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Chairman: Mr. HOLLAI (Hungary)
Vice-Chairman

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- (c) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 38 AND 51 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will take up the remaining resolutions relating to disarmament. I understand that the Committee is ready to proceed to the vote and to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The remarks I made last week on Wednesday, 16 November, in introducing draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28 on the SALT talks apply equally to the substance of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1, which was distributed in due course to members of the First Committee and is sponsored by the delegations of Argentina, Ghana, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sweden.

Accordingly, today I shall only add some brief comments to what I have said earlier to explain the slight changes in the text of a new draft as compared with the original. These changes, which are the result of consultations which we, the sponsors, have held with other delegations in seeking to obtain general acceptance of the draft resolution, are the following:

First, in the second preambular paragraph, instead of the word "Reaffirming", we have used the words "Recalling also", so as to dispel any scruples which States might have had when they abstained on one or more of the six General Assembly resolutions mentioned in that paragraph.

Secondly, in the next paragraph, which is the last preambular paragraph, we have decided to speak of the absence of "definitive" results instead of "positive" results, because the delegations of the two super-Powers, which, after all, are the only ones that really know what has been going on in the SALT talks since they are shrouded in secrecy, seem to be firmly convinced that some progress has been achieved in the last three years, even though as yet it has not been possible for progress to have ended in complete success.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Thirdly, operative paragraphs 3 and 4 have been combined into a single paragraph, where we omit any specific mention of "important qualitative limitations and substantial reductions" from the strategic systems of the nuclear weapons of the two super-Powers.

We have agreed to this omission taking into account that some delegations felt that the original draft prejudged highly controversial issues which are precisely those that are now the subject of delicate negotiations at Geneva.

Nevertheless, this does not imply any change in the position of the sponsors of the draft resolution as regards substance. What has happened in the new text is that the "necessity and urgency" - I quote from the former operative paragraph 4 - now mean that it is for the United States and the Soviet Union to "strive to implement as soon as possible" the declarations of their respective heads of State, which are reproduced verbatim in operative paragraphs 1 and 2, and that the original invitation contained in operative paragraph 3 is now addressed to the Governments of both super-Powers "to adopt without delay all relevant measures to achieve that objective". The objective, as can be inferred from operative paragraphs 1 and 2, goes far beyond any appeals made by the General Assembly in past resolutions on the subject, since both President Carter as well as the President of the Supreme Soviet, Mr. Brezhnev, have committed themselves not only to reductions but as President Carter said, they will work towards further reduction so as to arrive at a world truly free of nuclear weapons and, as Mr. Brezhnev said, to move towards the complete, total destruction of existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

A fourth and last change is that in operative paragraph 5 of the former text, which has now become operative paragraph 4, and the last paragraph in the revised draft resolution, we have deleted the words "the progress and", and we have included the words "appropriate information" rather than the reference originally made to "a special report".

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

We co-sponsors of the draft resolution believe we have thereby registered the spirit of conciliation which prompts us and our open-mindedness regarding the points of view of other States, in the certainty that our attitude will be rewarded when the draft resolution is submitted to the Committee for its pronouncement on it.

The CHAIRMAN: May I take it that the Committee is ready to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1? I understand that the Committee would like to adopt it by consensus.

Mr. ANGONI (Albania) (interpretation from French): My delegation would like a vote to be taken on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1.

The CHAIRMAN: That being the case, I shall now call on those delegations wishing to explain their votes before the vote.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): I should like to explain the support the United States gives to draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1. Together with the Soviet Union, the United States is engaged in an intensive effort to work out the remaining aspects of a SALT II agreement, a step in a continuing process that will require persistence and patience.

As stated by President Carter, the Government of the United States hopes that current and future rounds of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks will permit the United States and the Soviet Union to reach agreement on substantial reductions in the arsenals of both States. We understand the strong interest with which other members of the international community follow the progress of these negotiations. Accordingly we intend to inform the special session on disarmament of the results achieved in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The limitation of strategic arms, with regard to which talks are going on between the Soviet Union and the United States, is an extremely important matter which is of vast significance for the peoples of our two

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

countries and the peoples of the whole world. The Soviet Union has constantly striven to achieve agreement on the limitation of strategic arms and is doing everything in its power to bring this about, in the firm conviction that a mutually acceptable agreement at these talks on the basis of strict observance of the principles of the equality and equal security of States is fully attainable.

The Soviet Union believes that we should call a halt to the arms race and begin gradually to reduce the level of military confrontation. We wish substantially to reduce and finally to eliminate the threat of nuclear war. It is precisely for this reason that the Soviet Union proposes that we come to an agreement on the simultaneous cessation by all States of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, whether they be atomic, hydrogen or neutron bombs or missiles. At the same time the nuclear Powers could undertake to begin the gradual reduction of existing stockpiles and move towards their total destruction. We agree that urgent measures are needed to attain this goal.

On the basis of these considerations, the Soviet delegation will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1.

The CHAIRMAN: As no other representatives wish to explain their votes before the vote, we shall now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1, pertaining to agenda item 51, entitled "General and complete disarmament". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sudan, Surinam, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia

Against: Albania, China

The draft resolution was adopted by 91 votes to 2.

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

Mr. YANG (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese Government's principled stand and views on the question of nuclear disarmament are well known to all. The draft resolution on SALT contained in document A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1 makes an assessment of the recent statements of the two super-Powers which is not acceptable to us. For this reason the Chinese delegation has voted against the draft resolution.

Mr. SY (Senegal) (interpretation from French): My delegation was not present when the vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1. I wish it to be placed on record that, had we been present, we would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. NABETA (Uganda): Had the Uganda delegation been present when the voting took place on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1, it would have voted in favour.

Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation was absent when the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1, entitled "General and complete disarmament" was taken. Had we been present, we would have voted in favour. I hope that that will be appropriately recorded.

Mr. HAQUE (Bangladesh): I could not be present for the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1. Had I been present, I would have voted in favour.

Mr. FADHLI (Democratic Yemen): Had we been present during the vote, we would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1.

Mr. KAJAL (Nigeria): My delegation co-sponsored draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1. Unfortunately, I was not present when the vote was taken on that draft resolution. I wish it to be placed on record that I would have voted in favour had I been present.

Mr. ORTEGA (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation was absent when the vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1. We should like to indicate that we would have voted in favour had we been present.

Mr. SIKAULU (Zambia): My delegation was absent during the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1. Had we been present, we would have voted in favour.

Mr. MASOODI (Thailand): I was absent during the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1. Had I been present, I would have voted in favour.

The CHAIRMAN: The statements of those delegations that were unable to be present during the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.28/Rev.1 will be included in the record.

As no other delegation wishes to explain its vote, the consideration of agenda item 51, "General and complete disarmament" is concluded.

The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1 pertaining to agenda item 38, entitled "Incendiary and other specific conventional weapons which may be the subject of prohibitions or restrictions of use for humanitarian reasons". The draft resolution has financial implications which are set forth in document A/C.1/32/L.44. The draft resolution is sponsored by 14 delegations and was introduced by the representative of Sweden on 15 November.

I shall now call on those delegations wishing to explain their votes before the vote.

Mr. NEUBERT (Federal Republic of Germany): The Federal Republic of Germany will abstain in the vote on resolution A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1 on "Incendiary and other specific conventional weapons which may be the subject of prohibitions or restrictions of the use for humanitarian reasons". It is with great regret that my delegation is not able to support this draft resolution. We still have a number of reservations on the contents of the present text.

The Federal Republic of Germany joined in the consensus on resolution 22 (IV) of the Diplomatic Conference on humanitarian law which called for a Conference of Governments to be held not later than 1979 to complete the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Weaponry. We feel committed to resolution 22 (IV) and are fully prepared to consider further steps as proposed in that text.

We feel, however, that draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1 does not fully reflect the consensus arrived at in Geneva, to which we feel committed. Resolution 22 (IV) of the Diplomatic Conference in fact stated that further work in this field should in all cases seek the broadest possible agreement. The Federal Republic of Germany considers that it is only on the basis of decisions taken by consensus that the 1979 conference can be successful.

(Mr. Neubert, Federal Republic
of Germany)

My delegation hopes that it will be increasingly understood that the procedures applicable in a deliberative organ are not suitable for a conference with a totally different task, namely, to draft agreements intended to become binding under international law. To be widely accepted, prohibitions or restrictions on weapons should be based on a balanced appreciation of both the military and humanitarian factors involved. The Federal Republic of Germany also believes that it would be premature to consider any rigid system of review for conventional weapons before progress has been made in the preparatory conferences on possible agreements which would be the subject of such a review. The Federal Republic of Germany considers that the 1979 conference should be built upon the common ground identified in the Ad Hoc Committee on Weaponry and endeavour to work out agreements on those proposals for which there is a sufficiently wide measure of support.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): The United States has participated actively in previous international work on conventional weapons issues and we are fully prepared to support the continuation of that work in any international forum which is suitable for those issues and in which there is a reasonable prospect for meaningful progress. However, in our view meaningful progress can only be made if the procedural arrangements for this work are carefully designed to ensure that the results are acceptable to interested States. In particular we believe that the rule of consensus must be observed in reaching any decision on the restriction or prohibition of conventional weapons, and we are disappointed that neither the text of this resolution nor the statements of its co-sponsors offer assurance that that will be the case. Accordingly, we have decided to abstain from voting on this draft resolution.

In addition, we are disappointed that the language of the third operative paragraph deviates from that of the resolution adopted by the Geneva Conference on humanitarian law in armed conflicts which called for meetings of Governments on these issues.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The question of the prohibition or restriction of the use of specific conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects belongs to the category of questions on disarmament. As has been repeatedly stated by the Soviet Union, it should be viewed within the context of the problems of disarmament and at the appropriate international forums. Without any doubt, it is connected with the security of States, and for its solution we must reckon with considerations of a military character regardless of the motives for which it is proposed to prohibit or limit the use of any given types of conventional weapons. Therefore we should, of course, take into account the experience of talks on the questions of disarmament affecting the security of States. To disregard that experience would lead, incidentally, to a situation where attempts to resolve this question at a Conference on international humanitarian law in Geneva, faced with other tasks, did not lead to results.

In the course of consultations the Soviet delegation patiently explained its views to the sponsors of the draft resolution now before the Committee. We should acknowledge that some very perceptible changes were made from the initial draft. Nevertheless, we cannot agree with all the provisions in the draft resolution now under consideration. In particular, we see in it an attempt to prejudge the character and orientation of the work of the future conference. For example, in operative paragraph 2 it is provided that the Conference should deal with the question of a system of periodic review of this matter. We consider that the determination of what the Conference should deal with is the business of the Conference itself and of its preparatory organs. It is also important that the method for taking decisions at the Conference should be in keeping with the special nature of the questions which will be discussed there; and on those questions directly connected with the security of States, decisions should be taken on the basis of consensus. Only the general consent of the participants in that enterprise can ensure concrete results. Since these views of ours were not taken into account by the sponsors of the draft resolution, the Soviet delegation will not support the draft resolution in the voting.

Mr. LAY (Italy): At the conclusion of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, the Italian delegation joined in the consensus on the resolution adopted there concerning further consideration of the question of the prohibition or restriction of the use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects.

This resolution provided for the convening of a conference of States not later than 1979. The Italian delegation associated itself with such a proposal in the firm conviction that the future conference would follow the rules already established, and in fact respected, by the Diplomatic Conference. While we are fully in favour of the principle of humanizing warfare and, hence, of prohibiting or limiting the use of certain weapons, it is our firm opinion that any decision which the future conference may take on this delicate matter - a matter in which a proper balance must be struck between legitimate humanitarian needs and the equally legitimate security requirements of all States - can only be adopted by consensus. In our opinion, this fundamental principle should also be applied to the work and the deliberations of whatever preparatory committee may be set up. It is only by respecting this principle that the future conference may achieve a happy ending and that ratification by all participating States may be ensured. Draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1 does not seem to provide clear, precise or unequivocal guarantees on this essential requirement.

In addition, some of the proposals of this draft resolution, in particular the fifth preambular paragraph, do not seem to reflect the real situation and appear to exceed the extent of consensus actually achieved, both at the previous Conferences of military experts in Lucerne and Lugano, and at the Diplomatic Conference.

For these reasons, the Italian delegation is not in a position to cast a vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1 and will therefore abstain.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): While we understand the difficulties encountered by certain Member States in voting for this draft resolution and the arguments put forward, yet the matter is of such vital importance that at some time a prohibition must be placed on weapons, the use of which is considered by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) as violating the laws of war according to which the means of combat should be restricted in two ways: weapons should not cause superfluous injury - and it is abundantly evident that napalm bombs cause superfluous injury; and weapons should not be used indiscriminately against combatants as well as non-combatants without regard to their general effect.

I should like to centre my attention on napalm bombs and I will first refer to the United Nations report of 1972 which pointed out that:

"Napalm is particularly barbarous because it causes injuries that are superfluous and particularly cruel to the civilian population."

Those are the words of the report. They do not answer any military purpose really. They create tremendous suffering without achieving the aim of using weapons in wars.

First of all, according to SIPRI more than a quarter of the people struck by napalm are likely to suffer burns over more than 25 per cent of their bodies. Secondly, about one third of the napalm casualties die within half an hour in intense agony. Thirdly, if a victim badly burned by napalm survives the first day he remains in a critical state, that is a state of agony for 30 or 40 days and then dies. Those 30 or 40 days of agony from napalm bombing are not caused by any other weapons and, therefore, this matter should be dealt with thoroughly and expeditiously. Fourthly, despite intensive medical care less than 20 per cent of such casualties live through convalescence. Even if they manage to get over it they will not survive convalescence, which is in itself most painful and arduous. Not only are burn wounds intensely painful but large-scale treatment requires enormous medical resources far beyond the capacity of most countries.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

These are the napalm bombs that we want to have prohibited. I speak on this matter with some emotion because my country was the most recent large-scale victim of napalm bombing - in 1974 - when open cities were attacked, forests unreasonably burned and destroyed and tremendous suffering caused to human beings in the way I have just mentioned. That is why we not only support and shall vote for this draft resolution but we are, moreover, astonished that for two years the Conference of Government Experts in Geneva managed to hold discussions over minor differences and difficulties endlessly, without regard to the intensity of human suffering caused by these weapons, without respect to the suffering of humanity because of these weapons continuing to be in use.

Therefore we fully support the convening of the conference in 1979 although we think that is not soon enough. Let us hope that mankind will show some respect for the most essential element of human rights, the prohibition of the use of napalm and other incendiary weapons which cause unnecessarily terrible suffering to humanity.

Mr. ELLIOTT (Belgium) (interpretation from French): Belgium wishes to reaffirm its support for the convening of an intergovernmental conference on the prohibition or restriction of use of certain conventional weapons in accordance with resolution 22 (IV) of the Diplomatic Conference on Humanitarian law.

As indicated in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution before us we consider that this conference should above all deal with areas of common ground. However, Belgium will abstain on the draft resolution because of considerations relating to the organization of the conference and to the processes of decision-taking. Indeed, in a field where humanitarian and military considerations are so closely linked it is essential that decisions should be adopted by consensus because in the absence of a consensus on the part of the major military Powers it is to be feared that any decision taken will not be followed by action.

On the other hand, we would wish this conference to be open to all States which are interested and express a desire to participate. Finally, we further consider that it seems premature at this stage to consider before the conference is held the establishment of a system of periodic review.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1, the financial implications of which are explained in document A/C.1/32/L.44. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sudan, Surinam, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against: None

Abstaining: Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mongolia, Poland, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The draft resolution was adopted by 84 votes to none, with 21 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call upon representatives who wish to explain their votes.

Mr. TAYLOR (United Kingdom): We abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/32/29/Rev.1. The United Kingdom wishes nevertheless to reaffirm its support for resolution 22 IV of the Diplomatic Conference on Humanitarian Law, which called for a conference to be held not later than 1979 to complete the work of its ad hoc committee on weapons. That resolution stated that further work in this field should in all cases seek the broadest possible agreement. The United Kingdom considers that it is only on this basis that the 1979 will be successful. Indeed, it is the view of the United Kingdom that the work should proceed on the basis of consensus. It is partly because of the lack of adequate assurance on this point either in the draft resolution itself or in the statements by the sponsors that the United Kingdom has abstained. To be widely acceptable, prohibitions or restrictions on weapons should be based on a balanced appreciation of both the military and the humanitarian factors involved, and in our view this calls for procedure by consensus.

The United Kingdom also believes that it would be premature to consider any system of review for conventional weapons until progress has been made in the preparatory conference on possible agreements which would be the subject of such a review. We find the language in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution on which we have just voted unsatisfactory in this respect also. As we made clear to the sponsors, we would have preferred language which followed more closely that of resolution 22 IV.

The United Kingdom considers that the 1979 Conference should build upon the common ground identified in the ad hoc committee of the Humanitarian Law Conference and should be prepared to adopt agreements on those proposals for which there is a sufficiently wide measure of support.

Mr. OXLEY (Australia): The Australian delegation supported draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1. This decision reflected the concern of my delegation to take a constructive approach towards the goal of achieving

(Mr. Oxley, Australia)

agreement on prohibitions and limitations on the use of certain types of conventional weapons. I know this approach is shared by those delegations with which Australia co-operated in the course of the intensive discussions already held to date within the framework of the Diplomatic Conference. However, my delegation considers that the deliberations that have taken place to date on preparations for the conference called for in draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1 are deficient in a very important respect: that is that it has not been agreed that decision making in the preparatory stages, and, for that matter, at the conference itself, should be by consensus. My delegation regards decision making by consensus within this particular context as of great importance. The limitations and restrictions being considered have a direct bearing on the security of all States. The proposed conference will not be one convened to adopt resolutions or, for example, prepare exultatory declarations, but will have the task of negotiating legal instruments placing prohibitions or restrictions on the use of certain sorts of weapons which a great number of States already possess. Also, it is my delegation's view that if a convention is evolved which does not enjoy the support of the militarily significant States, then that convention may have little value.

Mr. ULUCEVIK (Turkey): The Turkish Government has always considered favourably the idea of reaching agreement on possible rules prohibiting or restricting the use of incendiary and other excessively injurious or indiscriminate conventional weapons and has supported every initiative to that end. We still whole-heartedly support the idea in its substance. However, as far as the draft resolution in document A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1 is concerned, we are not quite sure whether it envisages the best possible procedure for this important question.

Although we are not overlooking the humanitarian considerations involved in this subject, in our view the question of banning the use of certain specific conventional weapons is a disarmament matter. As is generally acknowledged, decisions relating to disarmament measures must be based on consensus to the broadest possible extent if they are to be effective.

(Mr. Ulucelik, Turkey)

Therefore, my delegation firmly believes that an effective ban on the use of incendiary and other excessively injurious or indiscriminate conventional weapons can only result from decisions reflecting the consensus of the participating Governments in the relevant conference.

My delegation considers that the draft resolution just adopted by this Committee does not fully meet our concerns about the decision making procedure. It was solely with this consideration in mind that the Turkish delegation reluctantly abstained in the voting.

Mr. d'AMECOURT (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation would like to make some comments with regard to the vote that has just been taken on draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.29/Rev.1, on which we abstained.

The principle of convening an international conference to examine measures for regulating the use of certain types of weapons considered as having excessively injurious effects was adopted by consensus during recent sessions of the international Diplomatic Conference on humanitarian law in armed conflicts. The French Government has always been convinced of the need for regulating the use of certain inhumane weapons, and at the Lucerne and Lugano Conferences, convened under the auspices of the International Red Cross, it set forth a number of proposals in this field.

France has always felt, however, that the study of these questions should not be confined to the humanitarian approach proper and that aspects of defence should also at the same time be taken into account in any attempt to regulate the situation. This is absolutely imperative, and if we want to achieve concrete and positive results we must take that approach.

Another point which flows directly from these preceding considerations is that it is important for decisions not to be imposed on certain countries by homogeneous majorities of any kind and, therefore, that decisions on the subject should be taken by consensus.

We can only note that this provision did not appear with all the desirable clarity in the text which was submitted to us. Also, we see possibilities of different interpretations in the way in which the draft resolution presented to us was drafted. It might be thought, indeed, that there had been some agreement in the case of arms which could be studied at the proposed conference. That is not the case, and my delegation would like to point out, with reference to the last preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, that the French Government, while it is ready to discuss draft resolutions on weapons, such as those that cause injury by fragments not detectable by X-ray, land-mines, booby-traps and certain types of incendiary weapons, has not agreed to the examination of the case of small-calibre projectiles or certain blast weapons.

The French Government has formulated the most express reservations on these points.

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 38. I should like at this stage to make a brief statement.

(The Chairman)

With the adoption this morning of the two remaining draft resolutions, we have come to the conclusion of the Committee's consideration of the questions of disarmament under 17 separate items. We discussed those items at 34 meetings, 21 of which were devoted to general debate. In that respect it is worth noting that some 110 representatives spoke in the general debate. Furthermore, the Committee adopted 24 resolutions, including 10 by consensus or unanimous vote.

The number of speakers, as well as the number of resolutions adopted, emphasizes the increasing importance attached by the international community to the problem of disarmament. Similarly, the views heard in the general debate underline the common concern of the world community and reflect its apprehension at the unrelenting arms race, with particular stress on the urgent need to stem the flow of the vast resources wasted on the production, stockpiling, perfection and transfer of arms. Those resources could and should be channelled to ensure the welfare of mankind.

The Committee adopted a large number of resolutions which will allow either the continuation of the work and efforts on disarmament on the existing basis or which offer an entirely new framework for such efforts, as is the case with the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978, which will provide an opportunity for the international community to take important and appropriate action on disarmament with the participation of all Member States.

At this stage already there have been some developments of particular importance to the general objective of slowing down the arms race. I refer specifically to the progress that has been made on the question of cessation of nuclear tests.

A great deal of effort has gone into the adoption of the 24 disarmament resolutions. I wish to thank all the delegations for their contributions, whether as sponsors or co-sponsors, by their interventions during the debate or by their informal consultations on draft resolutions. I have no doubt that their constructive efforts were essential to the final positive outcome of our work.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.