UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
25th meeting
held on
Monday, 4 November 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 25th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. Ordones (Philippines)
(Vice-Chairman)

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91-61652 7111V (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/46/PV.25
13 November 1991

ENGLISH

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Ordonez (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 47 TO 65 (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to the second phase of its work. A6 members wore informed, this morning's meeting a6 well as those scheduled from 5 to 7 November have been set aside for the introduction of and comments on draft resolutions.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): At last year's session of the Committee, Sweden circulated, in document A/C.1/45/8/Rev.1, a memorandum on naval armament6 and disarmament. It wa6 stated in the memorandum that every fourth nuclear weapon in the world, or 6 tot61 of a&out 15,000, was earmarked for deploymeat at sea. Approximately one third, or about 5,000, of 611 sea-based nuclear weapon6 could be estimated to belong to the category "sub-strategic", comprising a variety of nuclear weapon6 intended for targets at sea, 66 well a6 nuclear-armed cruise missiles and other nuclear arm6 for attacks against target6 on land. In the memorandum, Sweden proposed negotiations on the prohibition of non-strategic nuclear weapons at sea.

A6 is well-known, since then fact6 and figures have changed, or are about to change, substantially. We have been able to welcome the historic Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the United State6 and the Soviet Union containing a commitment to reduce substantially the number of strategic nuclear weapons and, in many respects, constituting a turning point in world disarmament efforts. In the last few week6 we have also seen initiative6 directed specifically at naval nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The unilateral measures recently announced by the President6 of the United State6 and the Soviet Union comprise a total withdrawal of all their naval sub-strategic nuclear weapons. These are decisive and much appreciated step6 in naval disarmament. After they have been implemented, all the 5,000 sub-strategic nuclear weapon6 will have disappeared from the high seas.

Over the year6 Sweden ha6 many times called for an end to the policy of neither confirming nor denying the presence or absence of nuclear weapons on board any particular ships at any particular time. A6 we interpret them, the declaraticns by United States defence officials in connection with the recently announced unilateral measures indicate that, au soon as United States nuclear weapon6 have been withdrawn, this policy will no longer be relevant to surface ships snd attack submarines. In practice, it will thus not be applied any more. We fervently hope that 611 the nuclear Powers will act in the same manner. Such a change of policy would contribute to openness and transparency in naval matters and would in itself be a confidence-building measure of great significance.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

A8 encouraging as the80 latest developments may be, let me however note that much remains to be done in the maritime domain. Confidence could be further strengthened, not least through a multilateral regime for the prevention of incident8 at sea, building on the positive experience of existing bilateral agreements.

As ha8 been stressed by Sweden in many forum, the law8 of sea warfare are also in urgent need of modernisation. I will return to this subject under the agenda item regarding excessively injurious conventional weapons.

The year 1991 ha8 been a memorable one for disarmament, giving hope and encouragement for years to come. Let me conclude by emphasizing that this now hold6 true also for the state of affairs in the field of naval disarmament.

Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand): I would like to address agenda items 51 and 53. I have the honour to introduce into the First Committee, under those two items, a draft resolution entitled "Comprehensive nuclear-teat-ban treaty", which is to be found in document A/C.1/46/L.4.

For nearly 20 year8 New Zealand, alternating With Australia, has submitted 6 draft resolution in this Committee on nuclear testing. Mexico has done likewise, and every year both draft resolution8 have been adopted by overwhelming majorites. Initially, each draft resolution reflected the rather different perspective8 of its group of sponsors. In recent years, those difference8 have become less and less clear-cut, but the shared objective has always been the same: cessation of nuclear testing.

New Zealand and Australia as main sponsors of one of the traditional texts and Mexico as main sponsor of the other attempted last year to present the Committee with a single text. We did 80 in the belief that the time had come for the First Committee to demonstrate a8 far a8 possible its willingness

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

to approach this important subject on a common basis. Our effort8 were, of course, also consistent with our aim of rationalising the Committee's work. It was a matter Of regret that those efforts were not successful in 1990.

But we did not give up. Over the past 12 mouths we have seen a series of positive development8 in the international disarmament and security situation, development8 which were widely commended during the general debate held over the last three weeks. Amongst other things I refer. of course, to the ratification of the threshold test-ban Treaty and the Treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions, the agreement on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and, moat recently, the announcements by the United States and the Soviet Union on tactic61 nuclear weaponry.

Against that background, New Zealand, Australia, Mexico and other interested delegations, notably Japan, Sweden, Canada and Norway, were encouraged again to embark on a course of negotiation8 this year to draft a single draft resolution on a nuclear-teat ban, one which would secure the support of most, if not 611, of the international community. I am extremely pleased to place the results of those negotiations before the Committee in document A/C.1/46/L.4.

The draft resolution is sponsored by the 42 State8 which last year sponsored either the Australia-New Zealand or the Mexican draft resolution. Their namas head document A/C.1/46/L.4, and I will not read out the long list. But I want to assure each and every one of the States listed there of our deep appreciation of their support. It demonstrate8 the importance which States Members of the United Nations accord to a nuclear-teat ban. I might add that since submitting the text we have had request8 from other States also wishing to sponsor the draft resolution, and I would encourage any delegation

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand

60 interested to contact the Secretariat and add its name to the list of sponsors.

The sponsors of this draft resolution are convinced that an end to nuclear testing by all State8 in all environment8 for all time is an essential step towards preventing the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapons. It would also contribute, along with other concurrent efforts to reduce nuclear arms, to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

By the draft resolution the General Assembly would welcome the recent positive developments to which I *referred* a moment ago. Amongst those is the long-awaited ratification of two important bilateral treaties, the 1974 threshold teat-ban Treaty and the 1976 Treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions. But as draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.4 make8 clear, we consider that the moat effective way to bring about a cessation *of* nuclear testing is through a multilateral treaty that would attract the adherence of all States. The Conference on Disarmament ha8 a particular responsibility in that regard, a responsibility spelled out in paragraph8 3 and 4 of our draft resolution. Paragraph 5 sets out our views on the work the Conference on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Expert8 should undertake in addressing the verification requirement8 of a teat-ban treaty.

For the first *the in* many years, the First Committee ha8 the opportunit to speak with one voice *on* the subject of a nuclear-test ban. Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.4 represents a very real effort by all concerned to promote 6 practical, positive approach to this often emotionally-charged subject. I would particularly like to salute the efforts of Ambassador Miguel Marin Bosch of *Mexico* and Ambassador Paul O'Sullivan of Australia and their delegations in enabling us to place this text before the Committee today. Together we commend it to all member States.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The cessation of all nuclear testing is among the main disarmament goals of the United Nations. Along with the overwhelming majority of other Member States, Mexico has insisted on the Urgent need to put an end to such tests once and fo- all. This is a measure the priority of which has been recognized repeatedly by the General Assembly and by the Secretary-General.

More than 30 years ago the international community stated that a complete halt to testing was the key to stemming the qualitative nuclear-arm8 race. Every year since 1957 the General Assembly has spoken out on this issue.

The commitment8 undertaken *in* the 1963 partial teat-ban Treaty and reiterated in the 1968 Treaty *on* the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) concerning the achievement of a comprehensive teat-ban treaty have come to naught. For three decade6 there have been unsuccessful bilateral and trilateral negotiations.

The Conference on Disarmament too has failed in its attempta. Some have argued against 6 comprehensive nuclear-teat-ban treaty) they have claimed that testing is essential to enhance the safety of nuclear-weapon design and to maiatain the credibility of the nuclear deterrent, and that the lack of sufficient verification would make it possible to gain a military advantage,

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico

The independent scientific community demonstrated. however, that the problem of verification could be resolved appropriately and that the only purpose for which tests were essential was to develop new type6 of nuclear weapons.

At the present time, with the disappearance of ideological rivalry and military rivalry on the part of the super-Powers and their allies, arguments against a comprehensive test-ban treaty lose all meaning. Furthermore, in a completely changed international atmosphere, the main military Powers have begun to question their military doctrine8 and the need to maintain the level and diversity of their arsenals. Why should they continue to teat nuclear weapon8 in order to modernize arsenals if they wish to reduce them radically with a view to their elimination?

We welcome the recent unilateral initiatives in the field of nuclear disarmament, and we welcome particularly the decision of the Soviet Union to suspend its nuclear testing for one year. We are perhaps witnessing the beginning of what may be a reversal of the nuclear-arms race. We appeal to the main nuclear Powers to intensify their bilateral consultations on this subject and to promote multilateral negotiations.

Almost daily the international press takes note of the timeliness of the subject of a nuclear-weapon-test ban. It is a matter of constant debate. A comprehensive test-ban treaty is attainable precisely at this time when relations between the nuclear Powers have moved from confrontation to cooperation. Technological and scientific advances in the field of verification now offer solution8 to the obstacles that used to be invoked, i we have the necessary political will.

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

The cessation of nuclear testing continue8 to be the starting-point for successful nuclear non-proliferation. If no progress is made in this field, the very future of the current non-proliferation regime night be jeopardized. We have two possible courses of action to achieve our objective, both of them viable and undoubtedly complementary. The first of them would be to amend the partial test-baa Treaty of 1963 in order to convert it into a comprehensive ban. This process is now being carried out in the Amendment Conference which, under the leadership of Minister Ali Alatas of Indonesia, began its substantive *work* in January of this year, and we hope that progress will be made in this respect.

The other possibility would be the beginning - the beginning, I repeat - of negotiation8 in the Conference on Disarmament. The Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear-Test Ban was re-established, with Certain expectations, at the beginning of 1991. In spite of the imaginative approach and the endeavours of it8 Chairman, Ambassador Chadha of India, it only managed to put forward the same positions as everyone already knows. The debate was interesting, but in the laet analysis it was the same debate a8 always; it was business a8 usual.

Year8 and even decade8 after the end of the Second World War, some men appeared who had been lost in the forest of certain Pacific islands. They were soldiers who were not aware that the war had ended. Something similar is now happening in Geneva. In the Palais de Nations there seem to be representative8 who have not yet been informed of the end of the cold war. The thick wall8 of the Council Chamber perhaps serves a8 a fortress for certain outdated military doctrinea.

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

For many year8 now the delegation of Mexico, together with other delegations, ha8 been submitting in the First Committee a draft resolution on the subject of the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests, a draft which the General Assembly ha8 invariably approved by an overwhelming majority. The Assembly ha8 also been approving, with a similar vote, another draft resolution on the urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

This latter draft ha8 bee8 sponsored by another group of countries headed by Australia and New Zealand. Given the similarities and the content of the two resolutions in 1989, the delegations of Australia, New Zealand and Mexico, supported by the respective co-sponsors, decided to attempt to merge their respective texts. That merging, which was almost achieved last year, was introduced just a few moments ago by Ambassador Terence O'Brien of New Zealand. My delegation is pleased at the text which we have developed together, and which is contained in document A/C.1/46/L.4. We wish to state here our appreciation for the effort8 made by the delegation8 of New Zealand and Australia, and by all of the other sponsors.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (Australia): On behalf of the Australian Government I am very pleased to support the comments by my New Zealand and Mexican colleague8 in commending the text of the draft resolution on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The successful merger of two earlier similar but competing resolutions is on substantive grounds and on procedural grounds. Substantively, it gives a clear framework for the expression of the international community's view8 on testing issues. Procedurally, it help8 rationalize this Committee's work,

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

We clearly recognise that there are differing views on the issues raised by nuclear testing, but those differences need to be managed in a satisfactory way in accordance with the ordinary working methods of this Committee. Australia believe8 the merged text offers such a framework, for the nuclear-weapon State8 also. We look forward to a high level of support for this draft resolution.

Finally, may I take the opportunity of thanking in particular the effort8 of my New 2ealaad and Mexican colleague8 a8 well a8 my friend8 from the other core group countries: Canada, Japan, Norway and Sweden. In Geneva and in New York, these countries have cooperated closely and, we believe, very effectively with a useful result.

Mr. AALBU (Norway): Norway ha8 traditionally been co-sponsoring a draft resolution put forward by Australia and New Zealand on the urgent need for a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We highly appreciate the fact that it ha8 been possible this year to have just one draft resolution on this question covering agenda items 51 and 53. We are happy to co-sponsor this merged draft resolution.

As we said in our statement in plenary, the achievement of a total and permanent ban on all nuclear testing remains an important Norwegian disarmament objective. A comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is absolutely necessary in order to prevent the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapon8 and their further proliferation, and to contribute to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. Our concern about environmental and health risks associated with nuclear testing is an additional argument for discontinuing such testing.

(Mr. Aalbu, Norway)

We share the view expressed in the draft resolution that the most ● ↗↗□□♦)(❖□ way to achieve an end to nuclear testing is through the conclusion, at an early date, of a comprehensive, verifiable nuclear-test-ban trosty that will attract the adherence of all States. In this regard we greatly appreciate the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear-Test Ban established by the Conference on Disarmament.

We also attach great importance to, and we take an active part in, the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts and their GS/ETT-2 experiment, the result of which will now be analysed and ● valuatad before the Group's next meeting early next year. A global network for the ● xubngo of seismic data must serve as the most important basis for a future system of verification Of a test-ban treaty.

(Mr. Aalbu, Norway)

Careful thought should now be given to the question how the work of the Group and the result8 of the global experiment aould be used as a basis for a treaty-verification system.

The Conference ou Disarmament ha8 particular responsibilities in the negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. We would like to see the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Barr in 1992, with an appropriate mandate a8 spelled out in this year's draft resolution,

It is our hope that the wide-ranging proposals made by the President of the United State8 and the President of the Soviet Union with regard to strategic nuclear arm8 would have a positive impact on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. Norway will, for its part, continue to support the work of the Conference on Disarmament in this field.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): I should like to express the strong support of the Swedish delegation for draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.4, "Comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty", which was introduced just now by the Ambassador of New Zealand.

Sweden has consistently over the year8 called for multilateral action on the test-ban issue. That position ha8 been manifested by it8 co-sponsoring of the two traditional draft resolutions on the subject. Sweden's support for two separate draft resolutions emanated from a pragmatic attitude as to the formulation of a mandate for the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament in addressing the issue.

In our view, what matters is that substantive work on a nuclear-test-ban treaty be carried out so that the overall goal of a treaty can be ● ffoctivoly promoted and, when political condition8 so allow, negotiation8 can lrad to quick results. We hope that negotiations on a treaty CM start without further delay.

(M t .)

Sweden is very pleased that the effort8 initiated laet year to arrive at a merged text on the test-ban issue have this year resulted in one joint draft resolution. This has been possible owing to considerable flexibility on both sides, and the result is, in the view of my delegation, very satisfactory. Furthermore, the draft resolution would, a8 pointed out by the representative of blew Zealand, at long last allow the First Committee Md the General Assembly to speak with one voice on this important item, sending even stronger political signals from thie authoritative body. It is encouraging that the draft text has already received a8 many a8 42 sponsors.

In July this year Sweden submitted to the Conference on Disarmament a revised draft proposal for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. The text contains updated sections with regard to verification of a test-ban treaty as well as provisions on organisational aspects. My delegation hope8 that that draft will be given careful consideration by the Conference on Diearmament and will facilitate the work on this highly topiaal nuclear item.

My delegation join8 the delegation of New Zealand in commending this draft resolution for wide support by the members of the First Committee.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.

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