



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 48th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BOATEN (Ghana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 35 AND 36 (continued)

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/32/20; A/C.1/32/L.39, and Corr.1, L.40, L.41 and Corr.1, L.42, L.43/Rev.1)

Ms. HOLZER (Austria): The Austrian delegation has the honour to introduce on behalf of the sponsors the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/32/L.40 dealing with the work done by the Outer Space Committee this year and its mandate for the year to come. The text is largely self-explanatory and I shall therefore limit myself to indicating its essential contents.

Operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 refer to the work of the Legal Sub-Committee. The drafting of a treaty relating to the moon, of principles on direct television broadcasting and on remote sensing are to remain high-priority items on the agenda of that Sub-Committee.

Operative paragraphs 7 to 14 deal directly and indirectly with the tasks entrusted to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, which next year should give priority to questions of remote sensing, the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and questions relating to a possible United Nations conference on outer space matters.

Operative paragraphs 15, 16 and 17 relate to the relevant work performed by specialized agencies and to United Nations sponsorship of launching stations.

May I take this opportunity to thank sincerely all delegations which have co-operated and contributed in this drafting effort and, on behalf of the sponsors, express the hope that this draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): I am pleased to inform this Committee that, after broad consultations with members of several delegations - in particular with the sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.42, Austria, and the 30 delegations sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.43 - it has been possible for us to submit to the Committee a revised draft resolution in document A/C.1/32/L.43/Rev.1.

In particular, when drafting that text the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.43 did so with the valuable participation of the delegation of Austria and were assisted by the co-operation and experience of other delegations.

In its operative paragraphs 1 and 2 the new text does not differ much from that in document A/C.1/32/L.43. However, in operative paragraph 2 we introduce the fact that the appointment of new members should take place before 31 January 1978, because the Committee will have to start its work in February.

In operative paragraph 3 the Secretary-General is requested to ascertain the views of Member States on ways and means to allow participation of further Member States in the Committee and, after having received the opinion of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session.

(Mr. Albarnoz, Ecuador)

Finally, I should like to express the hope of the sponsors of this draft resolution, which is a compromise, that it has succeeded in reflecting the various points of view of prior resolutions as well as the favourable opinion of members of the Committee on the enlargement of the Outer Space Committee, an opinion expressed by virtually every delegation which took part in the debate, the only discrepancy being on the date when the increase is to take place. We hope that we have thus paved the way for general acceptance of this revised draft resolution by consensus.

Ms. HOLZER (Austria): As my delegation emphasized the other day, in introducing draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.42, relating to the question of increased membership of the Outer Space Committee, we were motivated exclusively by the desire to find a widely acceptable balance between the legitimate aspirations for wider participation in the Committee and the need to maintain its efficiency. The draft was offered as a possible compromise, since we were convinced that it reflected the viewpoints of a number of delegations. At no point was there any intention of excluding anyone from participation in the work of the Committee. The increasing interest in that important work was indeed welcomed by my delegation. I should like to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to all those who have spoken in support of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.42 or who have otherwise indicated their understanding of our efforts and intentions.

The past few days have provided us with a useful opportunity to discuss this question with many delegations. We have listened with great interest to the various viewpoints presented. Consultations have helped us further to clarify the situation. In the light of those consultations and their result, the Austrian delegation has decided to withdraw its draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/32/L.42. We hope that this decision will help the General Assembly to arrive at a conclusion of this matter.

Mr. ZEA (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all, on behalf of my delegation, I should like to say that we welcome draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.40 just introduced by the representative of Austria, and that we fully agree with the text of that draft resolution.

The statements we have just heard from the representatives of Austria and Ecuador, prompt my delegation to comment on the views expressed in this debate by those delegations which object to our proposal to increase the membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

I should have liked to refer in some detail particularly to the statement made here by the representative of the United States, but we should now welcome the agreement reached on the various points of view stated in the Committee. The negotiations were arduous and fraught with difficulty, but now, on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution on enlarging the Committee, I should like to express my appreciation to the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Jankowitsch, and his representative here, Ms. Gabriele Holzer, for their spirit of conciliation and understanding which led to the revised draft resolution just introduced by the representative of Ecuador.

It seems to my delegation that this is a wise decision. We are quite convinced that an increase in its membership will benefit the work of the Committee - as we have already said, and we are not in the least convinced by the argument that an increase in membership would detract from the efficiency of the Committee. On the contrary, we believe that the input of the new members will give fresh impetus to the work of the Committee. Then all the highly-deserved praise lavished in the course of this debate on the Committee will surely be repeated at successive sessions of the General Assembly when the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will have the benefit of its additional members.

Finally, I should like to express my appreciation and that of the sponsors particularly to those delegations of countries already on the Committee which supported the request made by some delegations for an increase in its membership. In the circumstances, and now that an agreement has been reached, I am confident that the new members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will be warmly welcomed by its present members.

AGENDA ITEMS 37, 50 and 127 (continued)

CONCLUSION OF A WORLD TREATY ON THE NON-USE OF FORCE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (A/32/94, 95, 97, 108, 112, 114, 119, 122, 123, 181 and Add.1)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY (A/32/68, 69, 70, 71, 74, 75, 77, 78, 89, 93, 117, 128, 140, 153, 154, 157, 164 and Add.1, 165; A/C.1/32/2, 8)

DEEPENING AND CONSOLIDATION OF INTERNATIONAL DETENTE AND PREVENTION OF THE DANGER OF NUCLEAR WAR (A/32/242; A/C.1/32/L.1, L.2)

Mr. NEAGU (Romania): I should like first to express the appreciation of the Romanian delegation for the initiative taken by the USSR in requesting the inclusion in the agenda of the present session of an issue of such timely interest as the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war. This question is closely connected with the two other items which are being discussed also on the initiative of the Soviet Union, namely, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" and "Conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations".

It is a well-known fact that profound revolutionary changes - both social and national - and far-reaching mutations in the world ratio of forces have taken place as a consequence of the ever stronger determination of peoples to live in freedom and independence, without any outside interference.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

These changes in the ratio of forces on a world-wide scale have induced the passage from the "cold war" policy to a policy of co-operation, to a new course in international relations, to an incipient détente aimed at establishing an enduring security system likely to offer every nation the opportunity to develop in peace and prosperity.

A telling expression of these new trends is the very fact that a number of problems which posed a serious threat to the peace and security of the world have been solved in recent years, while contacts and negotiations among States have gained momentum, and co-operation among nations has been considerably extended. It is worth emphasizing that the European continent, which gave rise to two world conflagrations, has witnessed the successful conclusion of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe with the signing in Helsinki of the Final Act at the highest level. Now, in Belgrade, the representatives of the participating States are multiplying their efforts in order to find new means to ensure the widest and most comprehensive application of the Final Act.

The scope of colonialism and racism is continuously shrinking; new ways and means are being explored for the peaceful solution of the conflicts that still darken the international atmosphere. Preventing a new world war is now within reach and has become a real prospect for mankind. However, in order to have this prospect translated into fact, the need is felt for strengthening the co-operation and unity of the progressive and anti-imperialist forces, for intensifying the peoples' struggle aimed at liquidating the old policy of domination and inequity, of force and diktat, and at establishing new relations based on full equality among all States.

It should be clearly understood that the new course towards détente and the establishment of genuine international security that would eliminate the use or threat of force is still fragile and incipient and has not yet become irreversible. A true policy of peace and security cannot be promoted without putting an end to the arms race, without withdrawing the troops and military bases located on other States' territories, and without initiating a process of vigorous disarmament - first of all, nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

It is our firm belief that only by adopting and implementing resolute measures of disarmament - nuclear, first of all - will it become possible to establish the climate of confidence required for furthering the process of détente and grounding inter-State relations on the principles of national independence and sovereignty, non-interference in others' internal affairs, full equality of rights and the inalienable right of each people freely to decide its own destiny.

I should like to stress that, in order that it may assert itself, the process of achieving effective détente and international security requires the reduction and finally the bridging of the gaps which divide the world into opposing groups of rich and poor countries.

For a number of years now, the attention of the world community has been called with anxiety to the fact that the aforementioned gaps, which are a source of mistrust, tension and conflicts, far from diminishing, ceaselessly grow as years go by.

The harmful consequences of colonial domination and spoliation cannot be easily eliminated, since their overcoming requires a radical change in the system of relations which had engendered them and the building of a new international economic order that would stimulate the development of all countries, and especially the steadier development of the developing countries. This requires not only the establishment of equitable economic relations, but also adequate support for the efforts made by the developing countries to overcome the backwardness of their economies and to forge healthy and stable economies, as well as modern and advanced social structures.

The course towards the peaceful solution of any problems, including territorial issues existing between the developing countries, which are in fact the remnants of colonial domination, should also be supported by every means. Any action aimed at aggravating these divisive problems imperils international peace and security. Such basic principles of international relations as non-interference, under whatever circumstances, in another State's affairs and the renunciation of the use or threat of force should be scrupulously observed.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

In order to consolidate détente and international security it is imperative to eradicate racial discrimination and the apartheid policy. It is the sacred and inalienable right of the peoples still under colonial domination or under oppression by the racist régimes to fight by all possible means, including armed struggle, to secure their national and social liberation and self-determination.

The attainment of all the goals I have mentioned is possible only if adequate conditions are provided for the participation of all States in every phase of negotiations, including the decision-making process. The solution of such important problems as disarmament, development and decolonization is hardly conceivable without concerted and vigorous action by all nations. Recent as well as more remote events amply demonstrate that the approach to these issues within a closed framework, from bloc to bloc or from a position of force, is bound to fail. The United Nations therefore offers the most appropriate forum for debating such issues with the participation of all States.

While paying constant and unswerving attention and devoting its untiring efforts to the economic and social development of its own country, the Socialist Republic of Romania is highly interested in international life. My country pursues a policy of active international co-operation and good understanding with all nations, thus making its contribution to the consolidation and deepening of the course towards deepening détente and strengthening international security.

The foreign policy of my country is unwaveringly based on the principles of full equality of rights, respect for national independence and sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, mutual advantage, renunciation of the use or threat of force in international relations, and the observance of every people's right to choose the path of its development according to its own interests and aspirations. Romania has always stood for a generalized application of these principles in international life, being convinced that peace, détente and security in the world can be maintained only by strictly abiding by these principles.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

The visits paid by President Nicolae Ceausescu to several countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, Latin and North America as well as the visits to Romania of many Heads of State and Government, and the meetings and talks that have taken place on these occasions, are telling evidence of the efforts made by my country along with other countries for deepening and consolidating détente and for strengthening peace and security in the world.

The treaties of friendship, joint declarations and communiqués as well as other political and juridical instruments concluded on the occasion of these high-level meetings are significant proof of the attention paid by Romania to the establishment of lasting and principled foundations for peace and security in the world.

The value of these instruments exceeds the scope of bilateral relations and acquires general significance. While reaffirming the adherence of the parties to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, these documents make a noteworthy contribution to the progressive development of the principles and norms of international law in the light of the realities prevailing nowadays in the world.

After the successful conclusion of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Romania has stated its determination to make its contribution to the full implementation of the principles and commitments enshrined in the documents signed, which represent an indissoluble whole.

We deem that, in the light of the work now in progress in Belgrade, all European States have an obligation to act to the best of their ability to secure the translation into practice of the provisions of the Final Act signed in Helsinki, by taking concrete steps conducive to disarmament and military disengagement in Europe, the intensification of economic co-operation between the European States, the strengthening of cultural ties and the development of the circulation of spiritual assets. In a word, to secure the conditions required for building up security and extending manifold co-operation on the continent.

Romania perseveringly works for the establishment of close relations of good neighbourliness and co-operation between the Balkan countries for converting this region into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

In agreement with other developing countries, Romania strives for the elimination of under-development, the setting up of a new economic international order and the definitive abolition of colonialism and the apartheid policy.

We do our best to see that the negotiations on disarmament shall go beyond mere declarations of good intentions and take effective steps, in the absence of which it is of little avail to speak about genuine détente and even less about security.

Mr. SMID (Czechoslovakia): Last year, at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, the Czechoslovak delegation already repeatedly expressed support for the Soviet proposal to conclude a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. Together with the majority of the States Members of the United Nations, the Czechoslovak delegation supported with its vote resolution 31/9, which rightly opened the way to the broad international unfolding of the Soviet initiative. The Czechoslovak Government also responded to the request contained in that resolution and, in a letter from the Czechoslovak Minister for Foreign Affairs, communicated its position on the proposed treaty to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The exact wording of the Czechoslovak position is contained in document A/32/95. The Czechoslovak Government regards the Soviet proposal as another manifestation of the efforts to promote and deepen the process of international détente and as further proof of the unfailing Soviet determination to search for new ways leading to the elimination of the danger of war, international violence and oppression, to the strengthening of the existing safeguards of international peace and security, and to the adoption of effective measures in this field.

We have been wisely reminded several times in the course of the current session of the General Assembly that international détente, advocated on various occasions by the overwhelming majority of the States of the world, is not an end in itself, but one of the means of reaching an important goal, namely, a lasting peaceful settlement of international relations. Thus, détente is not a static phenomenon but a process that, as such, is subject to various influences, both as to its speed and as to its substance.

(Mr. Smid, Czechoslovakia)

We are convinced that consideration of the Soviet proposal to conclude a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations and, moreover, the conclusion of such an international legal document would further accelerate the process of détente and, what is decisive, would significantly deepen its substance. There is no need to stress in particular that the draft treaty touches the very heart of the problem of the relaxation of tension.

We regard as positive the fact that almost all the positions taken so far in respect of the draft treaty on the non-use of force in international relations have affirmed the adherence of individual Governments to the principles of peaceful coexistence among States and the elimination of aggression and all forms of force in the solution of disputes between States. One can also note with satisfaction the degree of authority and seriousness that Governments attach in their statements to fundamental international documents - whether legal or political - that have been adopted within the United Nations in the service of the cause of peace. However, the actual international situation convinces us that the noble principles of the United Nations Charter and the instruments derived from it are not always being consistently observed. Hotbeds of dispute still exist throughout the world, the danger of war has not been warded off by far, there are plans to produce a new weapon of mass destruction, and the consequences of aggressive wars still survive from the recent past.

(Mr. Smid, Czechoslovakia)

Proceeding from the discrepancy between the aspirations and the determination, on the one hand, and the unsatisfactory reality on the other, we do not see any other possibility but to continue the search for political and legal means of strengthening and multiplying the system of international guarantees for the preservation and consolidation of peace.

The undeniable progress, both political and legal, which the implementation of the Soviet proposal would bring, must be seen as an indivisible phenomenon. Instead of mere one-sided formalistic and abstract legal disputations, we recommend that more attention be devoted in the First Committee to the substance and the aim of the proposal. It is our belief that from this point of view there should be no reservations against it.

It would hardly be possible nowadays to take a stand in the United Nations against such principles of international relations as the principles of the sovereign equality of States, territorial integrity of the State, non-interference in the internal affairs of another State, the settlement of disputes by exclusively peaceful means, the exclusion of aggression and force from international relations, the prevention of disputes in general, and so on. It is these very principles that are being protected and strengthened by the draft treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. The proposed treaty would significantly expand and qualitatively enhance the legal and political responsibility of signatories for the consistent observance of practically all the fundamental principles safeguarding international peace and security.

Another sphere of international relations, to which we have for years been devoting primary attention in the First Committee and which would undoubtedly be favourably influenced by the conclusion of the treaty initiated by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, is the sphere of efforts to achieve progress on the road to disarmament. The renunciation of the use of force in the relations among States would further reduce the political role played so far by weapons as technical instruments of strength and power. The adoption of an independently formulated legal and political commitment not to resort to force in international relations would proportionately facilitate the negotiating position of all participants in disarmament talks.

(Mr. Smid, Czechoslovakia)

The conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations and its being given a place in the system of international law would significantly strengthen the security and independent existence of the newly independent and developing States and would enable them to devote primary attention to the securing of their all-round economic, cultural and social development. That kind of international climate would also favourably influence the efforts by colonial nations to gain freedom and independence.

Furthermore, the proposed treaty would be fully in accordance with the right of States to individual or collective self-defence in keeping with the United Nations Charter, and it would become another important instrument in the hands of the United Nations and the Security Council to serve the protection of international peace and security. We are convinced that the conclusion of this treaty and its implementation would significantly strengthen the position and the international prestige of the United Nations.

The basic prerequisite for the conclusion of any international agreement is the existence of certain international relations that call for contractual regulation. The Czechoslovak delegation believes that from this point of view the draft treaty on the non-use of force in international relations as it was submitted by the Soviet Union is a timely document that would bring all-round benefit to the international community. Proceeding from this conviction, we trust that the competent United Nations bodies will devote priority attention to this proposal.

The Czechoslovak delegation recommends that, following specialized procedural and legal consideration of this question in the Sixth Committee, the preparation and the drafting of the final text of the treaty should be entrusted to a special committee established for that purpose.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, accept the assurance that Czechoslovakia is always ready to take an active part in the consideration of the draft treaty and exert every effort for its earliest possible introduction into international life.

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning the meeting I would advise members that the Committee will take decisions tomorrow afternoon on the draft resolutions relating to the outer space items. In that connexion I should like to announce that Ghana has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/32/L.40. As there are no speakers for this afternoon, I am compelled to cancel the meeting that was to be held at 3 o'clock.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.