (interpretation from Russian): In answer to the question of the representative of Ireland, first of all I should like to say that the Journal, which is a publication of the Secretariat, is published by a different department, for the activities of which I bear no responsibility. Secondly, I may say that I have been here in the United Nations not for four years but for twenty years, and I know that there have been so many mistakes in the Journal during those 20 years and so many omissions that if I were to come here with a list of them I am sure that delegations would probably be quite surprised.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Under-Secretary-General. I hope that the representative of Ireland will be satisfied with the explanation and will not insist on further clarifications on this matter. I consider the question clarified enough. We shall now proceed.

I call on the representative of Ireland.

Mr. CRAIG (Ireland): I was about to say that I was very grateful for the further clarification from the Under-Secretary-General. I accept that there are often mistakes in the Journal and would not like to hold the Secretariat responsible in any way for complete accuracy; that would be quite impossible. I should simply like to reiterate again the inconvenience that such a mistake does cause if the fact that a draft resolution has been submitted is not brought to the attention of delegations in the morning if it is not listed in the Journal. That, in fact, was the case yesterday. It did not appear in the Journal and delegations were not informed that a draft resolution had in fact been submitted. I certainly do not wish to take the matter any further, but I do regard my raising it as fully justified.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Ireland. I should like to share his hope that such occurrences would not happen again, though, as the Under-Secretary-General has pointed out, this was not the first mistake of this kind, unfortunately. But I agree with the representative of Ireland that it should not have happened. However, I would like to draw his attention to rule 120 of the rules of procedure which says that proposals and amendments should normally be submitted and circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meetings, not 24 hours before, which means that we can still take action, and I hope he agrees with me we can take action on those drafts today even though perhaps there has not been a full 24-hour interval between circulation of the draft document and the action that we propose to take on it today. I call on the representative of Ireland.

Mr. CRAIG (Ireland): I do not wish to continue this series of exchanges, but since you put a question to me I feel bound to reply to it. First of all, I think the Committee has yet to take a decision whether it is going to vote on this resolution today. That is a matter within the competence of the Committee. On the other point, I do not wish to continue the discussion but I think I would like again to make clear that my comments yesterday were related primarily to the question of the non-appearance of a draft resolution when it had been put into the Secretariat at 6 p.m. the previous day and the fact that there was no reference

(Mr. Craig, Ireland)

to that draft resolution. The question of the 24-hour delay is a somewhat different issue and I believe that the Committee shall have to decide whether it is going to vote on that resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: Obviously the Committee is always empowered to take a decision -- whatever the decision it may take on a draft before it. The only thing that I wanted to point out is the fact that the draft resolution was circulated yesterday afternoon is no obstacle to taking action on it today, even at this morning's meeting, because the requirements stipulated in rule 120 have been met, namely, that it should have been circulated the day preceding the meeting. With this clarification, which I hope satisfies the representative of Ireland, I will not call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. SIBAHI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): According to the decision, regardless of the binding and moral nature of the procedure, there should not be any obstacle that would hinder our consideration of the substance of the matter, since the draft resolution before this Committee in document A/C.1/31/L.43 deals with the substance of the matter we are discussing at present and was submitted by a friendly group of States -- Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic and Poland -- that are interested, as we all are, in the strengthening of international security and the implementation of the Declaration to that effect. My delegation feels that in this specific case we might be well-advised to waive the procedure and take into account the fact that a technical error has been committed regarding the date on which the text was submitted. The Under-Secretary-General has given us the reasons for it and therefore I would endorse your appeal.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not even think that it is necessary in this case to waive any requirements of procedure, because the proceeding that I am suggesting to the Committee is in accordance with the rules of procedure and the representative of Ireland has agreed with that.

(The Chairman)

We shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41, which was introduced by Sri Lanka on 8 December. While it relates to item 33 of the agenda, namely, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", it deals specifically with the question of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. I am informed by the Secretariat that the draft carries no financial implications. I declare the beginning of voting in accordance with rule 128 of the rules of procedure.

I call on the representative of the Netherlands who wishes to explain his position before the voting.

Mr. MEERBURG (Netherlands): Speaking on behalf of the nine member States of the European Communities, I should like to emphasize the importance our countries attach to the strengthening of international peace and security. Indeed, this is one of the most important aims of the Charter of the United Nations and of the 1970 Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security which was adopted by consensus. We attach particular importance to the aspects of this Declaration relating to the principles of international law and co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter. Our countries take a positive stand in the search for ways and means to strengthen international peace and security, as shown by our active participation in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The Governments of our nine countries are doing their utmost to ensure the strict implementation of the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act in its entirety, but much remains to be done. Last year, the representative of Italy, speaking on behalf of the nine, quoted a common declaration adopted by our heads of States or Governments on the Helsinki Conference, emphasizing our positive outlook on these matters. Our countries wish to repeat the reservations on the annual repetition of the discussions on the agenda item "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security". These yearly discussions have gradually undermined the unanimity which gave force and value

(Mr. Meerburg, Netherlands)

to the original Declaration. The Declaration was the product of extensive negotiations in which delicate balance was achieved. We consider that the Declaration is sufficient in itself and the subsequent debates which are often repetitious of debates held elsewhere in the General Assembly have not contributed to the implementation of the aims of the Declaration.

(Mr. Meerburg, Netherlands)

In this connexion, I would like to point out that draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42 contains, inter alia, rather selective references to and interpretations of some specific documents, such as the Helsinki Act. There are also other ways in which the draft resolution -- and the same holds true for draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.43 -- does not take balanced account of the different aspects of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

Our countries will therefore abstain in the vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/31/L.42 and A/C.1/31/L.43. I may remark also that very little time was given to study draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.43. As to draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41, the nine feel that the different aspects of the principles touched on in the draft merit careful consideration. We regret, therefore, that the sponsors of this draft resolution did not see fit to consult the nine countries in advance of the debate on the important subject of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. We are now faced with a draft resolution which, although it contains positive elements, set out to define the behaviour of States in a manner which is too vague to guide States in their international relations and incorporates also unspecified accusations and recommendations. Certain elaborations of the principles of the Charter contained in the draft also do not seem entirely correct. The nine will therefore, to their regret, abstain on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now vote on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", and subtitled "Non-interference in the Internal Affairs of States".

The draft resolution was adopted by 81 votes to none, with 14 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes after the voting.

Mr. WHISTLER (United States of America): My delegation wishes to explain the reason for its abstention on the draft resolution on non-interference in internal affairs of States.

The United States strongly supports the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. We believe, however, that the best approach to

(Mr. Whistler, United States)

achieving this objective continues to be universal adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. We do not believe that the present resolution, despite the intentions of its co-sponsors, will contribute to obtaining this objective or to strengthening the commitment of the international community to the non-interference principle.

Mr. da COSTA LOBO (Portugal): Last year my delegation had expressed some reservations on the draft resolution concerning the Strengthening of International Security, especially in regard to the reference to the dismantling of foreign bases, where it considers that some distinctions should be made.

Draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42 includes what is no doubt an important paragraph concerning the implementation of the provision of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, with special reference to the Mediterranean.

Precisely because it is so important, we think that further consideration and study is necessary, and eventually the proper place for such a provision should be a different one. We also have doubts about the utility of repeating every year principles that some countries accept and others reject without seeing any progress in respect to either a better definition or a wider acceptance of such principles.

For all the above reasons the delegation of Portugal decided to abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42, while stressing that this attitude does not mean a change in position in relation to the various principles contained in that resolution.

With reference to draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 I should like to state that we are not completely happy with the wording of several paragraphs which we think are too vague and may create difficulties in interpretation. In any event, we agree basically with the contents of the draft resolution in question and consequently we voted in favour.

Mr. ULUCEVIK (Turkey): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution on the Non-interference in Internal Affairs of States contained in draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 because of my Government's commitment to uphold the basic principle which constitutes the subject-matter of the said resolution. However, in

(Mr. Ulucevik, Turkey)

the view of my delegation, successive adoption of resolutions on this subject may upset the carefully worded and well-balanced structure of the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty which was supported by my delegation during its adoption at the twentieth session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1965 (resolution 2131 /XX/).

The CHAIRMAN: I have no other names on the list of representatives wishing to explain their votes after the voting. Is there any other delegation that wishes to do so?

Mr. S. KHAN (Mozambique): I would simply like to indicate that my delegation was absent during the voting. If we had been present we would have voted in favour of the resolution A/C.1/31/L.41.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement of the representative of Mozambique will be duly recorded in the verbatim record.

I should like to remind representatives, however, that I made a special appeal yesterday to all delegations to be here punctually at 10.30 a.m. so that everyone could vote when the time for voting came, because this procedure of a great number of delegations coming late and then saying "Had I been present I would have voted in such and such a manner" is not, I think, the best one for this Committee to follow. However, the statements of representatives will, as I have said, be duly recorded.

Does the representative of Senegal wish to speak on a point of order?

Mr. SY (Senegal) (interpretation from French): I would have liked to have been here for the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 but for reasons outside our control, my delegation was unable to participate. However I should like the record to note that had we been here we would have voted in favour.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement of the representative of Senegal will be recorded with the same comment that I made after the intervention of the representative of Mozambique. I call on the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. RAHMAN (Bangladesh): We also deeply regret that owing to circumstances beyond our control we were not present for the vote. If we had been present, we would have voted in favour.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement of the representative of Bangladesh will be duly recorded. I call on the representative of Nicaragua who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. PAGUAGA (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to speak not on a point of order, but in explanation of my vote after the vote. The delegation of Nicaragua agrees entirely with the contents of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 as expressing our adherence to the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of States, with the hope that at least one of the sponsors of this draft resolution will in future refrain from interfering in the domestic affairs of Nicaragua.

The CHAIRMAN: I was under the impression that I had asked whether any more delegations wished to explain their votes after the voting and that none had indicated its readiness to do so, so I would repeat my question. Does any delegation wish to explain its vote after the voting on resolution A/C.1/31/L.41? As there are none, I declare the conclusion of the consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41.

We shall now proceed to draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42. I call on the representative of Poland on a point of order.

Mr. PAWLAK (Poland): Mr. Chairman, in view of substantial consultations which are now going on concerning resolutions A/C.1/31/L.41 and A/C.1/31/L.43, I move to suspend the meeting for about 15 minutes.

The CHAIRMAN: This seems reasonable, and if the Committee agrees, I shall suspend the meeting for 15 minutes in order to give additional time to the sponsors of these two resolutions to finish their consultations.

The meeting was suspended at 11.15 a.m. and resumed at 11.30 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been informed that real progress has been achieved during those 15 minutes, which thus have been very fruitful, and I call on the representative of Malta.

Mr. GAUCI (Malta): Following our meeting of yesterday afternoon, and early this morning, intensive consultations took place between the co-sponsors of draft resolutions A/C.1/31/L.42 and L.43. Because of the large number of delegations involved, these consultations took somewhat longer than expected and we had to communicate the results of the consultations to a large number of delegations which are also, though not officially co-sponsors, very interested in the outcome of the draft resolutions. I am glad to inform the Committee that, as a result of these consultations, the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42, acting in a spirit of compromise, and because we felt that we should make every effort on the eve of the conclusion of the work of this Committee to be as accommodating as possible, have accepted some suggestions made to us concerning the wording of the fifth preambular paragraph of A/C.1/31/L.42. We have gone along with suggestions for certain changes in the second and third lines of the fifth preambular paragraph. That paragraph will now read as follows:

"Noting the successful outcome of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, emphasizing that the security of Europe should be considered in the broader context of world security and is closely interrelated, in particular, to the security of the Mediterranean, the Middle East and other regions of the world, and expressing its conviction that the implementation of the Final Act of that Conference through agreed means will contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security".

I should like to emphasize that the first part of this change is taken from the Final Act itself and the second part, in a compromise formulation, brings into proper focus the relationship between security in Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and other regions of the world. With this maximum attempt at a compromise and on the basis of the indications that were given to us, we feel that it will not be necessary to put draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.43 to the vote. However, this is my understanding. It depends on the understanding of the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.43 and I would think it appropriate for them to indicate what they feel should be done on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.43, bearing in mind the maximum effort made by the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42 to arrive at a compromise formulation.

Mr. PAWLAK (Poland): In the spirit of compromise and responding to the appeal made by the representative of Malta, I should like to inform the Committee that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.43 do not press for a vote on that draft resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Poland and I should like to thank the sponsors of both the draft resolutions A/C.1/31/L.42 and A/C.1/31/L.43 for their spirit of compromise and co-operation, which I am sure will facilitate the concluding stage of the work of this Committee. The situation now is that we have one draft resolution, namely A/C.1/31/L.42, as orally amended by the representative of Malta. We shall now take action on that draft resolution. I have been informed that it carries no financial implications. Does any delegation wish to explain its vote before the voting?

Mr. KABINGA (Zambia): The Zambian delegation generally agrees with the thrust of the entire resolution. However, in supporting the resolution, we want to register our strong reservation regarding the amended fifth preambular paragraph which contains a notion with which we do not agree. To the Zambian delegation, the amended fifth preambular paragraph reflects a Euro-centric notion of international security which basically treats Europe as being the centre on the questions of peace and war and, in some form of gradation, all the other parts of the world are treated either secondarily or tertiarily or even in some other stage of classification.

The Zambian delegation will vote for the draft resolution as a whole but we want to register our reservation on this Euro-centric element.

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan): I have asked to speak to explain the Pakistani delegation's vote on the draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security in draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42. Pakistan regards the Declaration as an important effort to secure a stable, just and durable structure of world peace. We solemnly believe that the principles concerning sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and

(Mr. Khan, Pakistan)

non-interference in each other's internal affairs are of fundamental importance. There can be no peace and tranquillity in the world unless these principles are respected by all States, big or small.

Within its modest means, Pakistan has pursued and promoted the objectives of the Declaration. Understandably, our principal contribution has been in our relations with the States of South Asia. In our view, considerable progress has been achieved in normalizing relations between the States of the region on the basis of step-by-step approach. Pakistan has also advanced several proposals to promote a system of security in our region. Other proposals for the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free zone in Asia and for securing assurances that the non-nuclear States in our region and elsewhere are not subjected to nuclear threat or blackmail have evoked a positive response from this Committee.

It will be apparent, therefore, that my delegation can fully support the objectives of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42. This is not to say that we agree with all of its assessments and assumptions about the present situation with regard to world peace and security.

First of all, it is difficult to conclude that significant progress has been achieved in strengthening international security and developing international relations as is stated in the preambular part of the draft resolution. Such a judgement should await more credible developments. We acknowledge that the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe was an important event for Europe and that it could have implications which extend beyond Europe. Nevertheless, we cannot also fail to note that some of the issues and tensions which have plagued Europe for the past many decades have yet to be overcome. Moreover, who can deny that the apparent decline of tensions in this traditional arena of global confrontation has shifted, and unwanted rivalries of big Powers have been transferred to other parts of the world, particularly to the regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America? These aspects of the world situation are not adequately reflected in the draft resolution.

Finally, we must point to a serious omission in operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution. While specific measures towards promoting disarmament have been mentioned, there is no reference in this paragraph to a very significant step which

(Mr. Khan, Pakistan)

has been affirmed by the General Assembly, that is, the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones. We believe that the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones in various parts of the world is an essential complement of the efforts towards disarmament and is a logical and essential corollary of the establishment of zones of peace and co-operation. It is our hope that the sponsors of the draft resolution will find their way to include a reference to nuclear weapon-free zones in operative paragraph 6.

Mr. KAPLLANI (Albania): The Albanian delegation cannot accept some parts of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42, in particular that preambular paragraph which evaluates the Conference on European Security and Co-operation. Likewise we cannot accept the contents of operative paragraph 8. For these reasons the Albanian delegation will not participate in the vote on the aforementioned draft resolution.

Mr. WHISTLER (United States of America): In 1975 the United States delegation voted against General Assembly resolution 3389 (XXX), principally because that resolution contained a paragraph which appears to suggest that traditional peaceful measures of diplomatic protection of foreign investment or other legal actions which a foreign investor may take in defence of his rights could constitute "a flagrant violation of the right of self-determination of peoples and the principle of non-intervention, as set forth in the Charter, which, if pursued, could constitute a threat to international peace and security". This proposition has no basis in the Charter, international law or the contemporary practice of States, yet it is repeated without change in operative paragraph 4 of the draft omnibus resolution that is about to be voted on by the First Committee. While there are other provisions of the draft resolution with which we do not agree, it is operative paragraph 4 that requires a firm negative vote on our part. The false concept and polemical language of that paragraph debase the General Assembly and its work product. The United States will not associate itself with an action of this character. In addition, we have objections to certain other provisions of the text -- in particular, operative paragraph 8 concerning security in the Mediterranean and the references in the penultimate preambular paragraph to actions taken at the sixth special session of the General Assembly. Accordingly, despite the last-minute changes, the United States will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42.

The CHAIRMAN: As no other delegation wishes to explain its vote before the voting, we shall now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42, as orally amended by the representative of Malta.

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by 103 votes to 1, with 16 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those delegations that wish to explain their votes after the voting.

Mr. SUCHARIPA (Austria): The Austrian delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42. Nevertheless, I should like to recall that, in previous years, the Austrian delegation expressed some reservations on different parts of preceding draft resolutions submitted under the same item. As the wording of the present draft resolution follows to a large extent the wording of previous resolutions on this agenda item, these reservations of my delegation remain valid.

To these general remarks, I should like to add some observations regarding the new element in the draft before us -- that is, operative paragraph 8. By making specific reference to one part of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, operative paragraph 8 does not satisfy the concern of my Government that all provisions of this Final Act have to be considered as having the same weight and therefore ought to be applied on an equal footing. This, however, does not mean that my Government agrees with the content of the Mediterranean document of the Final Act.

Finally, let me point out that the wording of the last part of operative paragraph 8, and especially its reference to the conversion of the Mediterranean into a zone of peace, as indeed the notion of a zone of peace in the Mediterranean itself, is, in the opinion of my delegation, very unclear.

In spite of these reservations, my delegation was in a position to cast a positive vote on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42 because we had no difficulties in supporting the main thrust of that draft.

Mr. EDMONDS (Canada): The Canadian delegation has abstained in the vote on the two draft resolutions which have been presented to us for approval today. Although we have reservations on certain passages in each of these resolutions, we should like to make brief reference at this time to just two elements in draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42, upon which we have just voted, that we would have difficulty in supporting.

First of all, with regard to the fifth preambular paragraph, even in its amended form, we cannot go along with the implicit misinterpretation of the results of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe cited therein -- namely, that all signatories of the Helsinki Declaration agreed that the security of Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East were all interconnected.

(Mr. Edmonds, Canada)

Secondly, we have strong reservations, in particular, about the last operative paragraph of this resolution, which could well have been omitted.

Continuing debate on this item year after year is not accomplishing its stated purpose, namely, the promotion of the ideal to which we all solemnly rededicated ourselves in adopting the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly. In other words, the Canadian delegation would prefer that this item not be automatically reinscribed on the agenda of the thirty-second regular session of the General Assembly.

Mr. ULUCEVIK (Turkey): The Turkish Government attaches great importance to the strengthening of international security and regards the unanimous adoption of the Declaration in 1970 by the twenty-fifth General Assembly as a positive contribution to this end. However, in the view of my Government, adoption of new resolutions on this very topic during each consecutive session of the General Assembly since 1970 has shown the tendency to impair the carefully balanced content of the 1970 Declaration. It was with this consideration that my delegation abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42 concerning the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

The CHAIRMAN: As no other representative wishes to explain his vote after the voting, we have thus concluded the consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42, as amended, and, in view of the statement made by the representative of Poland before the voting to the effect that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.43 do not insist on a vote on it, we have also concluded the consideration of the agenda item 33, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security".

CONCLUSION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

The CHAIRMAN: We are coming to the close of our work and, before making some concluding remarks, I should like to call on the Chairmen of the regional groups who wish to make short statements.

Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius): Now that we are concluding the deliberations of the First Committee, I wish, on behalf of the African States Members of the United Nations, to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our appreciation for your continuous effort up to the very last minute to bring about the successful conclusion of our work. It is indeed with a feeling of satisfaction that we place on record that this session has reaffirmed once again the common determination of all the members of the Committee to spare no effort to promote the cause of peace and understanding in a world free of armaments. In fact, the many resolutions adopted during this session reaffirmed our attachment to the principles that should

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

govern relations among States and established a closer link between the three inseparable elements of contemporary international life: disarmament, development and security. Your personal contribution to these results cannot be underestimated. It is our hope that political will will be shown in the future too in order to maintain the momentum that would lead us to a new, a better and a more just international world order.

The large number of participants in the debates proves that all countries -- regardless of their size, level of development, types of weapons at their disposal or other criteria -- are ready and willing to contribute to the solution of all international issues. This is, in fact, their right, the full exercise of which guarantees that we bring about solid, real agreements that would foster the cause of peace and security in the world.

I wish also to express our feeling of gratitude to the Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee, who have contributed to the success of our work.

I cannot conclude my statement without paying a very special tribute to the personal representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Arkady Shevchenko and to the eminent Secretary of the Committee, my beloved brother Ambassador P. K. Banerjee, who during this session, as always during the assignments with the United Nations, brought to this Conference room, competence, efficiency and a spirit of accommodation and guided the excellent staff at their disposal to make our work not only smooth but pleasant as well.

Of course I also wish to thank all the delegations in this Committee for their constructive attitude that has made the completion of the session a success.

To all those who have worked quietly and so effectively and efficiently behind the scenes, especially the Conference officers, the interpreters and translators, the précis-writers and reporters, the document officers and printers, the security officers and the technicians, and last but not least the cleaners, indeed to all who, however remotely, have contributed to the work of the First Committee in one way or another, I say thank you and wish them sincere seasonal greetings.

May I add that this is the first session of this Committee over the last eight years that our good friend and distinguished colleague, Ambassador Jacob Malik, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet

(Mr. Ramphul Mauritius)

Socialist Republics, has not participated in the work of the Committee. We are aware that Ambassador Malik has assumed higher responsibilities and will be the Chief of the African Affairs Department of the Foreign Office of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. We shall miss him greatly and we wish him well.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Chairman of the African Group and former Chairman of this Committee, Ambassador Ramphul, for his statement. I should like to recall that I had the pleasure to serve in this Committee some four years ago under his able and competent guidance, and he was one of those who have preceded me who have set high standards for the work of the First Committee. I thank him very much on my own behalf and also on behalf of my colleagues, the officers of the Committee, for his kind words addressed to us personally. I shall not fail also to convey his kind words to Ambassador Malik of the Soviet Union.

Mr. VUNIBOBO (Fiji): It is a pleasure on behalf of the Asian group to make this statement upon the successful completion of the work of the First Committee. At the outset permit me to convey to you, Sir, our sincere and very warm congratulations for the exemplary manner in which you have guided the deliberations of this Committee on vital matters, some of which enjoyed wide consensus, while others were concluded after fruitful exchange of views. The First Committee, as we all know, devotes its time and energy to issues relating to peace and security, which are of vital importance to humanity. While we might not have been able to solve all the complex and intricate problems relating to global peace and security, we definitely have had a very comprehensive and progressive debate as part of our continued and united search for peace and security -- the twin goals which are at the very heart of the concern of our world Organization. While it is difficult to highlight the achievements of our Committee in this brief intervention, delegates would no doubt agree that we have had positive and enlightened debates on such matters as the peaceful uses of outer space, the enormously complicated question of disarmament and the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Peace and Security. The question of disarmament alone took some five weeks of debates on some 18 items, during the course of which the Committee was able to adopt 21 draft resolutions. Perhaps this alone, Mr. Chairman, serves to reinforce the importance that the international community attaches to the various aspects of the disarmament question among others. In briefly taking note of our work, we feel it appropriate to mention once again the impartiality and firmness with which you, Mr. Chairman, applied yourself to our long and sometimes difficult agenda. The successful conclusion of the Committee's work is ample testimony to your varied and wide experience that you so ably brought to bear on the varied and complicated tasks of the Committee. Allow me also to extend our congratulations to the two Vice-Chairmen, the acting permanent representative of Portugal, Mr. Antonio da Costa Lobo, and Mr. Frank Boaten, Ambassador of Ghana, for their unfailing support of the Committee's work. We should also like to pay tribute to Mr. Kedar Shrestha of Nepal, a fellow member of the Asian group, whose commitment to the Committee's work is amply reflected in the succinct reports that he has prepared for us. We would be failing in our duty if we were not to acknowledge,

(Mr. Vunibobo, Fiji)

on behalf of the Asian group, the continued co-operation and assistance that was rendered to us by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Affairs and the Secretary of this Committee. And through you, Sir, may we also convey the deep sense of gratitude and our appreciation for the support that we continuously receive from the devoted Secretariat staff. And last, but not least, our sincere thanks go to the other United Nations staff members, including those that we could see and those who operated from behind the scene in performing such duties as keeping the vote tabulating machines going, conveying to us, in a language intelligible to all of us, the messages of various distinguished representatives on the various vital matters of peace and security. Finally, may I, on behalf of the Asian group, wish the members of your delegations and your families the compliments of the Christmas season.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Chairman of the Asian group of States, Ambassador Vunibobo of Fiji for his statement. I very greatly appreciate his kind and generous words addressed to me personally and also to my colleagues, the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur.

Mr. GAUCI (Malta): Mr. Chairman, I should like very briefly but very sincerely, on behalf of the group of Western European and other States, to thank you very much for the way in which you have managed this Committee. In fact, this enables me to rectify an omission, since I was unable, because of pressure of work, to extend to you fully and in a way which befits a representative of your country, the expressions of good neighbourly friendship and relations that we have for you as a representative of your country, Mr. Chairman. You have accomplished very good work in a very good-humoured and efficient way and I think we all must admire you for the way in which, despite the attempts in the other room to impede your efficiency by the mechanical means of voting and despite the fact that unfortunately you did not have an Einstein among your staff, you were still able to rise above these minor accidents, as shown by the results we have achieved. If we are to attempt to evaluate the session, Mr. Chairman, I think it was an important session. It was more or less a holding session -- a session of

(Mr. Gauci, Malta)

consolidation, a session which laid down the foundation of hopes for better progress at the next session. Despite the lack of exceptional substantive progress, you managed to maintain harmonious relations among delegations here and this, I think, is a very important fact. There is no denying -- and this may be for outsiders to determine -- that we do have a common determination to do better, we do have a common willingness to work hard and long in order to achieve the progress that has eluded us so far. Perhaps we can add that, as a result of the measures taken, the questions of disarmament will feature more prominently in the awareness of the general public and perhaps this might serve to stimulate our minds to seek the elusive agreement on substantive matters that we are always so proud of when we manage to achieve it. I should like to share in the expressions of goodwill put so ably by Ambassador Ramphul, who I think descended on us at the same time as I did at the United Nations, and therefore I need not repeat what he has said, but I do wish to join with him thanking the Secretariat, the representative of the Secretary-General and all the hands, seen and unseen, that have guided us in our work. And I think, Mr. Chairman, there is one more thing that we can all agree on, and that is that we all deserve the break that is ahead of us. For some it might not be a break but it should be a relief for a few days not to have to attend Committee sessions.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Chairman of the Western European and other group of States, Ambassador Gauci of Malta, for his statement. I should like to express to him my gratitude for his kind reference to the friendly relations between our two countries and for his kind words about me and about my colleagues on the Bureau of the Committee. I certainly share his views and the views of those who preceded him about the positive accomplishments of this Committee, but to this I propose to address myself a little later.

Mr. YANKOV (Bulgaria): Mr. Chairman, I should like on behalf of the Eastern European Group to congratulate you most warmly on the successful completion of the work of this Committee and to express to you our most sincere appreciation of the way in which you have conducted its deliberations. I feel particularly gratified by the fact that the representative of Poland, a fraternal country and one of the most active members of our Group, has discharged his important functions with such distinction. We are pleased to note that you have done credit to the confidence which our countries and the entire Committee have placed in you. I am sure that my colleagues in the Committee will share my assumption that if the Political and Security Committee has successfully dealt with such a long and complex agenda, a great deal of this achievement is to be attributed to your high skill and dedication, to your most competent, sometimes firm, but always fair and wise guidance.

The number of resolutions adopted by the Committee on so many topical issues related to international security and disarmament is yet another proof of the efficiency with which you have conducted the work of this Committee. Congratulations go also to the Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Boaten, of Ghana, and Mr. da Costa Lobo, of Portugal, and the Rapporteur, Mr. Shrestha, of Nepal, who have so ably assisted you in shouldering your heavy workload. I wish also to address our appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Comrade Shevchenko, the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Banarjee, and his staff, visible and invisible, including the working class in the Secretariat, who have offered their competent assistance with devotion and a sense of responsibility.

We are pleased to note that the constructive and meaningful deliberations in a spirit of accommodation and understanding which prevailed during this session in our Committee will be a new impetus in our common efforts to provide a comprehensive and viable framework for the strengthening of international peace and security.

The discussions on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space, the consideration of the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international affairs, the discussions on 18 different items on disarmament and on the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security will constitute a fruitful basis for the future activities of the United Nations.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

Let us hope that the implementation of the decisions adopted by the Committee will be an important contribution of our Organization in the discharge of its noble mission.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Deputy Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, Mr. Yankov, my good friend, who spoke on behalf of the Eastern European Group of States. I am really overwhelmed by his kind words addressed to me. I should like to thank him in particular as it was precisely the East European Group of States which unanimously endorsed my candidature for the post of Chairman of this Committee. I thank him also for his words addressed to my colleagues on the Bureau of the Committee.

Mr. MOORE (Guyana): Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Group of Latin American States of the United Nations my delegation has the honour to extend to you the warmest congratulations and deep appreciation and satisfaction for the excellent and most efficient manner in which you have carried out your functions as Chairman of the First Committee.

We as a Group feel that under your expert guidance this Committee has been able to complete the very important tasks on international, political and security issues assigned to it in an extremely competent, satisfactory and friendly manner. We sincerely hope that in the future you will be able to continue to contribute the knowledge, expertise and skilful tact which you have so vividly demonstrated during the course of our deliberations, not only in future sessions of the First Committee, but in any other international forum in which you may serve. We wish also to congratulate the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, the Ambassadors of Portugal and Ghana, and in addition to congratulate the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Affairs, the Secretary of the Committee and the Rapporteur of the Committee, as well as the other members of the Bureau on the way in which they, too, discharged their functions. We feel that their contributions were no less important to the efficient conduct of the business of this Committee.

We wish further to express our deep satisfaction with the excellent facilities and services provided by the Secretariat, without which it would not

(Mr. Moore, Guyana)

have been possible for this Committee to complete its work in such a smooth and competent manner.

We in Latin America, however, would hope that after fully eight weeks of deliberations in this Committee the decisions taken might be seen as yet another step towards the creation of an international environment free of instability and insecurity, and it can only be hoped that the various States Members of this Organization will make every effort to implement the decisions embodied in the resolutions which we have adopted here in order that positive results may be achieved over the forthcoming year.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Guyana, Mr. Moore, who spoke on behalf of the Latin American Group of States for his statement, and in particular for his very kind words addressed to me personally, as well as to other officers of the Committee.

Mr. HAMZA (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Arab Group, I have the honour to congratulate you most warmly on the success which you have brought to the work of our Committee. Thanks to your wisdom, experience, diplomatic tact, you have been able to preside over the work of this Committee in such a way as to conclude consideration of the items on the agenda despite the very scarce time given us to consider them. We are particularly gratified at the concrete results achieved by the First Committee in our discussions. And, as far as we are concerned, it is perhaps a matter of pride to say that you represent the People's Republic of Poland, a friendly country that has always been on the side of the rights and the legitimate claims of the Arab world.

May I also extend my congratulations and thanks to the Vice-Chairmen, the representatives of Ghana and Portugal, who have also proved their competence and have measured up to the confidence placed upon them and borne the responsibilities that were placed on their shoulders when we elected them.

I would not overlook of course the important role played by the representative of Nepal as the Rapporteur of our Committee in the fulfilment of his functions.

May I, Sir, on behalf of my brothers, the representatives of the Arab States and personally address to you and the officers of the Committee who worked under your authority to wish you all success in your forthcoming undertakings.

I wish also to express our appreciation to all the others who have participated in our work, the representative of the Secretary-General and the Secretary of our Committee, for whom we have the greatest admiration for the contributions that they have made to the work of the First Committee.

We wish, too, to greet the many unknown soldiers, the members of the Secretariat, the interpreters, those in charge of the verbatim records, the documents officers, conference officers and other members of the staff.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, may I express our thanks to you for the many efforts that you have made to make this success possible and we wish you a very happy New Year.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Democratic Yemen, Mr. Hamza, who spoke on behalf of the Arab Group of States. I am deeply moved by his very

(The Chairman)

kind words addressed to me and I should like to thank him also for the words he addressed to my fellow-officers of the Committee, and I can assure him that I appreciate very deeply his kind reference to my country, Poland, and to the friendly relations existing between his country and mine.

I think the time has come for me to say a few words and concluding remarks before we adjourn this Committee.

Too many kind words have just been addressed to me as well as to the other officers of the Committee on the conclusion of this Committee's work. In accepting them in all humility I also realize that at times like this the tradition of courtesy is perhaps bound to take precedence over the consideration of merit. But if only a modest part of what the representatives of Mauritius, Fiji, Malta, Bulgaria, Guyana and Democratic Yemen have just said on behalf of their respective groups of States conforms with the real state of affairs I take their statements as an expression of distinction and privilege for me to have been able to conduct the work of our Committee. I wish to thank them once again most cordially for their sentiments and good wishes which I fully reciprocate.

Today, when we are about to conclude our deliberations, I can only repeat what I said at the beginning of our work more than two months ago, namely, that I have always taken my election to the Chairmanship of this important Committee as first and foremost a token of distinction conferred upon the Polish delegation in recognition of the peaceful, constructive and consistent foreign policy of my country and of its active involvement in the work of the United Nations from the Organization's very inception.

Reflecting on the eight weeks of hard work of the First Committee this year, with your permission, I would have three admissions to make.

My first admission is one of arithmetics.

At the current session members of the First Committee spent well over 100 hours together. Out of 80 substantive meetings allotted to us, we have held only 56 meetings thus saving considerable time and money which otherwise could have been spent for servicing our deliberations. We have managed to retain the best rate of punctuality among all seven Main Committees of the Assembly which, however, has not prevented us from losing some 18 hours as a result of lateness in starting our meetings. Finally, we have passed 25 resolutions including 8 resolutions adopted by consensus.

(The Chairman)

My second admission relates to substance.

We are concluding our work this year not without important accomplishments. True, what we have achieved is only commensurate with the present state of world affairs, but after all, is not this Organization precisely a reflection of a political world around us?

On the one hand we have dealt with traditional items of the Committee's successive agendas. Yet their discussion this year proceeded in a climate characteristic of the current phase of international development, to mention only the broad range of disarmament items or that on the strengthening of international security. On the other hand we started consideration of a new inspiring subject concerning the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

When I refer to our accomplishments I think of the Committee's first consensus resolution which outlined the programme of work in the important field of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

When I claim some success in our work, I have in mind 21 resolutions on various aspects of disarmament, 7 of which were adopted by consensus. Disarmament matters have always played an important role in the work of the First Committee. This year, too, they traditionally pertained to a wide spectrum of problems. For the first time in the last five years, our Committee has come up with an arms limitation measure, in the form of the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, meant to exclude one more environment from the global arms race.

(The Chairman)

Nuclear disarmament, prohibition of the development or manufacture of new kinds of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their elimination from the arsenals of all States; the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament; special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament; world disarmament conference; strengthening of the régime of non-proliferation; nuclear-free zones; general and complete disarmament -- these are but a few catch phrases whose substantive and political content can hardly be over-estimated as guiding pillars of our disarmament discussions, in which, I venture to say, we have managed to advance and keep up the momentum of their lasting topicality.

When I quote positive results of our work I recall the interesting review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, which every year offers new elements for appraisal and proves what an important impact that historic Declaration has had upon international relations. When I see achievement in the work of this Committee, I trace it clearly in the outcome of our discussions of the new item concerning the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. In fact, this new subject has logically embraced under one heading most of the other items on our agenda, whether they concern disarmament or the strengthening of international security.

Last, but not least, when I speak of the over-all record of accomplishment, I have in mind the constructive atmosphere of our deliberations all through the entire session of this Committee. All in all, there would be no exaggeration in saying that both the course and the effects of our work have confirmed the role of the First Committee, which, next to the General Assembly and the Security Council, remains the leading political organ in the United Nations and indeed represents the basic reflection of the very essence of the purposes and principles of our Organization.

My third admission is an admission of gratitude. The Chairman and the other officers of the Committee owe it to the membership of this Committee that we achieved what we did. Your active involvement and understanding, dear colleagues,

(The Chairman)

greatly facilitated the performance of the duties entrusted to the Chair. My special thanks go to numerous participants in our debates, sponsors of resolutions, as well as to those whose efforts did so much to smooth the negotiating and resolution-making process. I am grateful to all for the co-operation extended to me personally and to the Bureau, for the courtesy and generosity bestowed upon me by members of the Committee.

I address my sincere expressions of gratitude and appreciation to the two Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, Minister Antonio da Costa Lobo, of Portugal, and Ambassador Frank Edmond Boaten, of Ghana, as well as to the Rapporteur, Mr. Kedar Bhakta Shrestha, of Nepal. Their invaluable co-operation with and assistance to the Chairman have been part and parcel of the functioning of the First Committee.

I am also grateful to all the officers of the Secretariat, so ably led by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Ambassador Arkady Shevchenko, the Secretary of the First Committee, Ambassador Purnendu Banarjee, as well as Directors of the respective divisions, especially Dr. Rolf Björnerstedt, of the Disarmament Division, for their most valuable assistance, based upon great experience and knowledge of the functioning of the United Nations.

I thank the interpreters, translators, verbatim and OPI reporters, conference and documentation officers, as well as all the technical staff, for their hard work and proper understanding of their duties.

At this juncture I cannot fail to extend, on behalf of this Committee, our warm congratulations to our distinguished Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, on his unanimous re-election to the highest office in the Secretariat of the United Nations. I would request our distinguished Under-Secretary-General kindly to convey the sentiments of this Committee to Mr. Waldheim.

Whatever we have achieved this fall in the First Committee conference rooms is a product of a collective effort for which I am most grateful to all concerned. Extending to all of you my sincere season's greetings, I wish you much personal success in your future endeavours and a happy new year.

(The Chairman)

The last meeting of the First Committee during the thirty-first session of the General Assembly has thus been concluded. This Committee stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.