

United Nations
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY
THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION
*Official Records**



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FIRST COMMITTEE
29th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 9 November 1982
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 29TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GBEHO (Ghana)

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| Mr. Ijewere (Nigeria) | - A/C.1/37/L.10 |
| Mr. Rose (German Democratic Republic) | - A/C.1/37/L.11 |
| Mr. Issraelyan (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) | - A/C.1/37/L.6 and L.7 |

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/37/PV.29
13 November 1982

ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 11.00 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 39 TO 57, 133, 136, 138, 139 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: We shall begin consideration of and action upon draft resolutions under the disarmament items. As has been the practice of the First Committee in previous years, draft resolutions do not have to be introduced in the chronological order of agenda items or document numbers, but whenever sponsors are ready to do so. So far 14 draft resolutions have been submitted to the Committee and I invite their sponsors to introduce them as early as possible so that other delegations may address their comments to those drafts. I should like to state that while Members are urged to observe the deadline of 1 p.m. on 17 November for the submission of draft resolutions, this does not mean that draft resolutions should be held up until that moment. Delegations are invited to submit draft resolutions as soon as possible, especially those which contain financial implications, in view of the fact that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly must take action on them before they are considered by the plenary Assembly.

Mr. IJEWERE: (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, my delegation had availed itself of an earlier opportunity during the general debate which ended last Friday in this Committee to extend its courtesies to you. In adding my personal greetings and best wishes to those courtesies, which you so richly deserve, I wish to introduce the draft resolution on the United Nations programme of fellowships on disarmament contained in document A/C.1/37/L.10 of 4 November 1982. I do so on behalf of the delegations of the Bahamas, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Greece, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Nigeria, the Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the United Republic of Cameroon, Venezuela, Yugoslavia and Zambia.

Conceived as an effort to encourage and promote expertise in disarmament, particularly among developing countries, the United Nations programme of fellowships on disarmament has, since its inception in 1979, come to represent a modest investment in human development.

(Mr. Ijewere, Nigeria)

While it is incontrovertible that disarmament remains essentially a political decision for Member States, it is the firm view of the sponsors that since wars are made in the minds of men it is also in the minds of men that the defences of peace, the object of disarmament, must be constructed. The expectation therefore is that the disarmament follows, through an understanding of the dynamics of the arms race as well as of the security perception of States, which is its most visible index, would assist their various Governments in developing domestic policies and international attitudes favouring disarmament, in which all States have a stake for their survival.

Additionally and in view of the growing interest which continues to be manifested in the programme by an ever-increasing number of States, the number of fellowships was recently increased from 20 to 25 as from 1983. The sponsors have taken note of this with satisfaction as well as of the programme content, which has progressively benefited from an extended experience of its implementation.

The draft resolution which the Committee now has before it is presented with all objectivity and sense of realism. It invites representatives to take cognizance of the concrete nature of the programme, the growing interest in it among Member States and its modest contribution to the relevant debates as an input disarmament processes at the multilateral level. It then requests the Secretary-General to provide the necessary support services through adequate staffing at the appropriate level to implement the programme as from 1983.

As presented, we believe that the draft resolution has taken into account the evolution of thought on the programme since its inception in 1979, its actual performance over the past four years which has been very satisfactory, the general view among Member States of its immense potential as reflected in the relevant debate during the second special session on disarmament and the need to enable the programme to retain its efficiency in a cost-effective manner.

We commend it for adoption by the Committee.

Mr. LUSAKA (Zambia): Mr. Chairman, My delegation has already had occasion to offer its felicitations to you and to the other officers of the Committee on your unanimous election. I shall now take this opportunity to congratulate you and all the officers on the efficient manner in which you continue to conduct the proceedings of our Committee.

I am speaking in this Committee today on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.10, which has just been introduced by the representative of Nigeria concerning the United Nations programme of fellowships on disarmament. The United Nations programme of fellowships on disarmament, adopted at the first special session devoted to disarmament, in 1978, at the initiative of Nigeria, to promote expertise in disarmament in more Member States, particularly in the developing countries, has more than demonstrated its imperative necessity. The programme has, since its inception, been attracting the manifest interest of an increasing number of Member States. This has been done either through their direct participation in it, or by inviting the fellows to visit their respective countries to study disarmament-oriented activities, thereby contributing to the fulfilment of the overall objectives of the programme, as well as providing additional information sources and practical knowledge for the fellows.

(Mr. Lusaka, Zambia)

The imperative necessity of the programme was succinctly recorded by the second special session devoted to disarmament, held here in New York four to five months ago. That session recognized that

"The result of the implementation of the programme thus far, including the continuing contribution to disarmament negotiations by former fellows, confirms the view that the programme has justified the hopes which inspired its establishment." (A/S-12/32, annex IV, para. 2)

It further concluded that

"In view of the growing interest which continues to be manifested in the programme by an ever-increasing number of States, an expansion of the programme in terms of its content and number of awards has become desirable." (ibid.)

As a recipient of one of the disarmament fellowships, Zambia can attest to the programme's importance as a tangible investment in our sustained efforts to bring about a disarmament régime. Zambia therefore wishes to reaffirm its unqualified support for increasing the number of fellowships from 20 to 25 from 1983 onwards. We can also attest to the efficient manner in which the programme has been organized so far. For this, we congratulate the Secretary-General and commend the Centre for Disarmament, especially its Assistant Secretary-General and the Co-ordinator of the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament, for their commitment to the programme and for conducting it remarkably well thus far.

Finally, my delegation is convinced that, in view of the envisaged expansion in the content and number of awards, as well as the overall programme elements enunciated by the Secretary-General in document A/S-12/3 and Corr.1, there is a clear necessity to review the staffing position in order to meet the requirements of the increased activities and expanded structure of the programme.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): On behalf of the delegation of the German Democratic Republic, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/37/L.11, entitled "Obligation of States to contribute to effective disarmament negotiations".

My delegation is guided by the fact that no progress could be achieved in the implementation of the Final Document, in spite of numerous efforts made by many States and numerous constructive proposals. As to the reasons for this, there is some difference of view but the large majority of States are determined to stick to the line chartered by the first, and confirmed by the second, special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which centres on the prevention of nuclear war as the most urgent task. The alternative, and one that is unacceptable to the Peoples, is the acute threat of nuclear war.

The best way to prevent nuclear war is by negotiating at different levels and in various forms. The draft resolution now before us is especially dedicated to that end.

First, the fourth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution underlines the importance of the Final Document of the first special session and refers to its unanimous and decisive confirmation by the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. This endorsement also implies an appeal to all States to adhere in their practical policies to the concensus of the first special session and not to endanger it either openly or indirectly.

Secondly, in accordance with the Final Document of the first special session, the sixth preambular paragraph refers to the fundamental importance of disarmament for peace and security. This seems to be important in the light of certain attitudes that deny the close connection between disarmament and international security and object, under the pretext of national and international security, to curbing the arms race, which threatens not only the security of some peoples but also the survival of mankind.

Thirdly, in comparing the draft resolution with resolution 36/92 M of December 1981, we consider that it is necessary to underline the legally binding character of the negotiations. It is not left to the

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

States to negotiate or not. Therefore, the eighth preambular paragraph refers to those international agreements which contain such obligations. Both these agreements and the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament determine important objectives of negotiation. At the same time, it should be recalled that the misuse of negotiations to claim a readiness to reach understanding contradicts the concept of good faith. It is a direct consequence of the United Nations Charter principles to hold such negotiations on the basis of equality, reciprocity and undiminished security of each side. Operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution before us refers to this fact.

Finally, faced with the fact of the deliberate protraction and arbitrary break-off of negotiations and of the refusal to enter into negotiations regarding formerly agreed priorities, we regard it imperative that at the thirty-seventh session the United Nations General Assembly should request States to reach practical results in current negotiations as soon as possible; to resume suspended negotiations; and to take up negotiations on all questions of priority.

Our draft resolution is firmly based on the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament and also takes into account the results of the second such special session. Therefore, the delegation of the German Democratic Republic hopes that the draft resolution will be supported by all delegations. We are ready to exchange views with all those delegations that believe that at the thirty-seventh session the United Nations General Assembly should do everything possible to achieve concrete results in the struggle for arms limitation and disarmament through negotiations.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Since the Soviet delegation has already had occasion to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the high post of Chairman of the Committee, I shall simply associate myself with those congratulations and wish you once again success in your responsible task.

Today the Soviet delegation wishes to introduce two draft resolutions, which are contained in documents A/C.1/37/L.6 and A/C.1/37/L.7.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The Soviet delegation has already on a number of occasions in this Committee set forth the proposals of the Soviet Union presented for consideration at the present session of the General Assembly for the purpose of setting up barriers to the increasing military danger. We note with satisfaction that one such proposal, concerning the immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests has been in consonance with the feelings of the majority of delegations in this First Committee, as has been demonstrated. The essence of the Soviet draft resolution in document A/C.1/37/L.6 lies in the fact that it provides that the General Assembly should declare itself in favour of the adoption of concrete, tangible measures for the cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. In practice, that could be done through negotiations for the purpose of elaborating a draft treaty on the general and complete prohibition of tests. That is why the draft resolution provides in paragraph 2 that the basic provisions of a treaty on the immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests should be referred to the Committee on Disarmament and, further, that the Committee on Disarmament should also take into consideration the proposals and observations of other States made in the course of the present session for the purpose of solving this topical problem. As is known, many such proposals have been made both at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and at the present session of the General Assembly.

For our part, we consider that the document presented by the Soviet Union, which contains the basic provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, creates a new situation which should be favourable for guiding us out of the impasse in which we find ourselves in the discussion on this item.

In that document, as has been pointed out in the Committee, account is taken of everything positive that has been achieved in discussion of the problem in various forums over a number of years. It also reflects all the additional views of many States, in particular concerning control

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

over compliance with the proposed treaty. Moreover, in the course of the present session a number of proposals have already been made which we feel ought to be referred to the Committee on Disarmament for consideration.

Finally, in the course of the discussion many delegations have appreciated the need for a moratorium on nuclear tests. The Soviet draft resolution calls on all nuclear-weapon States, as a gesture of good will and with a view to creating more favourable conditions for the elaboration of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, not to conduct any nuclear explosions as from a date agreed among them and until the treaty has been concluded, appropriate declarations to that effect being made by them well in advance. In making that appeal, the General Assembly will already have contributed to the practical solution of the problem.

The Soviet delegation hopes that the draft resolution in document A/C.1/37/L.6 will be supported by all delegations. Its adoption by the General Assembly would be an important step towards the solution of one of the priority questions in the limitation of the arms race and an obstacle to the development of ever new types and systems of nuclear weapons as well as to the emergence of new nuclear States.

I shall now introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/37/L.7. The basic idea of the draft resolution is to have the General Assembly call upon all States to intensify their efforts to remove the threat of nuclear war and ensure the safe development of nuclear energy. The question of safeguarding the production of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is in consonance with the proposals of numerous countries, made both in the Committee on Disarmament and in the General Assembly itself. The Soviet Union has taken an active part in the discussion in the Committee of the question of prohibition as it relates to attacks upon peaceful nuclear facilities and indicated that it was ready to make its own contribution to the elaboration of appropriate international legislation which would supplement existing legal instruments. We have stated that we are ready to conduct negotiations both in the Committee on Disarmament and also, possibly, in a

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

conference specially convened for that purpose. We have also proposed that a certain time limit be set for the formulation of such international legal measures - say two or three years - and the only thing that the Soviet delegation has always objected to, and still does, is the confusion caused by the merger of two different questions: that of the prohibition of new possible types of weapons of mass destruction, in other words radiological weapons, and the other, which is extremely important, of ensuring the safe development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, on which question the initiative of the Soviet Union has already been demonstrated at the present session.

The draft resolution in document A/C.1/37/L.7 provides also that at this present session action will be taken for the purpose of ensuring the safe development of nuclear energy. In the draft resolution emphasis is laid on the fact that the destruction of peaceful nuclear installations would lead to a considerable release of radioactive materials, even if conventional weapons were used, while if nuclear weapons were used there would be totally disastrous consequences on a global scale. Therefore, the deliberate destruction of peaceful nuclear installations, even by means of conventional weapons, is essentially equivalent to an attack using nuclear weapons - in other words, to actions of a kind which the United Nations has already described as the gravest crime against humanity. The draft resolution provides that the General Assembly will state that clearly and authoritatively.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

It is obvious that the necessity of ensuring the safe development of nuclear energy is organically linked to the task of preventing the unleashing of nuclear war; this, in turn, requires that even greater efforts be made to eliminate the actual possibility of its outbreak -- in other words, to reduce and ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons.

The close interrelationship of all these questions fully justifies the reference to them in draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.7.

Those are the basic provisions of the draft. In our view, they are in keeping with the interests of both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States and they contribute to the establishment of favourable conditions for the solution of a whole range of questions involved in the limitation of the arms race. We hope that they will be supported by the members of our Committee.

Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway): I take pleasure in introducing document A/C.1/37/L.9, which is a draft resolution on the review of the membership of the Committee on Disarmament. This draft resolution is supported by 31 sponsors, belonging to all regional groups, among which are seven member countries of the Committee on Disarmament.

The draft resolution reaffirms, first of all, the importance of the Committee on Disarmament as a negotiating forum. It also refers to the recommendation in General Assembly resolution 36/97 J, pursuant to the recommendation of the first special session on disarmament, that the first review of the Committee's membership be completed during the second special session on disarmament.

(Mr. Vraalsen, Norway)

At that session suggestions to expand the membership of the Committee in a limited and balanced manner received wide support. This is reflected in paragraph 55 of the session's Concluding Document. In addition, the session adopted a proposal by the delegation of Norway to include in paragraph 62 a request to the Committee to report on its consideration of an expansion, consistent with the need to enhance its effectiveness. The draft resolution makes reference to these paragraphs.

According to chapter II F of the report of the Committee on Disarmament to this session, to which the draft resolution refers, the consultations among the members did not result in any agreement among the members of the Committee concerning the expansion of the Committee. However, the report states that no objection in principle was raised to a limited expansion.

On the basis of this development, the operative paragraph in the draft resolution requests the Committee on Disarmament to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, taking into account the relevant paragraphs of both the Final Document of the first special session and the Concluding Document of the second special session.

The Norwegian Government hopes that the Committee can conclude its consultations on this issue before the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The large number of sponsors of this draft resolution is an indication that our hope is shared by many other countries.

Finally, I should like to stress that this draft resolution is a follow-up to a Norwegian proposal submitted at the second special session in document A/S-12/AC.1/32. In that document Norway stated that the Committee on Disarmament should remain the most important negotiating forum for global disarmament questions, taking its decisions on the basis of consensus. An expansion compatible with the requirements entailed by the Committee's role as a negotiating forum was called for. Norway is of the opinion that a limited expansion will increase the representative nature of the Committee without hampering its negotiating character.

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that the draft resolution will be supported by all members of our Committee.

Mr. SILOVIC (Yugoslavia): Yugoslavia has always attached particular importance to the problem of nuclear disarmament. Our concern over the presence of nuclear weapons is caused by the very nature of these horrifying weapons. There is no doubt that their use would threaten the survival of our civilization, and even life on Earth itself. There are no essential differences among us in the assessment of this threat, as has often been stressed in the course of the recently completed general debate in the Assembly, as well as in this Committee.

However, there are deep differences in our approach to the undertaking of genuine measures of nuclear disarmament. This fact has often been used to justify the absence of genuine negotiations on such substantive issues as the halting of the arms race and disarmament. At the same time, we are faced with an intensified manifestation of the known trends characteristic of the arms race: the nuclear arsenals of the leading Powers have recently been growing faster under the pretext of aspirations to reach a vague ideal balance of armaments, which in fact leads to a new quantitative and qualitative escalation of the nuclear arms race.

Yugoslavia has on several occasions welcomed the launching of negotiations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on nuclear armaments in Europe and on the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). We are convinced that early and successful negotiations on the substance of this problem, as well as the firm political orientation of the big Powers towards further reduction of nuclear armaments, would significantly contribute to the beginning of multilateral negotiations on disarmament and to the launching of the process of genuine disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament.

It is obvious that the issues of nuclear disarmament do not concern only nuclear-weapon States, or only the two major Powers: the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament stressed the legitimate interest of the entire international community in being informed about all negotiations conducted on the problems of disarmament. We firmly believe, therefore, that the participants in the ongoing negotiations regarding some issues of nuclear disarmament have an obligation to keep the international community informed about the state and course of their negotiations, the results of which are of great interest to all of us.

We fully support the basic recommendations contained in draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.12, submitted by Mexico, Indonesia and Sweden, whereby the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are urged to transmit to the General Assembly, before 22 November, information about the Geneva talks. For that reason Yugoslavia has decided to sponsor this draft resolution.

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

We express our belief that the USSR and the United States of America will respond to this request by the General Assembly, that they will submit information on the proposals submitted by them in the bilateral conversations held in Geneva relating to nuclear weapons in Europe and to the strategic arms reduction talks, and that they will thus enable the General Assembly to formulate its recommendations and opinions in connection with this matter at the current session.

The CHAIRMAN: As representatives know, the Committee is approaching the end of its consideration of the disarmament items. In order to facilitate the task of the officers of the Committee and of the Secretariat, I wish once again to urge members to submit draft resolutions as far in advance as possible so as to allow sufficient time for consultations.

There are only three names inscribed on the speaker's list for the meeting tomorrow morning and, unfortunately, none for this afternoon and the rest of the week. We are therefore obliged to cancel the meeting scheduled for this afternoon. So as to utilize fully the time available to us, I urge delegations once again to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.