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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 48TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GBEHO (Ghana)

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 55 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now resume its consideration of and action upon the remaining draft resolutions under disarmament items.

I call on the representative of Sweden to make a statement on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/37/L.62.

Mr. C. LIDGARD (Sweden): It is with some hesitation that I am going to make this statement and I also have to ask for the Committee's indulgence in speaking at this late stage in our proceedings on disarmament matters.

My statement concerns the draft resolution in document A/C.1/37/L.62. It has been suggested that operative paragraph 1 should be amended in the following way. After the words "governmental experts" there should be inserted the following phrase: "and bearing in mind the savings that can be made within existing budgetary appropriations".

I have consulted the Secretariat and the persons with whom I have spoken have confirmed my own assumption that the Secretary-General, as a general rule, always bears in mind the savings that can be made within existing budgetary appropriations.

This phrase would then not add anything of substance to the draft resolution, nor would it detract anything from it. I have consulted with most of the sponsors, but I have unfortunately not been able to find all the sponsors of this draft resolution. So if any of the sponsors has any misgivings as regards this amendment for procedural or for substantive reasons, I hope the delegation concerned will express them and I will immediately withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62, as orally amended, under agenda item 55, "General and complete disarmament", on the subject of military research and development. The financial implications are set forth in document A/C.1/37/L.74. This draft resolution has 16 sponsors and was introduced by the representative of Sweden at the 38th meeting of this Committee, on 19 November 1982. I call on the Secretary of the Committee to read out the list of sponsors.

Mr. RATHORE (Secretary of the Committee): They are as follows: Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Malta, Mexico, Pakistan, Romania, Sweden and Yugoslavia.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution in document A/C.1/37/L.62 as orally amended. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic,

Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda,
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon,
United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam,
Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia

Against: None

Abstaining: Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands,
Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
United States of America

The draft resolution as amended was adopted by 103 votes to none, with
8 abstentions.*

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

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): The Netherlands shares the concern
of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62 about the impact of military
research and development related to the arms race. Military research and
development may not be the engine of the arms race but it appears at least to
provide the fuel that keeps it running. We are not at all convinced, however,
that a study on the military application of research and development would make
a valuable contribution to increasing available knowledge about this phenomenon.
It is precisely because of the vital nature of military research and development
that the relevant data are unlikely to be accessible, particularly in a
certain group of countries which play a primary role in the arms race.

We believe that the comprehensive study asked for in operative paragraph 1
will not turn out to be comprehensive at all but, quite to the contrary, will
provide an unbalanced flow of information, most of which is already known
and readily available. Such a study would be redundant and cause
unnecessary expenditure. The Netherlands will make its views known to the
Secretary-General in a written submission.

* Subsequently the delegations of Gabon and Yemen advised the Secretariat
that they had intended to vote in favour.

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

Moreover, having studied the contents of document A/C.1/37/L.74, the Netherlands delegation wishes to reserve its position in relation to the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/37/L.62.

For the foregoing reasons, the Netherlands abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62.

Mr. KORNIIEENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)(interpretation from Russian): The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR agrees with a number of the provisions contained in draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62, which express concern over the qualitative aspect of, and the impact of military research and development on the arms race, particularly in the area of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We also agree with the general orientation of the draft resolution, which is designed to ensure that scientific and technological achievements are used exclusively for peaceful purposes. All this made it possible for us to support the draft resolution.

At the same time, however, we are somewhat doubtful about the value of the provision contained in the draft resolution relating to information about military research and development. An exchange of information of a military nature can be useful, but within the context of the actual process of disarmament and on the basis of relevant agreements.

Mr. LUCE (United States of America): I take the floor to set forth some of the difficulties which my Government has with draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62 and which have prevented the United States from supporting that draft resolution.

The draft resolution implies that military research and development can be defined and verifiably controlled through international agreement. We do not believe this is the case, if only because of a lack of an identifiable borderline between civilian and military research and development. The terms of reference for the study requested in operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62 therefore cannot in our view be implemented in any meaningful way. But even if they could be, verifiable arrangements limiting the effect of research and development in the military area are extremely difficult to envision, especially in a world where some countries keep their military plans and activities under the veil of deep secrecy.

(Mr. Luce, United States)

Consequently, the United States is very pessimistic **about** the possibility of a constructive outcome of the proposed study. This, as well as our concern about using the limited financial resources available to the United Nations in as effective a way as possible, has led the United States to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62.

Mr. NOIRFALJSSE (Belgium) (interpretation from French): The amendment proposed by the delegation of Sweden to draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62 made it possible for us to vote in favour of that draft resolution, although we are well aware of its budgetary implications.

During its statement in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.46, the delegation of Belgium explained what conditions were necessary for the study to be significant.

Mr. TRAUTWEIN (Federal Republic of Germany): My delegation has abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62. The Federal Republic of Germany has consistently held the view that openness and transparency in military matters comprising a broad range of relevant information on the strength of armed forces are prerequisites for the establishment of mutual trust among States and, thereby, for the conclusion of agreements on disarmament and arms control. It is for this reason that my Government has for several years supported and acted as a sponsor of draft resolutions introduced by Sweden on an international system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures.

However, it has become evident that States belonging to a specific group, in spite of repeated invitations extended by the General Assembly, continue to display an unwillingness to co-operate with the Secretary-General in the reporting of their military expenditures. Equal reluctance has also been

(Mr. Trautwein, Federal
Republic of Germany)

shown by these States in other fields where openness and transparency are called for. There is no evidence at present that such openness would be displayed by these States in the field of military research and development. The result of the voting a few days ago on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.22/Rev.1, provides a telling story in this regard.

As long as the unfortunate state of affairs I have just described prevails, my delegation sees little benefit in extending requests for developing an institutionalized approach to greater openness in the field of military research and development. At least for the present, we believe that it is more appropriate to concentrate on the long-standing efforts for transparency of military budgets. Once some progress, particularly with regard to the participation of States from all groups, has been achieved in that field, we would be among the first to endorse an endeavour aimed at achieving transparency in the field of military research and development as well.

The CHAIRMAN: No other delegation has asked to speak in explanation of vote after the vote. The Committee has thus completed its action on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.62, as orally amended.

The representative of Guyana has asked to make a statement with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.51, and I now call upon him.

Mr. KARRAN (Guyana): Guyana is in principle supportive of all initiatives that seek to create nuclear-weapon-free zones on a regional basis, and in this regard we see the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which aims at committing regional States as well as the wider international community to the denuclearization of Latin America, as an important initiative.

(Mr. Karran, Guyana)

The Guyana delegation must, however, underscore its regret that a particular provision of that Treaty is discriminatory against my country and stands in the way of our accession to the Treaty. We believe that this exclusionary clause should be excised from the Treaty of Tlatelolco, so that it might better serve as a model to other regions of the world where similar initiatives are under consideration. This explains our abstention on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.51.

Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas): The attitude of the Committee upon completion of this phase of our work reminds me of expectant parents whose nervousness and concern turn into pride and joy upon hearing the announcement that the firstborn is alive and whole in every way. Nevertheless, the outcome is soon taken for granted after several such pronouncements. I see a very close parallel to the attitude towards disarmament over the years. The excitement has worn off, and if a sigh of relief was heard this morning, it could well be that that relief was because another ordeal is over, rather than preoccupation over the adoption of the resolutions. In fact, my delegation feels that there were no surprises at all, as all of us could predict how the votes would turn out.

Our deliberations over the past week have culminated in thousands of words which comprise the more than 60 resolutions adopted on the question of disarmament. Given the nature of the subject matter and the proliferation of identical, repetitious and ambiguous paragraphs combined with inconsistent factual data, I was surprised that not one text was defeated at the polls and fearful that not even the few consensus texts would be implemented in the near future.

If I were to compare the atmosphere at this session with that of previous sessions, I would say that it seems that a sense of frustration mixed with nonchalance overshadowed the Committee's proceedings, thereby producing a feeling of helplessness, out of which so many resolutions were born.

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

My delegation is disappointed that except in a few cases, sponsors could not reach a compromise, since in the majority of instances disagreement was not based on substance and interdependence of thought, but rather on political interpretation of language used.

As representatives are no doubt aware, the Bahamas delegation had entertained the thought of introducing a draft text on streamlining the work of the First Committee. When I made reference to that concept in my statement on 18 October 1982, I felt that the proposal may have been akin to Don Quixote's tilting at windmills or John the Baptist's voice crying in the wilderness. I was heartened, however, by the overwhelming support the idea received in principle from many members of the Committee. I am even more encouraged by the fact that our accomplishments thus far heighten the need for a more cohesive and rational plan of action that would give maximum consideration to the concerns of all Member States yet at the same time would allow the Committee to save time and money, reduce the proliferation of similar resolutions and give greater priority to informal discussions as a key to sponsors' searches for comprehensive and consensus language.

I would wish to reiterate for the record that my Government's policy in supporting all initiatives which show a genuine desire to find modalities for the achievement of general and complete disarmament has not changed; therefore, my delegation refrained from any explanation of vote on those votes that may have seemed to deviate from this premise.

Finally, let me sum up what I believe resulted from our exercise on the question of disarmament: First, serious and genuine appeals by the majority of States represented here seem to be falling on deaf ears in those States that could do the most to stop the arms race. Secondly, unless our discussions change from a parallel course to one of give and take, future decisions would be no more meaningful than those taken today. Thirdly, the value of trust and confidence cannot be underestimated, and all efforts to encourage polarization and unhealthy confrontation must be avoided at all costs.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.