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AGENDA ITEM 32

Question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction, and the use of their resources in the interests of mankind: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction (*continued*) (A/7622 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/7750)

1. The CHAIRMAN: At the last meeting the Committee completed voting on the various draft resolutions on this item and also heard those delegations which had inscribed their names to explain their votes after the voting. I shall

now give the floor to the representative of Ceylon, the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction, who wishes to make a statement.

2. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Ceylon): Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity of speaking, as I wished to raise once more in this Committee the question of the venue of the 1970 summer session of the sea-bed Committee. When the proposal was made in the sea-bed Committee itself there were certain objections raised to it on financial grounds, in view of the fact that it would involve an additional expenditure for the Organization. There were also certain delegations which had objections on the grounds that they would find it difficult to send their representatives to Geneva for this session. Therefore I took the step of conducting an unofficial poll among the members of the sea-bed Committee during this session. It appeared to me that there was overwhelming support for the proposal, although those who objected to it on financial grounds persisted—and understandably so—in their objections.

3. The reason why I have thought it fit to raise the matter here once again is that the procedure that has been followed in these cases is by no means clear to me. In fact, the advice I have received tends partly in support of the matter's being raised in this Committee and partly in support of its being raised in the Fifth Committee. The only way out of the dilemma for me, therefore, was to raise the matter in both Committees.

4. It was my hope that any special financial implications in excess of commitments already assumed by the Organization could be avoided by substituting the sea-bed Committee's 1970 summer session in the Geneva calendar for some other body which had already been accommodated in the Geneva calendar in accordance with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly. My inquiries have shown that that approach is not regarded by the Secretariat as permissible under its interpretation of the General Assembly resolutions. We do not wish to question that interpretation of the General Assembly decisions. What we do wish to assert, however, is that the reasons which justify other bodies in meeting at regular intervals in Geneva, rather than in New York where they are normally required to meet, are equally applicable to the sea-bed Committee. There is a quota of meetings included in the Geneva calendar every year, apparently at additional cost—included in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2116 (XX), on "Pattern of conferences"; but through some extraordinary procedure or budgetary device, those special additions to the Geneva calendar are presented as normal incidents of expenditure. We should like to see the sea-bed Committee's 1970

summer session treated as part of that category of special meetings, and to have it included in the Geneva summer calendar in place of some other meeting entailing equal financial cost already incorporated in that calendar.

5. General Assembly resolution 2116 (XX) states, in operative paragraph 2, the general principle that “meetings of United Nations bodies shall be held at the established headquarters of the bodies concerned”, and gives certain exceptions. I would wish to refer particularly to those exceptions that are mentioned in subparagraphs (d) and (e) of operative paragraph 2 of that resolution. First, under subparagraph (d):

“One Headquarters-based functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, to be determined by the Council, may meet at Geneva during the period from January to April;”

and then, under subparagraph (e):

“Sessions of not more than three other Headquarters-based functional commissions or committees of the Economic and Social Council may, by decisions of the Council taken after consultation with the Secretary-General, be held at Geneva during the period from September to December without overlap.”

6. Those seem to me to be a very substantial dispensation in favour of a special body, the Economic and Social Council. It should be possible to transfer some of those special meetings from the Geneva calendar to the New York calendar and to use the resultant saving to accommodate the summer session of the sea-bed Committee in Geneva. If that approach is not possible otherwise than through an amendment of the General Assembly resolution, then we shall have to have recourse to that procedure. If that approach is not feasible, we have no choice but to ask the Committee to consider the proposal in the light of its financial implications.

7. Once again I wish to state that I have decided to raise the matter in this Committee because it seems that other bodies go to their appropriate Committees in situations such as this. The other day the Sixth Committee took a decision that a meeting of a legal sub-committee—I am not sure which sub-committee it was—be transferred to Geneva at a cost of \$100,000. The sea-bed Committee is not a sub-committee and it deserves at least as much consideration as, if not more consideration than, a sub-committee. The sea-bed Committee’s mandate covers a subject that is of universal concern. In such cases, the United Nations policy should be to secure the widest possible interest in the question.

8. That, I believe, is the main reason for the great importance we attach in this Organization to United Nations publicity. Public opinion has to be educated and stimulated in such matters, and one means of doing so is to hold meetings at intervals at different centres. Next to New York, the most important centre so far as the United Nations and its activities are concerned is the European Headquarters of the United Nations.

9. I would therefore ask this Committee to express its views on this proposal. We realize and agree that, in

accordance with recognized procedure, the Fifth Committee would have to pass judgement on the matter, as it is its constitutional responsibility to do so.

10. We had, in the special session of the sea-bed Committee, an estimate presented to us by the Secretariat [*A/AC.138/SR.16*] of the additional financial costs of holding the meeting in Geneva. According to that estimate, if appeared that it would be necessary for the Secretariat to engage temporary assistance at an estimated cost of \$95,700, comprising \$72,000 for conference-servicing staff; \$4,500 for the reproduction and distribution of provisional summary records and in-session documentation; \$3,500 for miscellaneous services during the session; and \$15,700 for post-session editing, reproduction and distribution of final summary records. A further \$14,300, it was stated, would be required to provide for the cost of the travel and subsistence of the substantive servicing staff from Headquarters. The total cost of holding the Committee’s meeting in Geneva was therefore estimated at \$110,000.

11. I am not sure whether any of the special items that have been included in the estimate of \$110,000 would not have to be incurred in either case. If they would be incurred in either case, then they cannot appropriately be included in the estimate of \$110,000. My presumption may be wrong and I would be prepared to be corrected. I hope that, without encroaching unduly on the time of this Committee, we can reach a decision on this subject today.

12. Mr. THACHER (United States of America): We are indebted to Mr. Amerasinghe in his capacity as Chairman of the sea-bed Committee for bringing this matter to our attention. It strikes my delegation very clearly that the General Assembly needs in the future to re-examine the pattern of conferences so as to avoid discrimination or prejudice towards those committees which have been created since the General Assembly last considered this matter at its twentieth session.

13. I think it is well known that when Mr. Amerasinghe referred to certain delegations as strongly opposing the extra expenditure of approximately \$110,000 that would be required if the sea-bed Committee met away from United Nations Headquarters, he had my delegation in mind as one of those which had been the most vigorous and outspoken in this matter. If I understood Mr. Amerasinghe correctly, he asked that this Committee, the First Committee, express a view on where the session should be held, bearing in mind that the Fifth Committee—I think he used the words—“must pass final judgement” on this matter. Since our objections have rested exclusively on the extra expenditure of \$110,000, we could not object to a request by this Committee that the Fifth Committee examine this matter. We would of course make our views on the extra expenditure known in the Fifth Committee when the matter was taken up there.

14. Mr. VINCI (Italy): My delegation would like to support very strongly the proposal made by the representative of Ceylon, who is the Chairman of the standing sea-bed Committee. It is well known to representatives in this Committee who are also members of the sea-bed Committee that my delegation last year had already advocated holding a summer session of the sea-bed Committee in

Geneva. We still feel that that would be not only proper and appropriate but also in the interests of the work of the sea-bed Committee. It is our belief and conviction that the objections which could be made on financial grounds are not overriding if they are compared to the arguments which Mr. Amerasinghe put forward a few minutes ago. We completely share his view that it is of the greatest interest to ensure a wider awareness of the importance of the work we are doing in the sea-bed Committee, and that therefore it would be in the interest of all members to have this 1970 summer session of the sea-bed Committee in Geneva.

15. May I add that my delegation would very much favour a strong recommendation from this Committee to the Fifth Committee. We feel that in the calendar of Geneva and New York a certain priority should be given to the sea-bed Committee, and I fully share the view expressed by Mr. Amerasinghe that certainly a standing committee should be favoured over a sub-committee. Finally, if there is a difficulty of any sort, I would suggest that there should be a regular rotation between different committees and bodies for holding sessions at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and at the European Headquarters in Geneva. In conclusion, I fully support the proposal made by Mr. Amerasinghe and we should very much like to see that Committee take a decision this morning on the subject.

16. Mr. HILDYARD (United Kingdom): I think many of us find this procedurally a very complicated question. On the substance, when the matter was considered previously my delegation expressed sympathy for the idea of meeting in Geneva but reservations about the extra cost which apparently would be involved. As I see it, there seem to be two possibilities now. One is that the First Committee refer the whole issue to the Fifth Committee for decision. The second is that the First Committee send a positive recommendation to the Fifth Committee, of course leaving the final decision to the Fifth Committee.

17. On the first, we would certainly support it. On the second, we would not like to stand out against the majority of the Committee if they wish to have a session in Geneva, but until there is a clearer picture of the financial implications, or the possibility of holding a meeting without incurring quite a large extra expense, we would not feel able to support a positive recommendation.

18. Mr. STASHEVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): My delegation wishes to make a few comments on the proposal made by Mr. Amerasinghe, Chairman of the Committee on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor, that this Committee should hold its summer session at Geneva. My delegation has carefully considered the reasons advanced now and earlier for holding that session at Geneva. I regret to say, however, that having made such a study, my delegation sees no practical necessity for such an arrangement and fails to see how that would in any way advance the Committee's work.

19. My delegation does not agree with the arguments advanced, and it has heard no arguments which would convince it that the session should be held at Geneva rather than in New York. At the same time, we have heard from various delegations, in particular those of small countries, that it would be difficult for them to transfer those of their

members who are concerned with the questions of the sea-bed and the ocean floor to Geneva and back, since they deal with other matters as well. These considerations, being eminently practical, must of course be taken into account. We should also remember that holding the session at Geneva would occasion additional expenditure of the order of \$110,000 as we have been informed. That circumstance should be borne in mind when the question is finally decided. My delegation is therefore unable to support the view that the First Committee should make any kind of recommendation regarding the holding of the session at Geneva.

20. I also find merit in the procedural argument put forward by the United Kingdom representative to the effect that the First Committee should take no decision on the matter now, but should leave it for the Fifth Committee to consider.

21. The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on the Secretary of the Committee to make a statement on the financial implications of the proposal.

22. Mr. CHACKO (Secretary of the Committee): In accordance with the provisions of rule 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I should like to inform the Committee of the financial implications of the proposal made by the representative of Ceylon. As the representative of Ceylon, the Chairman of the sea-bed Committee, has himself pointed out, these financial implications were already submitted by the Secretary-General to the sea-bed Committee. However, for the information of the First Committee, I shall repeat the statement here.

23. The holding in 1970 of a session of the Conference on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor Beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction in Geneva, rather than in New York, will cause the planned capacity of the Geneva Office to service meetings to be exceeded. Accordingly, it will be necessary to engage temporary assistance at an estimated cost of \$95,700, comprising \$72,000 for conference servicing staff, \$4,500 for the reproduction and distribution of provisional summary records and in-session documentation, \$3,500 for miscellaneous services during the session, and \$15,700 for post-session editing, reproduction and distribution of final summary records. A further \$14,300 will be required to provide for the costs of the travel and subsistence of the substantive servicing staff from Headquarters.

24. The total cost of holding the Committee session in Geneva is therefore estimated at \$110,000. This estimate is based on the assumption that it will be possible to accommodate the session during the period 3 to 28 August 1970.

25. Mr. DEJAMMET (France) (*translated from French*): My delegation quite understands that some delegations should want to know the financial implications of the proposal before us. I would emphasize that it is financial implications that we are talking about, for the budget need not be increased thereby, since it has not yet been drawn up; consequently, we must simply consider the financial implications of transferring the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor to Geneva for its August session.

26. Nevertheless, I confess I have some doubts with regard to the figures submitted to us, as different figures appear on different documents. The sum of \$110,000 was recently mentioned, but another figure—\$95,600—appears in the report on the calendar of conferences submitted to the Fifth Committee.¹ Several months ago, when the Italian delegation suggested in the Committee on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor that the possibility of transferring the session should be considered, a still lower figure—\$75,000—had been cited.

27. My delegation feels that if we are to consider the question seriously, we can take it that some savings are possible and that the figure just given to us was a tentative one. We can certainly count on some savings, so that this expenditure should fit without great difficulty in a balanced budget.

28. In any case, I do not think that this submission, which arouses serious doubts on my part, should make us go back on the tacit agreement achieved in the Committee on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor. Whenever the question of transferring the session had been raised there, some comments and reservations had certainly been made, but no formal objection to this idea was ever recorded.

29. In reality, it seems to me, the problem is not exactly financial. The budgetary aspect does not fall within our province, since a possible reorganization of Secretariat services at Geneva is involved, and members are well aware that a study is being made on the matter and that, as we all wish, it will probably show that savings can be made.

30. On the other hand, we should consider the practical advantage of holding this third session of the Committee on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor in 1970 at Geneva and of establishing a permanent rotation along the lines indicated by the Italian representative. My delegation, for its part, has reacted very favourably to the comments of the representatives of Ceylon and Italy on the practical advantages for a very large number of delegations of holding this session in 1970 at Geneva. I therefore strongly support the proposal made by the permanent representative of Ceylon at the beginning of the meeting.

31. Mr. GAUCI (Malta): My delegation also shares the mystification just expressed by the delegation of France concerning the figures provided to us by the Secretariat. If my memory serves me correctly, it was known in the Secretariat that as far back as last August the sea-bed Committee had expressed a desire to meet in Geneva. Since then we have had three different sets of figures, and, apparently, from what I can gather, even those figures are not final yet. Therefore, speaking also as a small delegation, we would see no difficulty whatsoever in having one of the sessions of the sea-bed Committee held in Geneva next year—indeed we would prefer it. For that purpose we would support the suggestion made by the Chairman of the sea-bed Committee and by the delegation of Italy.

32. The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee to make a supplementary statement.

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 26 (A/7626)*, para. 19.

33. Mr. CHACKO (Secretary of the Committee): With reference to the statement made by the representative of France, I should like to explain with regard to the discrepancy in figures he mentioned that the figure of \$95,600 contained in the report of the Committee on Conferences referred only to expenditure in relation to the conference services. It did not include the cost for substantive staff, which had been added in the statement that I made. In fact, a correction to paragraph 19 of the report, which contains the figure of \$95,600, was issued on 24 November 1969.² That correction gives the estimated cost as \$110,000.

34. Mr. AL-SABAH (Kuwait): I should like, first of all, to thank the Secretariat for furnishing us with the figures concerning the next session of the sea-bed Committee in Geneva. However, my delegation supports the proposal made by the representative of Ceylon to hold the next session in Geneva.

35. The CHAIRMAN: There are two proposals before the Committee. The first, by the representative of the United States, is that this Committee should refer the proposal to hold a session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and Ocean Floor in August of next year in Geneva to the Fifth Committee for decision. The second proposal is that this Committee should refer the matter to the Fifth Committee with a favourable recommendation. I should like to be guided by the Committee as to whether it desires that we should proceed to decide this matter by a vote, or whether those who are in favour of the proposal and those who are opposed to it would like to have consultations among themselves.

36. Mr. THACHER (United States of America): It was not my intention to make a proposal when I spoke. I had attempted to express my view on the proposal which I understood the Chairman of the sea-bed Committee, Mr. Amerasinghe, had made.

37. Mr. IGNATIEFF (Canada): From the point of view of my own personal preference, I must say that the conception of having the opportunity of meeting my close friend and colleague, Mr. Amerasinghe of Ceylon, is one which attracts me greatly. The fact that I shall be in Geneva at that time means that it will be all the more convenient to me personally to have this session take place there.

38. It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that the point which you put to us is one which should really be the subject of further consultation. There were two questions raised. One was the question of the figures: various figures were mentioned, and the last one from the Secretariat was \$110,000. But the point that does require a little more advice—and either the Secretariat or the Fifth Committee should surely offer it before we make a final decision—concerns the facilities of Geneva. Will the schedule of conferences for the summer be such as to provide adequately for the servicing of this one, which is a very important one and would take place through most of August?

39. I would suggest that before we take a decision we should have the opportunity of consultations, with further advice on both points.

² Corrigendum to Supplement No. 26 (A/7626/Corr.1).

40. The CHAIRMAN: I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

41. Mr. CHACKO (Secretary of the Committee): With reference to the statement of the representative of Canada, I should like to explain that, when we speak of facilities, what would be available at that time would be conference rooms; but all the conference staff for servicing the meetings would have to be recruited specially for this session.

42. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Ceylon): May I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that, without taking a vote, you try to assess the feeling of this Committee on the question whether it agrees in principle that the 1970 summer session of the sea-bed Committee be held in Geneva. Then, if its agreement in principle is conveyed to the Fifth Committee, the matter can be examined in its full implications in that Committee and a decision can be taken.

43. Mr. PINTO (Portugal) (*translated from French*): The Chairman of the Committee on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor has given us his views on the advantages of holding that Committee's next session at Geneva. In the conviction that he is the person best qualified to express that Committee's feelings and explain its interests in the matter, my delegation supports his proposal.

44. The CHAIRMAN: May I request the representative of Ceylon to be kind enough to put his proposal again so that it may be formulated precisely.

45. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Ceylon): What I suggested was that, instead of taking a vote on this matter, the Chairman should try to assess the feeling of this Committee and to ascertain whether it agrees that the Fifth Committee should be informed that the First Committee agrees in principle that the 1970 summer session of the sea-bed Committee be held in Geneva, and that a decision be taken by the Fifth Committee in the light of all the relevant implications.

46. The CHAIRMAN: Since the representative of Ceylon has very kindly requested me to assess the feeling of the Committee, I should like to have some time to do so, after which I shall inform the Committee.

47. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Ceylon): To spare you the trouble of doing so, Mr. Chairman, may I suggest that you ask representatives whether they have any objection to the Fifth Committee's being informed in the terms suggested by me; that is, that the First Committee agrees in principle that the 1970 summer session of the sea-bed Committee be held in Geneva, and that a decision be taken finally by the Fifth Committee in the light of all the implications. If no representative objects to that formula then that ends it.

48. The CHAIRMAN: Does any member of the Committee wish to offer any comments on the suggestion made by the representative of Ceylon?

Mr. Kolo (Nigeria), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

49. Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*translated from Russian*): I believe that there exists a strict procedure for fixing the time and place of

conferences. If memory serves me, that procedure is that the organ directly concerned states its opinion on the matter. Its recommendation is then considered by the Committee on Conferences, then by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and later still by the Fifth Committee. Consequently, I fail to see how the First Committee can depart from a previously established procedure, which has been successfully applied for many years.

50. Before we comment on the proposal of the representative of Ceylon, perhaps the Chairman would inform us whether the First Committee should discuss the matter at all.

51. Mr. KARASIMEONOV (Bulgaria) (*translated from French*): I associate myself with the proposal of many representatives and of the Chairman himself that we should be given time before taking a decision on such an important question. Many representatives are absent at the moment; the head of my own delegation is not here, and I would find it difficult to take a position on this important question here and now.

52. I also associate myself with the suggestion that the problem should be ruled on by the Fifth Committee. In any event, I believe that we must be allowed some time for consultations, so that we can take a considered decision.

53. Mr. OULD DADDAH (Mauritania) (*translated from French*): My delegation is not opposed to a postponement of the matter, but my understanding is that the Chairman of the Committee on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor merely asked whether our Committee would have any objection to having the Fifth Committee consider the question and giving us its views on it.

54. As it can see no fundamental objection to this proposal, my delegation, while it would not oppose those who wish to study the problem further, especially as no decision has been taken on the substance, sees no reason why you, Mr. Chairman, should not ascertain a general consensus, as the Chairman of the Committee on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor has requested, thus enabling the Fifth Committee to give us information on the basis of which we can take a decision.

55. I therefore think that it would be desirable to grant this morning, if possible, the request made by the Chairman of the Committee on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor.

56. The CHAIRMAN: It is the understanding of the Chair that in his last intervention the representative of Ceylon desired that I should put to the Committee his suggestion or proposal that the First Committee agrees in principle to the holding of the sea-bed Committee's summer session in Geneva and that that view should be referred to the Fifth Committee for decision in the light of all the circumstances and facts available. It was on that proposal that comments were made by the representatives of the Byelorussian SSR and Bulgaria.

57. I feel that perhaps the Committee is not ready to take a decision at this time, and I would suggest that the interested delegations hold consultations among themselves and that we revert to this question at a later time.

58. If there is no objection, I shall take it that it is so decided.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEMS 29, 104, 30 AND 31

Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (continued)* (A/7639, A/7681 and A/7741-DC/232; A/C.1/989, A/C.1/992-995; A/C.1/L.490, A/C.1/L.492-495)

Question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons (continued)* (A/C.1/988, A/C.1/989 and A/C.1/991; A/C.1/L.487 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.488, A/C.1/L.489 and A/C.1/L.491):

- (a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (A/7741-DC/232);
- (b) Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons (A/7655);
- (c) Report of the Secretary-General (A/7575)

Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (continued)* (A/7741-DC/232; A/C.1/L.485 and Add.1-3 and A/C.1/L.486)

Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States (continued).*

- (a) Implementation of the results of the Conference: report of the Secretary-General (A/7677 and Corr.1 and Add.1-2);
- (b) Establishment, within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, of an international service for nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes under appropriate international control: report of the Secretary-General (A/7678 and Add.1-3);
- (c) Contributions of nuclear technology to the economic and scientific advancement of the developing countries: report of the Secretary-General (A/7568 and A/7743)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

59. Mr. PINTO (Portugal): We have read with great interest the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [A/7741-DC/232]³ submitted by the Secretary-General to this Assembly. We must congratulate him, as well as the Secretariat, for having succeeded in giving all of us, and especially those who were absent from Geneva, a broad base for the study of the results of the Geneva Conference. We also want to congratulate the Secretary-General and his assistants for their report on the problem of chemical and bacteriological weapons⁴ prepared in accordance with what had been established by the last General Assembly.

* Resumed from the 1707th meeting.

³ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969, document DC/232.*

⁴ *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.69.I.24).

60. Although Portugal is not a member of the Committee on Disarmament, my country, like every country in the world, is extremely interested in the various aspects of that problem. We realize that there is a particular sector in which substantive progress has been made at Geneva during the last two sessions. I refer to the draft treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and ocean floor [*ibid.*, annex A]. The Portuguese delegation attaches great importance to that project and the various aspects of the problem with which it deals. We follow attentively the statement made in this Committee by the Ambassador of Brazil on this matter [*1702nd meeting*]. Like the delegation of Brazil, my delegation will not be able to favour any clause which would mean an alteration to the *status quo* created by the Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf. The continental shelf as defined by the Geneva Convention is a part of the territory of the respective coastal State. That being so, any verification taking place in such zones should be subject to a specific provision that will comprehend the right of the coastal State concerned to intervene and be heard in any action that can take place on its continental shelf.

61. We must not exclude the possibility of coastal States without means of verification of submarine activities having dangerous weapons established on their coasts and on their platforms by other countries, without their even knowing what is happening to them.

62. As a possible alternative we consider highly constructive the suggestion of the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs that a coastal band of a 200 mile security zone should be created to which the proposed arms prohibition would apply in full but where the coastal State could undertake defensive activities. That zone would be established beyond the limits of the territorial waters.

63. We must admit that in their revised version the sponsors of the draft have sincerely tried to meet the objections that have been levelled against their document. Even so we do not think that they have succeeded entirely; and we sincerely hope that more thought will be given to the problem before this Committee gives its approval.

64. We should like now to express our complete support for the measures that could strengthen the Geneva Protocol of 1925 on bacteriological weapons.⁵ No country can see without horror the use of such weapons, and we share in the concern of the Brazilian delegation that the Assembly should be given more information on the type, location and quantities of those weapons actually in existence.

65. I should also like to refer to the co-operative attitude of the nuclear Powers offering to share the benefits of pacific nuclear technology with non-nuclear States. We refer to the provision of peaceful nuclear explosion services through IAEA and the role nuclear technology can play in the advancement of developing countries. Here also we agree entirely with our Brazilian colleague in his rejection of the proposal made in some of the replies contained in

⁵ Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use of War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925.

the report of the Secretary-General [A/7678 and Add.1-3] that the participation in the benefits of such service should be conditioned upon evidence that the countries have accepted certain agreements on nuclear weapons. Portugal has continually forbidden and is against any type of discrimination, even those that are presented under tempting formulas.

66. I should like now to stress how agreeably surprised we were at the news of the convening of the Helsinki conference. We sincerely hope that the United States and the Soviet Union will finally agree to stop the escalation of nuclear armaments in which so much wealth and technique is wasted. That conference could not have come at a better moment. Until recently there has been a balance of nuclear power although it has been precarious. Should the testing of multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRVs) continue, one of the two big Powers could very shortly reach the point of accuracy that would allow it to destroy by multiple warheads all the land-based missiles of the adversary on a first strike. That situation would create new dangers for mankind.

67. At this time I think we should also address a word of appreciation to the Latin American countries for the good will they were the first to show in establishing a nuclear free zone. That development suggests to me, at least, that peace cannot be imposed by the powerful but must start at the base of the pyramid of world popular support and subsequently rise to the top.

68. We must now stress that the nuclear dangers are not, in practical terms, the worst that menace us. The very fact that a nuclear war represents the annihilation of mankind makes it—and I hope I am right—less probable. We think that so-called conventional armament has proved to be, for the time being, more dangerous. In fact, at this moment conflicts with conventional arms are raging all over the world. There is a tendency to forget that reality. In each of two zones of the world more than one million deaths have been announced. None of those cases is on the agenda of this Assembly. None of them is solved. While we are here speaking of peace, people continue to die and starve in those areas.

69. We know that war has been a constant reality in man's evolution. From Pleistocene times to this very hour the process of evolution has been characterized by a constant struggle between the elements living upon the earth; but only in the last two decades, and for the first time in history, has man discovered sure means for the total destruction of his own species. At the end of the twentieth century man finds himself confronted with a tragic dilemma: he must either succeed in controlling his natural tendencies towards conflict, aggression and war or sooner or later face annihilation. The history of civilization has been that of a long struggle to dominate the forces of nature, to channel the tremendous forces of instinct, intelligence and will towards new goals in all fields of activity, destroying the barriers of prejudice when necessary. This will continue but, we hope, with new rules that will make war unnecessary.

70. Next year the United Nations will celebrate twenty-five years of life. At its inception it was the last, best hope

of man. It is in our hands and in the hands of the Governments we represent that the possibility lies of making the United Nations what it was meant to be. What is the good of disarmament conferences, of disarmament drafts and of agreements on nuclear-free zones if everywhere in the world nuclear and conventional weapons, progressively more sophisticated and deadly, are being built and put into action? What is the good of twenty-five years of the United Nations if in this very building and at this very session we hear strong and powerful countries telling us, with the smiles and approval of many, that they will spread terror, death and famine and that powerful efforts will be made to disseminate war where until now peace has existed? Aggression, although condemned by the Charter of the United Nations in all its forms and whatever the reason or pretext, is being committed at this very moment in certain parts of the world and, ironically enough, in the name of the lofty principles of peace, justice and human rights. Resolutions have been adopted at this very session of the General Assembly by which the United Nations will pay for a system of broadcasting to be used by an organization that has declared violence to be proper and legitimate. Peace will never be achieved in such a spirit because violence by one country against another, whatever the pretext, cannot but be met by violence. That is an elementary rule of self-defence, the legitimacy of which cannot be contested.

71. Those who know us know well that the Portuguese are a peaceful people. Ours is a peaceful country of sailors, traders, fishermen, agriculturists, craftsmen and so on. Its experience in many continents has given my country a special understanding of the aspiration to peace that exists among most peoples of the world. For a long time we have been aware of the slow interaction of the people of the different continents in a common aspiration to peace.

72. As evidence of what I have said and of the importance that my Government attaches to peace, I should like to quote the following words by the Prime Minister of Portugal, Dr. Marcello Caetano, before the National Assembly and other national institutions:

“We Portuguese are sincere peace-lovers. I myself am one, nor can I understand how any balanced individual can desire, applaud and provoke the solution of disputes by bringing about massacres and extensive destruction of property with the consequent but unforeseeable damage and extension of strife.”

He also said:

“The lovers and defenders of peace endeavour to find the best solution for the common good, but find their efforts continuously being nullified or challenged. Throughout the world the peoples worry and wonder, torn between the hope of better days and the dread of tomorrow.”

He said recently: “We Portuguese have declared war on nobody, we are at war with nobody.” He also said: “In our country we have constitutionally condemned for over fifty years war as a means of settling conflicts among States.” Those are words of a man of peace.

73. I should now like to say that my delegation has listened carefully to the words of goodwill and peace spoken in this Committee by the Soviet representative. We sincerely hope that those words represent the true intentions of the Soviet Union and that they supersede certain declarations that have been made by Soviet representatives during this session in other Committees. Every country must realize that peace is something that must be accepted as indivisible. You cannot have peace in certain zones and at certain levels and encourage and assist violence in others.

74. We must realize that the problem of disarmament is perhaps the most sensitive and delicate problem that the United Nations has ever faced. In fact, an error made in such a matter can cost a country its liberty. Peace in itself is an abstract concept that can be used, and even abused, with many intentions, some of which can be, to say the least, not exactly peaceful. Peace cannot be achieved through legal instruments alone. It is indispensable to begin with to agree on certain very simple principles. In this connexion I venture to offer a few remarks. No country should press its political differences with another to the point of violence, for it should not be forgotten that even a worm turns. Violence begets violence. Campaigns of hate, whatever the reasons, should not be allowed to spread. All possible bases of understanding and all zones of possible co-operation between nations should be carefully considered, explored and widened. Conversely, all zones of friction and all points of conflict should be settled peacefully. There should be some hard thinking on the population explosion, which has transformed certain States, known previously for their pacifism, into predatory countries. Modern wars have ceased to consist of frontal conflicts between vast armies. They now take the shape of a thousand minor conflicts and skirmishes scattered over the entire world. Adversaries seek to overcome one another by undermining ideological and moral resistance, by encouraging various kinds of subversion in the very heart of nations and by occupying strategic positions in the field of information, propaganda and so on. Every effort should be made to eliminate such activities, for they give rise to much misery and violence and, in the long run, lead inevitably to undesirable reactionary attitudes and policies in various countries of the world.

75. Those principles and others that I am sure will occur to members in this context could help countries to have less fear of one another, restore confidence in the United Nations and give to the new generation the hope it appears to have lost.

76. Mr. GHORRA (Lebanon) (*translated from French*): The Committee has been at work for some time, but as this is my first statement here, I should like to say that my delegation has deeply admired the skill and authority with which our Chairman has conducted the debates. Our warmest congratulations go also to the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur. The officers of the Committee have fully justified the Committee's choice.

77. Armament is a fundamental problem which has given concern to many civilizations, but at no time in history has it been as important as it is today, in an industrial society. The munitions industry has greatly benefited from technical progress, with two equally adverse consequences for international peace and security. The first is the dizzying

growth of the destructive power of nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons, and the second is the unequalled rise in the cost of these weapons. A mere glance at the sums expended on armaments will give a clear idea of how acute this problem has become.

78. In 1969, the world will have spent for military purposes a sum equivalent to the total of goods and services produced at the beginning of the century. Taking inflation into account, this sum is also double what had been spent for the same purposes in 1954. In twenty-five years, the amounts allocated for arms will exceed the value of the total production of goods and services today.

79. In 1968, world expenditure on weapons totalled \$150,000 million. The United States alone has expended \$79,000 million, the Soviet Union \$40,000 million, and Communist China \$7,000 million; Europe accounts for most of the rest.

80. From 1949 to 1968, military expenditures have increased on the average by 5.9 per cent every year. In the last three years, the rise was 8.9 per cent, mainly because of the high cost of producing missile and anti-missile systems.

81. Before 1914 and between 1914 and 1939, the sums allocated for armaments had represented 3.5 per cent of the world's resources; today they represent 8 per cent. According to a study made by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute,⁶ the sums assigned to armaments double every fifteen years and represent twice the share of the total national income of all countries that they did twenty-five years ago.

82. Increasing stockpiling and continued research and development not merely result in an accumulation of means of mass destruction, but also cause and maintain that climate of collective psychosis which is a distinguishing mark of our times. The horror we all feel at the possibility of war has been so well expressed by speakers who have preceded me that I need not dwell on it.

83. In the light of these figures and these preliminary considerations, we naturally wish to encourage progressive reduction of armament in its twin aspects and replace it by a constructive and humane policy. I would add, however, that while disarmament is a pre-condition for international security, it is not in itself sufficient. Its corollary is, and must be, a national and international strategy of development, made possible by the funds released.

84. I represent a small country which would not venture to discuss the more esoteric aspects of this problem in detail. I personally lay no claim to being an expert in the matter. But I am compelled, while noting that our work has had some positive results, to draw attention to the great gap between those results and the realization of the ideals we have affirmed at the twenty-three preceding sessions in our resolutions, all of them in conformity with the spirit of this Committee. My delegation, for its part, will support every effort that is likely to help to solve the disarmament

⁶ See *SIPRI Yearbook of World Armaments and Disarmament 1968/1969*, Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell; New York, Humanities Press; London, Gerald Buckworth and Company, Ltd.

problem, for like all the other countries in the world, Lebanon is extremely concerned over international peace and security.

85. Armament is supposed to bring about peace and security; but at the international level stockpiles of weapons only increase world tensions. These stockpiles certainly do not guarantee peace or security, for their very existence is a negation thereof.

86. At the national level, the stockpiles are certainly not conducive to peace and prosperity, for they cannot make up for the obvious handicap of technological backwardness, while the enemy's striking power may be even greater and may destroy the national potential. Moreover, expenditures on armaments do not necessarily mean the creation of productive investment, since they require taxation of the national *per capita* income in return for which they offer only probable, but not certain, protection in the case of armed conflict.

87. Lastly, expenditures on armaments are a section of the national budget which does absolutely nothing to raise the level of living.

88. As we have seen, the arms race cannot possibly be a sure factor of national or international security. The stockpiling of weapons provides no information on the preparedness of the enemy, so that, in addition to the arms race, there is a race for technological supremacy, an area in which the gap cannot readily be determined. Consequently stockpiling, in addition to unproductive expenditure, entails a dangerous unknown as to the issue of an armed conflict, which itself becomes the more probable as the arms race goes on.

89. Disarmament is such a vital problem that nations and international organizations have been concerned with it for twenty-five years. The importance of disarmament is so self-evident that it is expressly mentioned in Article 26 of the Charter. For the same reason the General Assembly, after instructing various United Nations organs to give priority to the study of disarmament, forthwith adopted its resolution 1 (I) of 24 January 1946 establishing the Atomic Energy Commission.

90. In its resolution 41 (I) of 14 December 1946, the General Assembly recognized the importance of disarmament for peace and security, and since then, it and the Security Council have studied this major problem year after year, creating a fortunate tradition which enables us to make yet another attempt this year to resolve this burning question.

91. During the twenty-five year history of earnest debates on disarmament, various proposals have been made, and I shall cite only a few of them by way of example—flexible and bold proposals, such as the Baruch Plan of 14 June 1946,⁷ the Gromyko Plan of 19 June 1946,⁸ the creation of the Commission on Conventional Armaments on 13 February 1947, the Disarmament Commission in 1952 and

its sub-committee on atomic weapons in 1954, the USSR plan for general and complete disarmament proposed on 18 September 1959 [*799th plenary meeting*], and followed by the joint recognition on the part of the two super-Powers in 1960 of the absolute priority of general and complete disarmament.

92. Lastly, in 1962 the third world demonstrated its desire to work for disarmament when eight of its nations joined the Eighteen-Power Committee on Disarmament, which had previously been composed only of five NATO nations and five Warsaw Pact nations. Thus, 1962 marked a turning point, when the “disarmament club”, heretofore confined to the industrial Powers, was enlarged in recognition of the Third World's great interest in disarmament.

93. The world has had to wait twenty-one years, apart from the regional treaty on Antarctica of 1 December 1959, for the first tangible results. The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America was signed on 14 February 1967. The convoluted discussions characteristic of this entire period were generally the result of different interpretations by the great Powers of the respective priorities of disarmament and control.

94. The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies was signed in 1967, in response to resolution 1884 (XVIII) which called upon all States “To refrain from placing in orbit around the earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons.”

95. The Treaty, nevertheless, had the shortcoming of not prohibiting the Powers from using outer space for military purposes.

96. On 24 August 1967, the two super-Powers submitted separate but identical draft treaties on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Eighteen-Power Committee later had numerous drafts pursuing the same purpose submitted to it. When the Treaty was opened for signature on 1 July 1968, many countries—including Lebanon—hastened to sign it.

97. On 24 November 1969, the United States and the Soviet Union announced the ratification of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, while several days earlier they had begun preliminary talks at Helsinki on the limitation of strategic arms.

98. On 25 November, President Nixon was to declare that the United States would unilaterally and unconditionally renounce the manufacture of bacteriological weapons, destroy their stocks and limit their use.

99. I am gratified to note the interest taken by the General Assembly since last year in the question of reserving the sea-bed and the ocean floor exclusively for peaceful purposes. My delegation, as it has done in the past, will support any constructive resolution or initiative to that end.

100. That the negotiations have taken a long time can be attributed to the climate of the cold war. Now that peaceful coexistence seems to be steadily gaining ground,

⁷ See *Official Records of the Atomic Energy Commission, No. 1, First Meeting*.

⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 2, *Second Meeting*.

we may hope for greater success with regard to general and complete disarmament. My delegation welcomes the spirit of understanding and co-operation manifested in Washington, Moscow and, in the course of the last few weeks, at Helsinki. It is convinced that this new attempt at disarmament will be continued without faltering, with ever broader and better prospects.

101. This naturally leads us to consider why disarmament is not in itself an adequate condition for attaining the purposes of the Charter and how the sums previously allocated for armament could and must be used to raise the level of living, that being a pre-condition for international peace and security.

102. Everyone knows that social injustice varies from region to region, from State to State, from one economic and social system to another. Industrial society, which has been revolutionizing the world since the late eighteenth century, is a challenge to the precarious and stagnant condition of man, who had hitherto lived for centuries virtually without change. Today, the means of planning, productivity, the growth rate, weighted averages, distribution of the national income are all characteristics of the modern, industrialized and, as Jean Marchal would say, "domesticated" world. Stuart Mill's anarchy of liberal capitalism has given way to Roosevelt's New Deal and the reconstruction operations of Marshall, Monnet and Robert Schuman. The tariff barriers raised over the years have given way to international co-operation, something that cannot be fully achieved so long as the world is divided into rich and poor countries.

103. The disparity between levels of living increases international tension. No rich State can be entirely protected and live in peace and security while people in another region continue to be cold or hungry.

104. Thus, while disarmament is one of the most urgent concerns of the international community, intent on making a new world free from anguish and terror, it cannot be disassociated from the question of the development of over two-thirds of the States Members of the United Nations.

105. Whereas, prior to the industrial revolution, the ideal of civilization had been individual charity, today any injustice of whatever kind and wherever existing, becomes the responsibility of every single one of us.

106. This is why at its fifteenth session the General Assembly examined this essential aspect of disarmament in its resolution 1516 (XV) adopted on 15 December 1960. In that resolution, the General Assembly

"Requests the Secretary-General to examine:

"(a) The national economic and social consequences of disarmament . . . including, in particular, the problems of replacing military expenditures with . . . civil expenditures . . .

"(b) The possible development of structural imbalances in national economies as a result of the cessation of capital investment in armaments industries . . ."

This resolution also requests the Secretary-General to study

"The impact of disarmament on international economic relations, including its effect on world trade and especially on the trade of under-developed countries"

and, finally,

"The utilization of resources released by disarmament for the purpose of economic and social development, in particular of the under-developed countries".

107. The Secretary-General appointed a group of ten experts from States with different political and economic systems and at different stages of development.

108. On 28 February 1962, the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council the expert report,⁹ which reached the conclusion that "the problems and difficulties of transition connected with disarmament could be met by appropriate national and international measures".

109. There is thus no doubt that the utilization for peaceful purposes of the funds now used for defence would be in the interests of all countries and would improve economic and social conditions throughout the world. The achievement of general and complete disarmament would bring nothing but good to all mankind.

110. Having examined the report, on 26 July 1962 the Economic and Social Council adopted its resolution 891 (XXXIV), requesting the Secretary General to transmit the report to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. What use has been made of the practical conclusions in that report?

111. On 18 December 1962, at its seventeenth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 1837 (XVII) entitled "Declaration on the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament". Generally speaking, Governments took the view that large-scale planning was necessary if full advantage was to be taken of the possibilities offered by disarmament to promote world economic and social progress.

112. In a report to the Economic and Social Council in 1966,¹⁰ the Secretary-General stated that nations were convinced that "whatever the transitory problems that might accompany it, disarmament would in the longer run be of incalculable benefit to all nations and peoples"; but he also added that some States found it "difficult to furnish the sort of data that would be required for international studies of a comparative or quantitative nature". The situation with regard to the provision of data accompanied by figures remains much the same, but the efforts made by the super-Powers this month show that mistrust is diminishing, co-operation is growing, and peaceful coexistence is gaining ground. Moreover, various studies undertaken by States and certain private institutions make it possible to

⁹ *Economic and Social Consequences of Disarmament* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 62.IX.1).

¹⁰ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 6, document E/4169.

estimate world and national expenditures on armaments to within some tens of millions of dollars.

113. At the 1967 General Assembly, Pope Paul IV expressed the hope that the funds released by disarmament would be used in the war against poverty.

114. The tenth anniversary of resolution 1514 (XV) on the liberation of colonized peoples, which laid down the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, will be celebrated on 14 December 1970.

115. In an age when man has walked on the moon, it is no longer Utopian to think that he may overcome his mistrust and enter on a new phase, even more cordial than that of peaceful coexistence.

116. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the proclamation of our Charter should serve as a spring-board for action by States to reduce their armaments by agreement or even voluntarily, starting in 1971. At the same time, they could decide to vote part of the sums thus released to the pursuit of social, economic and humanitarian goals. If this stage is reached, at least by voluntary and simultaneous action, the funds could be released and utilized progressively during the disarmament decade as part of the development decade which is parallel and so closely linked to it.

117. The released resources would be paid into an international planning and development fund, which would broaden the field of activity both of the United Nations and of its specialized agencies. Such international planning would assign priorities to the greatest needs and redress the economic imbalance which has plagued our planet for centuries.

118. We would thus inaugurate a new era, in which man's needs would be given priority. Warehouses would shelter vast stocks of food in various parts of the world to meet the demand for food-stuffs and to fight hunger.

119. The high cost and poor distribution of international transport would be overcome if a naval and air fleet were established under United Nations auspices. Naturally, the first to benefit thereby would be the developing countries. Such a fleet would be the best answer to the natural disasters which regularly occur in various regions of the world, often the poorest. It would also make relief more rapid and efficient.

120. We fervently hope for greater cultural co-operation at the international level, leading to the establishment of universities, institutes and educational centres in countries in which their absence is a challenge to civilization.

121. The remotest and most isolated regions would reap the advantages of progress if a vast programme of public works were set in motion under international auspices. Railway lines, highways and canals would link them with more developed areas.

122. The scourge of diseases and epidemics which afflicts a large part of mankind urgently calls for the creation of an international health infrastructure, the benefits of which would be incalculable.

123. A peace corps composed of engineers and technicians of every description and every nationality would enhance the potential of United Nations action in the economically weak countries.

124. The establishment of animal husbandry centres would be the best way of mitigating the meat shortage in many Member States.

125. The establishment of international demographic planning centres would be of even greater usefulness. Unemployment would be gradually eliminated if resources were allocated for the establishment of new production centres.

126. International teams would explore the floors of the oceans in order to augment the natural resources that are so badly needed. Satellites would be extremely useful in locating fish grounds and masses of plankton. Finally, nuclear power converted to peaceful uses would enrich mankind by meeting its needs for energy.

127. I am aware of all the difficulties that have been hampering international multilateral co-operation; but they should not make us lose hope that the world of tomorrow will give us a better demonstration of this type of collaboration.

128. This list is not meant to be exhaustive; it merely suggests a few of the infinite number of possibilities which will be open to the family of nations if disarmament goes hand in hand with the allocation of the released resources to an international planning and development fund, in the interests both of the poor and of the wealthy countries.

129. Let us not forget that the major problem of our century is the new awareness of the Third World of its precarious social and economic situation. The tragedy we witness is the great gap in the levels of living of the agrarian and pre-capitalist Third World and the industrialized countries, whether in the East or in the West.

130. The United Nations Development Decade which has just ended has not yielded the anticipated results. The principal cause of this failure was the lack of financial means. The new decade will undoubtedly face difficulties, and for the same reasons. In that connexion, I should like to refer to Lester Pearson's report entitled *Partners in Development*¹¹ which, possibly because of the scope chosen for it, has the shortcoming of not mentioning the financial resources that would become available in case of disarmament.

131. In this Committee, which is dedicated to peace and prosperity, I cannot fail to mention what seems to me a phenomenon without precedent in history—the appearance of a new youth whose ideas are of the boldest.

132. The social climate of today encourages this youth everywhere to criticize both national and international institutions. The young are becoming increasingly aware—and they do not hesitate to say so—that the traditional life of earlier generations no longer offers them a scope for

¹¹ Praeger Publishers, New York, 1969.

action. They believe that our societies cannot coldly disregard the tragic situation of the third world.

133. This youth is more generous and more outspoken than the one we have known. It means to be not charitable or philanthropic, but fair and active, and not only within national frontiers. This is the reason why the United Nations decided to convene in 1970 a general assembly of world youth. I can tell now what it will clamour for most: disarmament and peace.

134. What shall we offer to it? It manifests a growing apprehension; it is tormented by the dangers of the atomic age and the gigantic waste of resources used to build the instruments of war and destruction. Its ideal is an ideal of peace, whereas the environment in which it grows is one of threat and hostility.

135. The world is shrinking, distances are becoming immaterial. The new generation has understood that mankind alone is the source of peace and security. The world has suffered too much from the scourge of war. In fifty years, we have had two wars and 70 million dead. The last quarter of a century has claimed many millions of victims. It is time to say "enough", to take action and to realize at last that disarmament and world development must henceforward guide the peoples and nations along the paths of justice and brotherhood and—why not?—the well-being of the human race.

136. We are on the eve of two "decades", which are closely linked and dependent on one another. Let us work to bring them into reality and, above all, let us not try to dissociate them. The parallel pursuit of the United Nations Development Decade and of the Disarmament Decade will open up a new era for mankind. The game is well worth the candle.

137. The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Ghorra for his kind compliments to the Chairman and to other members of the Bureau.

138. Mr. VAKIL (Iran): The present debate on the disarmament items before this Committee may well turn out to be among the most fateful we have ever held. In recent days we have received news concerning actions by various States which may signify that the world is beginning to turn the corner in its tortoise-like progress towards disarmament and security. We have had news that the United States is renouncing bacteriological weapons and is moving to ratify the Geneva Protocol; that the Soviet Union and the United States have ratified, and that the Federal Republic of Germany has signed, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and that the United Kingdom has taken the final steps in relation to the Protocols attached to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. At long last the crucial discussions between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation of strategic arms have begun at Helsinki. All this is good news and must inspire hope—if as yet only modest—of better things to come, of a beginning in the fulfilment of the goal we set ourselves in 1959 of general and complete disarmament. None of these things is as yet more than collateral to that goal, however.

139. If I read the spirit of this debate correctly, those around this table are less content than ever before to be merely passive witnesses of what transpires elsewhere—of efforts made elsewhere to achieve the disarmed unity on which the future of man on this planet depends. If there is a rekindling of hopes grown faint with time that the nuclear super-Powers would turn from confrontation, there is at the same time much evidence of a growing sense that the United Nations itself has not done enough in the quest for peace, that now is the time to re-examine its role, that it can make a greater and more coherent contribution to understanding the essential unity of disarmament and security for all, and that it can do much to fortify the will to achieve it.

140. At this very session we have dedicated the coming decade to disarmament in conjunction with development. As yet, however, we have not given the same thought to the instrumentation of the Disarmament Decade as to that of the Second United Nations Development Decade. The present session of the Assembly affords an object lesson in the importance of this matter.

141. To begin with, it is not an exaggeration to say that we are being asked to take decisions within the space of two weeks or a little more on a variety of matters which will directly affect the security of each of us for as long as we can foresee. They are not mere *vœux* or recommendations, but legal formulas which will eventually serve as binding texts. Are we to have no choice but to take them or leave them? That is the practical outcome of the way they are put before us, even if that is not always the formal guise in which they appear.

142. We have a mélange of agreed texts—agreed, that is, by the Chairmen of the Geneva Committee; and we have non-agreed drafts—drafts not discussed by the Geneva Committee at all, or discussed with such brevity as amounts to no discussion and working papers which reflect the divisions of opinion within the Geneva Committee. Unsystematized in presentation, discordant, they are laid before us at the last or nearly the last possible moment, in a competition for hurried approval.

143. In this connexion I must remark with some regret that, in asking the Secretary-General to provide the necessary staff and facilities at Geneva, we neglected to make provision for the necessary staff services to support our own intelligent and informed consideration of the output from Geneva. We have only praise for the performance of the Secretariat. What I am saying really is that the talent of the Secretariat is not used to its full. It is of great importance that this situation should be changed, especially since most of us are not so fortunate enough to be able to provide such support out of our own resources. Why else do we maintain an impartial international civil service?

144. To add to the difficulty of dealing with this plethora of ideas and proposals, there is the fact that our very procedure makes for incoherence of the deliberative process. The difficulties which flow from this were made manifest in our consideration of the non-proliferation treaty, which had to be considered not only hurriedly but in near isolation from the consideration of the peaceful uses of nuclear explosions.

145. At the present moment the same incoherent procedure is being applied to our consideration of the régime of the sea-bed and ocean floor beyond national jurisdiction. It has become evident that in this subject we run the risk of coming to contradictory conclusions and of putting impediments in the way of the realization of our aims.

146. An example of the consequences of our defective and incoherent procedure is offered by the draft treaty on the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and ocean floor [A/7741-DC/232,¹² *annex A*]. All of us favour the demilitarization of the area. Such a ban is an indispensable condition as well as a consequence of the establishment of an international régime to ensure the utilization and exploitation of so much of the area that lies beyond national jurisdiction for the benefit of mankind and to the exclusion of exclusive interests.

147. The draft treaty does not look in that direction, however. As the representative of Ecuador has pointed out, it reverses the order of things. Reflection on its provisions for observation and verification suggests that in the name of control they would confer a licence on a few to meddle in the affairs of the rest of us. An unverified prohibition would be better in that respect, because it would involve no legitimation of intrusion and would not prejudice the outcome of efforts to establish the desired régime of peaceful uses. Intrusions might still occur, but under no colour of right and we should be free to employ such means as we possessed to resist them. Dependent as verification is on technological capability in this area, we should by approving the scheme offered us be placing ourselves under the tutelage of others, not to say at their mercy. A scheme to which we can confidently adhere must be really international and not make control a privilege of the strong. In this connexion, I am obliged to say that none of this is mended by the modifications suggested in the Canadian working paper on article III either in its original form [A/7741-DC/232, *annex C, section 35*] or as revised [A/C.1/992]. Normal navigation is an incident of the freedom of the seas; we hope the navigators who sail near our coasts are not blind. However, to single out the right of observation in the present context is to invite uncontrolled meddling, of which we have had much experience. It appears to us to continue a line of recent dangerous innovations, contrary to earlier precedents which opposed empowering States with superior technological capability to act as control agents for the world. Is it not to be feared that such an essentially anarchic system might provoke quarrels with and between the powerful, for which there are already too many causes?

148. The treaty is recommended as only a first step which is urgently required. A first step towards what? The most urgent requirement is to be sure that the step we take leads us on the road we seek. We also hear that progress must be gradual. The world has long experience of the stubborn tendency of the provisional to endure.

149. There are two alternatives: either this decision should wait until there is a consensus on the principles of an

international régime, or the decision must be such as not to preclude accomplishment of the purpose of the international community which is to dedicate the area involved to the benefit of mankind as its common heritage.

150. I shall not dwell on the misguided reference to the 1958 Convention¹³ in the definition of the geographical scope of the draft treaty. It is clear from this debate that the provision cannot stand. What is of interest for the purposes of my point is the light it throws on underlying faults in the agreement-building process. Had there been less haste and more consultation we should not now be facing the unfortunate consequence of requiring a good deal more specification to safeguard sovereign rights than would have been required if the reference had not been made. Surely it was no secret that it was on that very point that the 1958 Convention stumbled and the demand has been heard for its revision.

151. The machinery of the Geneva Committee seems not to have worked at all in dealing with chemical and bacteriological warfare. One draft convention now before us was never submitted or considered at Geneva. Another bears the Committee's document symbol to be sure, but that is all. There has been no systematic consideration at Geneva of those alternatives, if that is what they are. If the considerations involved have been thoroughly explored, they have not been presented to us in organized systematic form. We conclude regretfully that there must be time for the fruit of agreement to ripen before it can be plucked. As yet the tree has not even bloomed.

152. I feel that it is not enough, however, simply to remit all these proposals together with the records of our debate to another forum without making an effort ourselves to move the matter further forward. I have in mind an interim arrangement to make the ground more secure while a treaty edifice is being built. Before developing this there are some matters of principle with which I wish to deal.

153. It is our position that the Geneva Protocol applies to both chemical and bacteriological weapons without limit or distinction, that what it proscribes it proscribes absolutely; we hold, moreover, that the Protocol states the governing rules of international law. We believe, therefore, that the Protocol is the rock on which we must build. That has been the sense of the appeals addressed to States by the General Assembly; the appeal should be renewed. It is good news that the United States and others have set in train their constitutional processes looking to the ratification of the Protocol.

154. We are especially heartened by the announced decision of the United States not only to renounce totally the use of methods of biological warfare but also to destroy existing stocks of bacteriological weapons. We regret that the renunciation of chemical weapons was not as unlimited. We have difficulty in seeing how we can hope to end the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons if we maintain the possibility of making retaliatory use of them. The horrors of armed conflict will hardly diminish while States do not accept that there are things that must not be done in any circumstances.

¹² *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1966*, document DC/232.

¹³ Convention on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone, signed at Geneva on 29 April 1958.

155. I permit myself to believe that the action of the United States, together with the initiatives by the United Kingdom and by the Soviet Union and other socialist States, as well as the reception given to the Secretary-General's eye-opening report,¹⁴ signal a real movement towards an agreement which will dispel mankind's fear of those horrors for ever.

156. Like others, we should take additional comfort from the establishment of satisfactory verification arrangements. The draft of the socialist States [A/7655] makes hardly a gesture in that direction. It seeks to spell out the implications of the Geneva Protocol, an instrument without verification apparatus which nevertheless appears to have served the international community well, though one may suspect that the restraint practised by States may have been caused by the difficulties of managing the abominable instruments of warfare proscribed by the Protocol. The report of the Secretary-General's experts suggests that superior technology may have reduced those difficulties somewhat. This would increase the importance of verification.

157. The British draft [A/7741-DC/232, annex C, section 20] does make a beginning with verification, but at a cost unacceptable in its exclusion of chemical weapons and the attendant risk of undercutting the Protocol.

158. Time—much time, I fear—will pass before the knotty problems of practical definition and acceptable control are worked out. We cannot leave the matter there. My delegation would support a decision along the lines of the Swedish-inspired declaration. That interpretative pronouncement could, we suggest, be given additional strength, a kinetic charge as it were. We would do this by capping its statement of the law with an appeal to States to make a consequent unilateral renunciation of development, production, and stockpiling. I shall not dwell on the advantages, substantial and symbolic, of such an act. I should only like to repeat that renunciation of development, production, and stockpiling would be a consequent action.

159. It would be pedantic to look for mathematical rigour in the compatibility of the various outcomes of our deliberations, but it would be a failure of responsibility not to take thought for a measure of unity in them. After all, we are building, or we pretend to be building, a coherent system of disarmed security. Where in this house is that being done? Surely not in this Committee, nor in the Committee on Disarmament, which some say is not even a United Nations organ. Much, but not everything, depends on agreement between the nuclear super-Powers. That is why we accepted their joint statement of principles for negotiation in 1961,¹⁵ and endorsed their recommendation of a negotiating forum in which they could work out an agreed elaboration of those principles [see resolution 1722 (XVI)]. We have, however, allowed the needle to swing too far towards that pole and away from the pole of the United Nations itself.

¹⁴ *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.69.I.24).

¹⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 19, document A/4879.

160. Just four weeks ago, in operative paragraph 9 of resolution 2499 (XXIV), in connexion with the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of our Organization, the General Assembly, when dedicating the coming decade to disarmament, entrusted “the competent bodies of the Organization with the task of presenting concrete proposals”—on disarmament—“to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session”.

161. We have been told in the last few days in this Committee that it is the duty of the General Assembly to set a new pace in disarmament and to elaborate a programme of disarmament which would be inspired by the Charter, the corpus of General Assembly resolutions and the resolutions of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States,¹⁶ the Geneva Committee, and other bodies.

162. The need for an “organic programme” has been emphasized in the Geneva discussions and in the debate here. Again the suggestion has been heard that there was need for a clearing-house for information and proposals by Member States.

163. If, as was said the other day, the Geneva Committee is not negotiating machinery, as it was intended to be, but a consultative mechanism, all voices should be heard, for all are affected, great, medium-sized and small.

164. In sum, there is need for a forum, accessible to all Members, which would channel the flow from the various bodies involved in an orderly way so that we could perceive better where those currents have carried us and where they are leading. Without some such instrument, it is becoming more and more difficult to measure costs against benefits and to analyse the consequences of the necessary trade-offs. I believe we have the needed body in the Disarmament Commission.

165. Nothing I have said should be taken to suggest at all that I have in view dismantling the Geneva machinery. Its function remains vital, even though I continue to be of the unrepentant belief that some of its procedures have been faulty and that it would be well if its Co-Chairmen were to eschew the appearance, to which the representative of Mexico adverted in his first intervention [1691st meeting], that it stands above the General Assembly. Having said this, I may add that I am gratified that the Co-Chairmen agreed in perceiving the need for a wider spectrum of collaborators in their work. Moreover, had the opportunity been given us to express ourselves on the point beforehand, we should have endorsed each new incumbent warmly.

166. In the very nature of things the Geneva Committee cannot be all-seeing or all-wise. The quality of the debate held here has surely revealed that. Moreover, the fabric of disarmament is woven of many threads, not all of which are spun in Geneva. The task of establishing a coherent and harmonious pattern must be performed here, utilizing materials which come to us from a multiplicity of sources.

167. The question of convening the Disarmament Commission early in 1970 is on the agenda of the Assembly. It

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, *Twenty-third Session*, agenda item 96, document A/7277 and Corr.1 and 2, para. 17.

has been observed quite correctly here that it will need a precise agenda. In my view, the elements of such an agenda exist in what is now before us. The first business of the Commission would not be to lay out a programme of disarmament but to analyse and present a coherent account of the connexions and relations between matters before the Assembly which are perceived to bear upon disarmament. Those matters stem from the Geneva Committee, its Co-Chairmen and other members, from the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, from the Sea-Bed Committee, from this Committee, and from other sources. Their consideration by the Disarmament Commission would not signify an interruption of the work of the other bodies I have mentioned. The results of its work would, I hope, be found useful by them. That it would enable the Members of the United Nations to play a more enlightened, thoughtful and constructive role in the consideration of disarmament I do not doubt. As I observed earlier, I would look to the Secretary-General and his staff for invaluable help in the labours of the Commission.

168. It must be obvious that it would be worse than futile to convene a committee of the whole which would do nothing more than continue the general debate held in this Committee. One of the first tasks of the Commission would be to organize itself for efficient work. There is much experience on which to draw for that purpose and if I do not mistake the meaning of the present temper of this Committee an effective organization is both possible and likely.

169. We look forward to the convening of the Disarmament Commission early in 1970. Perhaps the best way of setting a date for the meeting would be by informal consultations. In our view, our Chairman is in the best position to make the necessary soundings. A consensus established in such a way as his wisdom suggested would perhaps relieve us of the need to take a formal decision in this Committee.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.