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Agenda item 44

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE  
IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Kedar Bhakta SHRESTHA (Nepal)

1. The item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" was included in the provisional agenda of the thirty-first session on the basis of General Assembly resolution 3474 (XXX) of 11 December 1975.
2. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 24 September 1976, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.
3. At its 2nd meeting, on 5 October, the First Committee decided to hold a combined general debate on the items allocated to it relating to disarmament, namely, items 34 to 50 and 116. The general debate on these items took place at the 20th to 39th meetings, from 1 to 19 November.
4. On 22 November, Egypt, Iran and Kuwait submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.19) which was subsequently also sponsored by Bahrain, Jordan, Mauritania, the Sudan and the United Arab Emirates. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Iran at the 41st meeting, on 23 November.
5. At the 45th meeting, on 29 November, the Committee voted on draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.19 as follows:
  - (a) Operative paragraphs 2 and 3 were adopted by 107 votes to none, with 11 abstentions;
  - (b) The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 121 votes to none, with 2 abstentions (see para. 6 below).

RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

6. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone  
in the region of the Middle East

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 3263 (XXIX) of 9 December 1974, in which it overwhelmingly commended the idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East,

Recalling also its resolution 3474 (XXX) of 11 December 1975, in which it recognized that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East enjoys wide support in the region,

Mindful of the prevailing political situation in the region and the potential danger emanating therefrom that would be further aggravated by the introduction of nuclear weapons in the area,

Concerned that the lack of any appreciable progress in the direction of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in the present atmosphere in the region, will further complicate the situation,

Convinced that progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East will greatly enhance the cause of peace both in the region and in the world,

Conscious of the particular nature of the problems involved and the complexities inherent in the situation in the Middle East and the urgency of keeping the region free from involvement in a ruinous nuclear arms race,

1. Expresses the need for further action to generate momentum towards realization of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;

2. Urges all parties directly concerned to adhere to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons 1/ as a means of promoting this objective;

3. Reiterates its recommendation that the States Members of the United Nations referred to in paragraph 2 above, pending the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zone under an effective system of safeguards, should:

(a) Proclaim solemnly and immediately their intention to refrain, on a reciprocal basis, from producing, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices, and from permitting the stationing of nuclear weapons in their territory or the territory under their control by any third party;

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1/ General Assembly resolution 2373 (XXII), annex.

(b) Refrain, on a reciprocal basis, from any other action that would facilitate the acquisition, testing or use of such weapons, or would be in any other way detrimental to the objective of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region under an effective system of safeguards;

(c) Agree to place all their nuclear activities under the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards;

4. Reaffirms the recommendations to the nuclear-weapon States to refrain from any action contrary to the progress of the present resolution and the objective of establishing in the region of the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone under an effective system of safeguards and to extend their co-operation to the States of the region in their efforts to promote this objective;

5. Invites the Secretary-General to explore the possibilities of making progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the area of the Middle East;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-second session the item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East".

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