UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT


Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By resolution 31/139 of 21 December 1976, the General Assembly decided to convene a special session devoted to disarmament, to be held in New York in May/June 1978. It further decided to establish a Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, composed of 54 Member States appointed by the President of the Assembly on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, with the mandate of examining all relevant questions relating to the special session, including its agenda, and to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-second session appropriate recommendations thereon.

2. The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to render the Preparatory Committee all necessary assistance, including the provision of essential background information, relevant documents and summary records.

3. At its 14th meeting on 20 May 1977, the Preparatory Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare certain working papers. Included among them was "A synthesis of the arguments adduced for and against each of the four proposals for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones that have been included in the General Assembly's agenda (Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and the South Pacific) and for and against the proposal for the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, including a subject index and a country index".

4. In response to this request of the Preparatory Committee, the Secretariat has prepared this working paper. It should be noted that, in expressing their views on the question of the establishment of the various nuclear-weapon-free zones and a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, Member States have expressed their support for the concept of such zones, which are generally recognized as a valuable contribution to disarmament efforts undertaken at the United Nations. Different approaches or divergent opinions did emerge, however, in the discussion of specific proposals relating to these questions.

5. In order to fulfill the mandate assigned to it, as well as to reflect properly the arguments adduced by Member States in connexion with the various proposals submitted to the General Assembly, the Secretariat has included in this working paper mainly those views expressed during the general debate on disarmament items in the First Committee, when aspects of the creation of such zones have been examined in depth.

6. In many cases, delegations unable to support resolutions dealing with the establishment of the zones have made it clear that their reservations related to the wording or procedures contemplated thereto, while at the same or different occasions they reaffirmed their sympathy and understanding of the objectives of the initiative.

7. As consideration of the various proposals for the establishment of zones led to discussion of specific aspects or problems relating to each of them, Member States have addressed themselves to these questions and thus less attention has been given to the arguments for and against the creation of zones during the debates. Therefore, views expressed on such arguments became less frequent as the respective items were regularly included in the agenda of the General Assembly.
II. PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN AFRICA

8. In 1961, fourteen African States submitted to the General Assembly a draft resolution on the demilitarization of Africa, which was adopted on 24 November of that year by 55 in favour, none against and 1 abstention, as resolution 1652 (XVI). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

'Recalling its resolutions 1378 (XIV) of 20 November 1959 on general and complete disarmament, 1379 (XIV) of 20 November 1959 on the question of French nuclear tests in the Sahara, 1576 (XV) of 20 December 1960 on the prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons, and 1577 (XV) and 1578 (XV) of 20 December 1960 on the suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests,

'Recalling further its resolution 1629 (XVI) of 27 October 1961, which declared that both concern for the future of mankind and the fundamental principles of international law impose a responsibility on all States concerning actions which might have harmful biological consequences for the existing and future generations of peoples of other States, by increasing the levels of radio-active fall-out,

'Concerned about the present rate of nuclear armament and the possible spread of nuclear weapons, as well as the resumption of nuclear tests in the continent of Africa which is being emancipated,

'Recognizing the need to prevent Africa from becoming involved in any competition associated with the ideological struggles between the Powers engaged in the arms race and, particularly, with nuclear weapons,

'Recognizing further that the task of economic and social development in the African States requires the uninterrupted attention of those States in order to allow them to fulfil their goals and to contribute fully to the maintenance of international peace and security,

'Calls upon Member States:
(a) To refrain from carrying out or continuing to carry out in Africa nuclear tests in any form;
(b) To refrain from using the territory, territorial waters or air space of Africa for testing, storing or transporting nuclear weapons;
(c) To consider and respect the continent of Africa as a demilitarized zone."

9. During the general debate, Brazil said that it would support the resolution, since the demilitarization of Africa would strengthen the cause of peace by removing at least one source of international friction.1/

10. While introducing the pertinent draft resolution, Ghana said that its purpose was to ensure that Africa should be kept free of nuclear tests and nuclear weapons, and should be treated as a denuclearized neutral zone. There could be no difficulty in that, since Africa was an integral territorial unit, a continent in which, with the exception of France, no power had attempted to conduct nuclear tests. Ethiopia held that the adoption of the resolution would be an effective first step towards the ultimate prohibition by treaty of the use of nuclear weapons to settle disputes between nations. The Soviet Union stated that it was in favour of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world, including Africa. The establishment of such zones would reduce the danger of armed conflict, prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and help to create confidence among States. At the same time, it could provide useful experience at the regional level in the organization of control and inspection. Poland said that the resolution would give Africa some measure of security pending the achievement of general and complete disarmament, and would, in fact, represent a major step towards disarmament in a large geographical area.

11. For its part, Yugoslavia maintained that the denuclearization of Africa might encourage the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones elsewhere. While appreciating the desire of the sponsors, the United Kingdom said that it had reservations about the manner in which they sought to isolate Africa from the threat of nuclear war. With regard to the appeal for Africa to be regarded as a denuclearized zone, it was not for the United Nations, or any group of States, to direct States to follow any particular policy. Moreover, there could be no guarantee of Africa's effective denuclearization in the absence of procedures for international verification. With regard to the question of halting nuclear tests, the only way to deal with this problem was to conclude an agreement halting tests everywhere under effective international control. Romania stated that a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa would help to reduce the risk of nuclear war, while Czechoslovakia said that the establishment of such a zone would help to strengthen peace not only in that continent but throughout the world, and would increase the security of the African countries. The resolution did not impose obligations on any State. It was merely an appeal, to which each Government could respond as it saw fit. Although in full sympathy with the motives of the sponsors, the United States feared that the initiative might interfere with its proposal for a programme of general disarmament. Moreover, the right of self-defence by whatever means might be appropriate was established in the United Nations Charter. If nuclear weapons could not be stored or transported in Africa, an African State attacked by a non-African State with nuclear weapons would be deprived of the right to defend itself by the use of such weapons. Also, the United States did not consider it appropriate for the United Nations to initiate recommendations to particular countries or areas for disarmament measures limited to only one region of the world, particularly by means of uncontrolled declarations. Once the African States had concluded appropriate regional agreements, Member States could properly be asked to co-operate in their implementation. Ivory Coast explained that it was unable to support the resolution, since it considered as a first step the conclusion of an international convention covering disarmament and military bases, as well as nuclear weapons and tests, and providing for international control. The General Assembly should then be asked to guarantee that convention.

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2/ Ibid., 1139th meeting.
3/ Ibid., 1190th meeting.
12. Mali held that, since no African State possessed nuclear weapons, the argument that the African States would be unable to defend themselves against nuclear attack was meaningless. The resolution in no way conflicted with the procedure suggested by the Ivory Coast. Tunisia stated that the African States had no objection to an effective system of international control. In connexion with the argument advanced concerning the right of self-defence, it stated that the resolution was intended as a moral condemnation of nuclear weapons.¹⁴

13. France fully appreciated the intentions of the sponsors, but it considered that the United Nations was not competent to lay down a special status for any region or continent, so long as the countries concerned had not agreed amongst themselves on a particular status. It was dangerous to seek to begin disarmament with measures which were not accompanied by effective international control. While fully appreciating the intentions of the sponsors, Argentina, Colombia, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela abstained from voting in view that there was not unanimity among the African States on the resolution.⁵

14. Mexico held that it fully understood the desire of the sponsors, but it felt that it was for each African State to decide for itself whether its territory, territorial waters and air space were or were not to be used in testing, storing or transporting nuclear weapons. The General Assembly could not impose restrictions on the use which those sovereign States made of their national territory. On behalf of the members of the Union Africaine et Malgache, Upper Volta expressed views similar to those of the Ivory Coast.⁶

15. At the twentieth session of the General Assembly, twenty-eight African States submitted a draft resolution adopted on 3 December 1965 by 105 votes to none, with 3 abstentions as resolution 2033 (XX). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Believing in the vital necessity of saving contemporary and future generations from the scourgé of a nuclear war,

"Recalling its resolution 1652 (XVI) of 24 November 1961, which called upon all Member States to refrain from testing, storing or transporting nuclear weapons in Africa and to consider and respect the continent as a demineralized zone,

"Recalling its resolution 2028 (X) of 19 November 1965 on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons,

"Observing that proposals for the establishment of demineralized zones in various other areas of the world have also met with general approval,

"Convinced that the demineralization of various areas of the world would help to achieve the desired goal of prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons,

¹⁴/ Ibid., 1191st meeting.
⁵/ Ibid., 1193rd meeting.
⁶/ Ibid., 1194th meeting.
"Considering that the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, at its first regular session, held at Cairo from 17 to 21 July 1964, issued a solemn declaration on the denuclearization of Africa in which the Heads of State and Government announced their readiness to undertake, in an international treaty to be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, not to manufacture or acquire control of nuclear weapons,

"Noting that this declaration on the denuclearization of Africa was endorsed by the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in the Declaration issued on 10 October 1964, at the close of their Second Conference, held at Cairo,

"Recognizing that the denuclearization of Africa would be a practical step towards the prevention of the further spread of nuclear weapons in the world and towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament and of the objectives of the United Nations,

"1. Reaffirms its call upon all States to respect the continent of Africa as a nuclear-free zone;

"2. Endorses the declaration on the denuclearization of Africa issued by the Heads of State and Government of African countries,

"3. Calls upon all States to respect and abide by the aforementioned declaration;

"4. Calls upon all States to refrain from the use, or the threat of use, of nuclear weapons on the African continent;

"5. Calls upon all States to refrain from testing, manufacturing, using or deploying nuclear weapons on the continent of Africa, and from acquiring such weapons or taking any action which would compel African States to take similar action;

"6. Urges those States possessing nuclear weapons and capability not to transfer nuclear weapons, scientific data or technological assistance to the national control of any State, either directly or indirectly, in any form which may be used to assist such States in the manufacture or use of nuclear weapons in Africa;

"7. Expresses the hope that the African States will initiate studies, as they deem appropriate, with a view to implementing the denuclearization of Africa, and take the necessary measures through the Organization of African Unity to achieve this end;

"8. Urges the African States to keep the United Nations informed of any further developments in this regard;
"9. Requests the Secretary-General to extend to the Organization of African Unity such facilities and assistance as may be requested in order to achieve the aims of the present resolution."

16. Nigeria said that it had always supported the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world, since it believed that that would be the first step towards limiting and eventually halting the spread of nuclear weapons. By deciding to denuclearize their continent, the African States were taking a most responsible step which would contribute immensely towards world peace and stability.\(^7\)

17. The United Republic of Tanzania said that man was devoting resources, energy and creative genius to developing a process which threatened the extinction of human life, and that the African nations wanted no part in that suicidal process. The African countries were anxious to remain non-aligned, and one way to ensure that was to prevent their continent from becoming a zone of conflict between the major nuclear powers, i.e. to make it a nuclear-weapon-free zone. There was nothing in the proposal that was aimed against non-African States; on the contrary, its adoption would give a lead to other continents and regions. The spread of nuclear-weapon-free zones would be a major advance towards general and complete disarmament and, indeed, towards international peace and security. Ethiopia said that it considered the question of the denuclearization of Africa as an aspect of the general problem of banning nuclear weapons. The proposal had the same objectives as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, since it sought to prevent States from acquiring such weapons, an argument also advanced by Senegal. Liberia held that the problems of economic and social development confronting Africa required the uninterrupted attention of the African States, without the additional burden entailed by the manufacture or acquisition of nuclear weapons. It was obvious that, for political, economic and strategic reasons, Africa should be considered a nuclear-weapon-free zone, and should not find itself in the paradoxical position of spending huge sums, far beyond its means. Nor did Africa wish to be drawn into the conflicts of the big powers by allowing their nuclear weapons on its territory. Peru said that, since the great Powers were unable to reach agreement on even the partial and gradual destruction of nuclear weapons, the efforts being made by the African countries to secure the denuclearization of their continent were to be welcomed. The proposal must be regarded as a part of the framework of principles on which United Nations legislation concerning nuclear questions should be based.\(^8\)

18. Ghana said that it was necessary to eliminate all foreign military bases in order to remove the threat of nuclear weapons being introduced or stored by a foreign Power on African soil; there was also the risk that a colonial Power in Africa which was allied to nuclear Powers might agree to store nuclear weapons in the territories under its domination, on the pretext that they were essential to the defence arrangements of that military alliance and the metropolitan Power concerned. The initiative was intended to insulate the African continent from the threat of a nuclear holocaust. The United Arab Republic said that the denuclearization of any region was as important to the world at large as it was to the countries and peoples of that region. It could not, therefore, be treated in isolation from the

\(^7\) Ibid., 1387th meeting.
\(^8\) Ibid., 1388th meeting.
circumstances prevailing in the region or in the countries surrounding it. As far as Africa was concerned, moreover, denuclearization could not be carried out unless the following conditions were met: first, all foreign military bases should be dismantled; secondly, any programme for the denuclearization of Africa should take into account the foreign military bases on the islands surrounding Africa; thirdly, all racist régimes, whether in the heart of Africa or established on its borders, should be under obligation to cede authority to the original inhabitants or be brought under international guarantees which would not enable them to nullify an international agreement on the denuclearization of Africa; fourthly, the nuclear powers should undertake not to extend any assistance to any racist régime in or around Africa which might assist those régimes to manufacture nuclear weapons; lastly, the geographic definition of "Africa" in the context of denuclearization must be clearly established. Somalia held that the proposal made a definite contribution to the objectives of the proposed treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The prospects for keeping Africa and the surrounding islands a nuclear-weapon-free zone were improved by the fact that the continent was virtually free from the power struggle between the two major blocs.2/

19. Jamaica said that the proposal was welcomed because it approached the problem of the proliferation of nuclear weapons from a new angle. It was important to explore every means of isolating and restricting the use and deployment of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union said that it had consistently advocated the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world as an effective way of limiting the areas in which nuclear weapons could be stockpiled and used, and thereby reducing the threat of nuclear war and limiting the scope of the arms race. It fully supported the position of the African States and stressed that the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones implied the elimination of foreign military bases which could be used for storing such weapons. Pakistan and Cyprus said that the denuclearization of Africa would lessen the threat of nuclear war and constitute a significant step towards general and complete disarmament. Libya held a similar view.10/

20. Romania supported the African States' proposals, for it was convinced that it would help to limit the sphere of operation of nuclear weapons and to strengthen peace and security in Africa and throughout the world. The United States held that it welcomed the initiative, for its objectives were in harmony with the United States policy of halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. With regard to the arrangements to be made to achieve the denuclearization of Africa, it reserved its position until it could examine the provisions of the convention which would give legal effect to the Declaration of the African Heads of State and Government. The fact that the initiative was being taken by the States concerned was in line with one of the principles which should govern the establishment of denuclearized zones. The United States would examine the legal instruments also in the light of other principles, namely, that the zone should preferably include all States in the area, especially those whose failure to participate may render the agreement ineffective, that no State or group of States should derive military advantage from the creation

2/ Ibid., 1389th meeting.
10/ Ibid., 1390th meeting.
of the zone; and that provision should be made for adequate verification. Mexico said that it supported with the greatest satisfaction the proposal on the denuclearization of Africa. It was a noble enterprise, analogous to the denuclearization of Latin America which had the same aim and the same motive: the vital necessity of saving present and future generations from the scourge of nuclear war. Denuclearization was the most effective way of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the supreme goal being general and complete disarmament and, more particularly, nuclear disarmament. While supporting the proposal, Yugoslavia said that it always attached particular importance to the denuclearization of various parts of the world, considering that to be one of the initial measures which should contribute to general and complete disarmament. Brazil supported the resolution and held that the first condition for establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone was the political will freely expressed by all countries of a given geographical area. The second was the readiness of the nuclear powers to respect the status of denuclearization in all its aspects and consequences. The world's balance of power would gain, from the point of view of political stability, if Africa was denuclearized.

Czechoslovakia said that it welcomed the proposal, since the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones would reduce the danger of nuclear war. Under the Charter of the United Nations, Member States had an obligation to aid the African countries. The United Kingdom voted for the resolution, adding that it would wait the results of the studies mentioned in operative paragraph 7 and the text of the treaty or convention which would presumably result from those studies.

21. South Africa abstained from the vote, stating that, although in full agreement with its objectives, it could not endorse the role given to the Organization of African Unity.

22. New Zealand supported the resolution, but said that this did not mean endorsement of all its provisions. In this context, it maintained that the military and political circumstances prevailing in each area must be taken fully into account in evaluating the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in certain regions of the world. Australia said that it supported the resolution, on the understanding that arrangements for nuclear-weapon-free zones should be made on the initiative of the countries of the region and with their unanimous support. They should not upset the strategic balance, including the balance of forces in the area, and include provision for verification and control.

23. Venezuela held that, in view of the unanimous agreement reached by the African States, it would support the resolution.

24. During the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, twenty-six African States submitted a draft resolution, which was unanimously adopted on 9 December 1974 as resolution 3261 E (XXIX). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

Determined to promote an agreement on general and complete disarmament, in pursuance of the objectives of the United Nations,"

11/ Ibid., 139lst meeting.
12/ Ibid.
13/ Ibid.
14/ Ibid., 1392nd meeting.
Nations, which would put an end to the armaments race and eliminate the incentive to the production, stockpiling and testing of all kinds of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons,

"Convinced that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would seriously enhance the danger of nuclear war,

"Believing that militarily demilitarized zones covering the territories of Member States would arrest the proliferation of nuclear weapons and contribute to the maintenance of peace and security in their respective regions and the world,

"Affirming the inalienable right of all the peoples of the United Nations to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes,

"Recalling its resolutions 1652 (XVI) of 24 November 1961 and 2033 (XX) of 3 December 1965, which called upon all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa, including the continental African States, Madagascar and other islands surrounding Africa, as a nuclear-free zone,

"Considering that the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, at its first ordinary session, held at Cairo from 17 to 21 July 1964, issued a solemn declaration on the demilitarization of Africa, in which the Heads of State and Government announced their readiness to undertake, in an international treaty to be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, not to manufacture or acquire control of nuclear weapons,

"Noting that the aforementioned Declaration on the Demilitarization of Africa, adopted by the African Heads of State and Government, was endorsed by the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in the Declaration issued on 10 October 1964 at the close of their second conference, held at Cairo,

"1. Reaffirms its call upon all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa as a nuclear-free zone;

"2. Reiterates its call upon all States to respect and abide by the Declaration on the Demilitarization of Africa issued by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity;

"3. Reiterates further its call upon all States to refrain from testing, manufacturing, deploying, transporting, storing, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons on the African continent;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to render all necessary assistance to the Organization of African Unity towards the realization of the aims and objectives of the present resolution;
"5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirtieth session an item entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa."

25. While introducing the draft, Nigeria also stated that the purpose of the resolution was to reaffirm the vital necessity of saving the world from the scourge of nuclear war, to register opposition to the consequences of radioactive fallout and to express concern about the possible spread of nuclear weapons. As regards other considerations relating to the submission of the draft, the delegation recalled that South Africa had nuclear capability and expressed the apprehension that this could be used to blackmail the independent African States so as to weaken their opposition at the United Nations and elsewhere to the policy of apartheid. With respect to the text of the resolution, it said that the idea of "transporting" in paragraph 3 reflected fear that nuclear weapons in transit across Africa might be dropped or even fall accidentally on the continent.15/

26. Canada stated that it was strongly sympathetic in principle to the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones, where they were feasible and promote stability and when specific proposals for their creation were put forward by the countries of the region concerned. Accordingly, it expressed support for the resolution, on the understanding that it in no way sought to constrain recognized rights of passage in international waters. Similar interpretations were made by Greece and Italy. China voted for the resolution, but reserved its views on the questions of general and complete disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons referred to in the preamble. Three delegations abstained from voting the draft in the First Committee, explaining the reasons for their reservations. While sympathizing with the desires of the African States, the United Kingdom held that it had to abstain in order to retain its formal freedom of action in view that many details of the project would still have to be worked out. For its part, France explained that it had abstained since its Government could not accept, in matters of self-defence, any distinction between the different parts of its territory. The United States welcomed the initiative, but said that it felt compelled to abstain since it could not subscribe at that early stage of the development of the zone to the particular set of undertakings contained in operative paragraph 3.16/ After informal consultations which clarified the objectives and wording of the draft, the three delegations were able to vote in favour of it in the plenary.

27. At its thirtieth session in 1975, the General Assembly adopted unanimously resolution 3471 (XXX). The draft had been introduced by thirty-four African States. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Convinced that nuclear-weapon-free zones provide the best and easiest means whereby non-nuclear-weapon States can, by their own initiative and effort, ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons from their territories and enhance their mutual security,


16/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2026."
"Mindful of the fact that nuclear-weapon-free zones strengthen and promote the régime for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons,

"Reaffirming the inalienable right of all States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes,

"Recalling its resolutions 1652 (XVI) of 24 November 1961, 2033 (XX) of 3 December 1974, which called upon all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa, including the continental African States, Madagascar and other islands surrounding Africa, as a nuclear-weapon-free zone,

"Noting the solemn Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its first ordinary session, held at Cairo from 17 to 21 July 1964,

"Noting also that the aforementioned Declaration was endorsed by the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo from 5 to 10 October 1964,

"1. Agrees that implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, will be a significant measure to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the world, conducive to general and complete disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament;

"2. Reaffirms its call upon all States to respect and abide by the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa;

"3. Reaffirms further its call upon all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa, including the continental African States, Madagascar and other islands surrounding Africa, as a nuclear-weapon-free zone;

"4. Reiterates its call upon all States to refrain from testing, manufacturing, deploying, transporting, storing, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons on the African continent;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to render all necessary assistance to the Organization of African Unity towards the realization of the solemn Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, in which the African Heads of State and Government announced their readiness to undertake, in an international treaty to be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, not to manufacture or acquire control of nuclear weapons;

"6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-first session the item entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa."
28. Practically no debate was held on the proposal. In introducing the draft, Nigeria reiterated that its purposes were the same as those mentioned when it introduced resolution 3261 E (XXIX) the previous year.17/

29. At the thirty-first session, in 1976, the General Assembly considered a draft resolution submitted by thirty-five African States. The draft was adopted without a vote as resolution 31/69, which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 1652 (XVI) of 24 November 1961, 2033 (XX) of 3 December 1965, 3261 E (XXIX) of 9 December 1974 and 3471 (XXX) of 11 December 1975, in which it called upon all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa, including the continental African States, Madagascar and other islands surrounding Africa, as a nuclear-weapon-free zone,

"Recognizing that implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in 1964 would contribute to the security of all the African States and to the goals of general and complete disarmament,

"Hearing in mind that the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its thirteenth ordinary session, held at Port Louis from 2 to 6 July 1976, expressed grave concern over the continuing collaboration between certain States Members of the United Nations and the racist régime of South Africa, particularly in the military and nuclear fields, thereby enabling it to acquire nuclear-weapon capability,

"Concerned that further development of South Africa's military and nuclear-weapon potential would frustrate efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa and elsewhere as an effective means for preventing the proliferation, both horizontal and vertical, of nuclear weapons and for contributing to the elimination of the danger of a nuclear holocaust,

"1. Reaffirms its call upon all States to respect and abide by the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa;

"2. Further reaffirms its call upon all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa, including the continental African States, Madagascar and other islands surrounding Africa, as a nuclear-weapon-free zone;

"3. Appeals to all States not to deliver to South Africa or place at its disposal any equipment or fissionable material or technology that will enable the racist régime of South Africa to acquire nuclear-weapon capability;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to render all necessary assistance to the Organization of African Unity towards the realization of its solemn Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, in which the African Heads of State and Government announced their readiness to undertake, in an international treaty to be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, not to manufacture or acquire control of nuclear weapons;

"5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-second session the item entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa."

30. While supporting action by the General Assembly on the item, Mauritius expressed its concern over the threat posed by the militarization and nuclear programme of South Africa to the independence of African States.18/

31. As in previous sessions of the General Assembly, Nigeria introduced the draft resolution. It explained that its preoccupation was the threat and danger which the atomic bomb in the wicked hands of apartheid South Africa posed to Africa and the world. It also stated that its immediate concern was over the continuing assistance which certain Powers were giving to South Africa to achieve its cruel nuclear ambitions.19/

32. The United Kingdom said that if there had been a vote, it would have voted in favour of the resolution, although it regretted that the text did not do more to encourage negotiations by the States of the region. It added that because of its nuclear non-proliferation policy and, in particular, its opposition to apartheid, its Government would not sanction the export to South Africa of any nuclear material, equipment or technology contributing to the development of a military nuclear capability. France also said that it would have voted in favour of the resolution if it had been put to a vote, and explained that the French Government had ensured the absolute impossibility for South Africa to progress towards obtaining military nuclear capacity because of the functioning of the Koberg power station. While joining the consensus without any reservations, the Federal Republic of Germany stated that it did not permit the export to South Africa of nuclear material, equipment or technology which might contribute to the development of a nuclear weapon capability by that country.20/

19/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.48.
20/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.50.
III. PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN SOUTH ASIA

At the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly in 1974, Pakistan requested the inclusion in the agenda of an item concerning the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. During consideration of the item, India and Pakistan submitted two separate draft resolutions. The Indian draft was adopted as resolution 3265 A (XXIX) by a vote of 104 (including the Soviet Union) in favour, 1 against and 27 abstentions (including China, France, Pakistan, the United Kingdom and the United States). The Pakistani draft was also adopted as resolution 3265 B (XXIX) by a vote of 96 (including China) in favour, 2 against (Bhutan and India) and 36 abstentions (including France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States). The resolutions read as follows:

"A

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 1378 (XIV) of 20 November 1959, which established the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control,

"Convinced that the highest priority should be accorded to measures in the field of nuclear disarmament,

"Recalling its resolutions 1652 (XVI) of 24 November 1961 entitled "Consideration of Africa as a denuclearized zone", 1911 (XVIII) of 27 November 1963 entitled "Denuclearization of Latin America", 2033 (XX) of 3 December 1965 entitled "Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa" and 2286 (XXII) of 5 December 1967 entitled "Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America",

"Recognizing that conditions and procedures for the creation of such zones differ from region to region,

"Recognizing further that, in appropriate regions and by agreement among the States concerned, the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones could promote the cause of general and complete disarmament under effective international control,

"Considers, therefore, that the initiative for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the appropriate region of Asia should come from the States of the region concerned, taking into account its special features and geographical extent.

"B

"The General Assembly,

"Recognizing the right of States to harness nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and as an instrument of development and progress,
"Realizing, at the same time, the dangers of diversion to military purposes inherent in the development of nuclear energy,

"Recalling its resolution 2456 B (XXIII) of 20 December 1968 concerning the establishment of zones free from nuclear weapons,

"Expressing the conviction that the establishment of such zones in various regions of the world is one of the measures which can contribute most effectively to halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to promoting progress towards nuclear disarmament as a step towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control, with the ultimate goal of total destruction of all nuclear weapons and their means of delivery,

"Believing that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones will strengthen the security of regional States against nuclear threat,

"Recalling the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in 1964 and the Declaration adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the Association of South East Asian Nations in 1971,

"Bearing in mind that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone would, \textit{inter alia}, entail:

"(a) Commitments by the States concerned to use exclusively for peaceful purposes nuclear materials and facilities under their jurisdiction and to prevent the testing, use, manufacture, production, acquisition or storage of any nuclear weapons or nuclear launching devices,

"(b) An equitable and non-discriminatory system of verification and inspection to ensure that nuclear programmes are in conformity with the foregoing commitments,

"(c) Undertakings by nuclear-weapon States not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the States of the region,

"Having considered the question of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia without prejudice to the extension of the zone to include such other regions of Asia as may be practicable,

"Desirous of preventing such a zone or any wider area as contemplated in the preceding paragraph from becoming involved in a ruinous nuclear arms race,
"Considering that the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America could serve as a model to be emulated with advantage by other regions,

"1. Takes note of the affirmation by the States of the region not to acquire or manufacture nuclear weapons and to devote their nuclear programmes exclusively to the economic and social advancement of their peoples;

"2. Endorses, in principle, the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia;

"3. Invites the States of the South Asian region and such other neighbouring non-nuclear-weapon States as may be interested to initiate, without delay, necessary consultations with a view to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone and urges them, in the interim, to refrain from any action contrary to the achievement of these objectives;

"4. Expresses the hope that all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, will lend their full co-operation for the effective realization of the aims of the present resolution;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to convene a meeting for the purpose of the consultations envisaged in paragraph 3 above, to render such assistance as may be required for the purpose and to report on the subject to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session;

"6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirtieth session the item entitled "Declaration and establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia."

34. During the debate in the First Committee, Pakistan stressed that there was no difference between a peaceful nuclear explosion and one that was conducted to develop a nuclear weapon, and that India's nuclear explosion of May 1974 might therefore have removed the restraint on nuclear proliferation. It underscored the responsibility of nuclear weapon Powers to give security assurances and guarantees to the non-nuclear weapon States, so that the latter would not feel obliged to join in the nuclear arms race on grounds of security.1/

35. India said that it had no intention to develop nuclear weapons and that it would use nuclear energy and technology, including underground use of nuclear explosive devices, exclusively for peaceful purposes. It also stated that South Asia could not be considered a distinct zone, as it was an integral part of the Asian and Pacific region, which was surrounded by nuclear weapon States or countries belonging to their alliances. As regards India's position with respect to nuclear-weapon-free zones, it held that it had supported such zones whenever it had been

demonstrated that there was prior consultation and agreement among the States in the regions.²/

36. Bangladesh expressed that it believed that the denuclearization of regions, especially in the developing world, would greatly assist in lessening international tension and consolidating international peace and security, but it felt that before a proposal was brought before the General Assembly the countries of the region should consult among themselves about the desirability of such an idea.³/ Similar views were held by Mauritius⁴/ and Bhutan.⁵/

37. Tunisia held that it supported every initiative intended to promote peace and security throughout the world and that, in this context, it also supported the Pakistani proposal to establish a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. It took note, too, of the reiterated statements of India regarding the peaceful uses of its atomic energy.⁶/

38. As the debate on the item continued, India stated that, in the past, it had supported nuclear-weapon-free zones in Latin America and Africa because conditions were suitable for the establishment of such zones in those areas, and because the countries in each area had agreed to join their common efforts. That, it maintained, was not the case in South Asia, where no prior consultations had taken place and no agreement had been reached in a matter bearing on the vital interests of each country in the area.⁷/

39. Pakistan, on the other hand, held that its draft resolution had gone as far as possible to accommodate India's legitimate preoccupations and concerns, since at that time it sought only endorsement of the principle of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia.⁸/

40. The United States abstained on both resolutions, explaining that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones required basic agreement on the goals and conditions for such a zone. It added that it did not believe that the two resolutions, which embodied quite differing approaches, would advance the objective of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. The Soviet Union held that it supported the creation of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world, as a step towards preventing regional proliferation of nuclear weapons and easing the threat of nuclear war, provided that measures were taken to transform the territory of the States concerned into a zone totally free from nuclear weapons. It also considered desirable that a decision by the General Assembly on the item be preceded by a common understanding on the part of the States which might participate on the

³/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2011.
⁵/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2024.
⁸/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2016, 2024.
establishment of such a zone, with regard to its geographical limits and the content of any future agreement. Consequently, it voted for the Indian draft resolution and abstained from voting the Pakistani draft. China abstained on the Indian draft and voted in favour of the Pakistani proposal, explaining that in its view the latter was just and reasonable. France, for its part, abstained from the vote on the two resolutions, maintaining that it believed that the first condition to establish a nuclear-free zone was that of full agreement among those States included in that zone.2/ Sweden also abstained in the voting of both resolutions, for similar reasons.10/

41. Japan voted in favour of both resolutions. In its opinion, they sought to promote a nuclear-free zone and met therefore with the approval of its delegation, which was concerned with the need to prevent nuclear proliferation. The United Kingdom abstained from voting both resolutions, since in its view they contained no reference to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and should define more precisely not only the geographical area of the proposed zone but also the method of verification. It also stated that arrangements for a nuclear-free zone should exclude the development of nuclear explosive technology in the area.11/

42. At the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, India and Pakistan again tabled separate draft resolutions which were adopted without a vote as resolutions 3476 A (XXX) and 3476 B (XXX) respectively. They read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 3265 A (XXIX) of 9 December 1974, in which the General Assembly, while recognizing, inter alia, that the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones could promote the cause of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, considered that the initiative for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in an appropriate region of Asia should come from the States of the region concerned, taking into account its special features and geographical extent,

"Noting with appreciation the comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, which has been prepared by the Ad Hoc Group of Qualified Governmental Experts under the auspices of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament,

"Having considered the basic principle unanimously accepted by the experts that, wherever appropriate conditions for a

2/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2024.
10/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2025.
11/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2025.
nuclear-weapon-free zone exist, the initiative for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone should come from States within the region concerned, and participation must be voluntary.

"Decides to give due consideration to any proposal for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in an appropriate region of Asia, after it has been developed and matured among the interested States within the region concerned."

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 3265 B (XXIX) of 9 December 1974, in which it endorsed, in principle, the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia,

"Noting the note by the Secretary-General,

"Further noting that, in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General has urged the interested countries of the different regions to consult together with a view to the establishment of additional nuclear-free zones,

"1. Urges the States of South Asia to continue their efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, as recommended by the General Assembly in resolution 3265 B (XXIX);

"2. Further urges those States to refrain from any action contrary to the objective of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia;

"3. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-first session an item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia."

"3. During the debate, India reiterated its position and added that South Asia was a subregion and an integral part of the region of Asia and the Pacific. The existence of nuclear weapons in the region of Asia and the Pacific and the presence of foreign military bases in the Indian Ocean complicated the security environment of that region, and made the situation inappropriate for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the subregion of South Asia. For a zone to be viable it should come into being as a result of the basic desire of States to ensure their security. The initiative should be the product of common security concern, common perception of the threats to security, and a common desire to help each other in meeting such threats. It was of the essence that participation in a zone was voluntary.12/

44. Pakistan said that its proposal expressed the unanimous will of the States of South Asia not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons. Agreement among all those States would be necessary before the zone was formally established, but there was no bar, in the meantime, to the Assembly's consideration of this question and encouragement of the proposal. As regards the proximity of nuclear Powers to South Asia, the response of the States of the region should be to make arrangements whereby these States could obtain binding undertakings from the nuclear-weapon States not to introduce nuclear weapons into the region or to use or threaten to use these weapons against them. 13/

45. After the adoption of the resolutions, China said that, had they been put to a vote, it would have voted in favour of the Pakistani text, and would have abstained on the Indian proposal. The United States explained that it would have abstained on both resolutions, for the reasons given the year before. It added that an important consideration in determining its attitude towards any particular zone arrangement was based on whether it effectively prohibited the indigenous development of any nuclear explosive capability for whatsoever purpose. 14/

46. In 1976, at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, only one draft resolution was submitted by Pakistan, being adopted as resolution 31/73 by 91 in favour (including China) 2 against (Bhutan and India) and 13 abstentions (including France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States). The resolution reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 3265 B (XXIX) of 9 December 1974 and 3475B (XXX) of 11 December 1975 concerning the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia,

"Reiterating its conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world is one of the measures which can contribute most effectively to halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to promoting progress towards nuclear disarmament as a step towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control, with the ultimate goal of total destruction of all nuclear weapons and their means of delivery,

"Bearing in mind the comprehensive study prepared by the Ad Hoc Group of Qualified Governmental Experts for the Study of the Question of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones,

"Believing that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, as in other regions, will strengthen the security of the States of the region against nuclear threat or attack,

13/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2102.
14/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2105."
"Noting the affirmation by the States of South Asia not to acquire or manufacture nuclear weapons and to devote their nuclear programmes exclusively to the economic and social advancement of their peoples,

"Recalling that in the above-mentioned resolutions the General Assembly had called upon the States of the South Asian region and such other neighbouring non-nuclear-weapon States as might be interested to initiate, without delay, necessary consultations with a view to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone and urged them, in the interim, to refrain from any action contrary to the achievement of the objectives of such a nuclear-weapon-free zone,

"Recalling that in resolution 3265 B (XXIX) the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to convene a meeting for the purpose of the above-mentioned consultations to render such assistance as might be required,

"1. Reaffirms its endorsement in principle of the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia;

"2. Urges once again the States of South Asia and such other neighbouring non-nuclear-weapon States as may be interested to continue to make all possible efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia and to refrain, in the meantime, from any action contrary to this objective;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to render such assistance as may be required to promote the above efforts for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia and to report on the subject to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session;

"4. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-second session the item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia."

47. While introducing the text of the resolution, Pakistan said that its proposal reflected the conviction that the non-nuclear weapon States should take it upon themselves to avert the nuclear threat at least in their own regions.15/

48. India recalled that its position had been explained in great detail at the previous sessions of the Assembly, adding that its most fundamental objection to the proposal was that it sought to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in an area which was not appropriate for the purpose. It also reiterated that the initiative for the creation of a zone should come from States within the region and that participation should be voluntary.16/

16/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.45.
Hungary abstained from voting on the resolution, saying that any nuclear-weapon-free zone should be entirely free from nuclear weapons or other explosive devices and that the initiative for its creation should come from the States of the region concerned. It also held that South Asia could not be treated in isolation from other parts of Asia. France also abstained, explaining that it was not unfavourable to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. However, a fundamental element was missing, namely the agreement of the States which were to become part of the zone. Similar views were expressed by Sweden and Yugoslavia. In commenting on the resolution, Pakistan expressed its willingness to continue consultations with other States concerned and reiterated that its proposal had called for the reaffirmation of the endorsement in principle of the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Asia, and not for the immediate establishment of such a zone.\(^{17}\)

\(^{17}\) Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.45
IV. PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE-ZONE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

50. At the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly in 1974, Iran and subsequently Egypt requested the inclusion in the agenda of an item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East". The two countries submitted later a draft resolution which was adopted by 128 votes in favour (including China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States) none against and 2 abstentions (Israel and Burma) as resolution 3263 (XXIX). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered the question of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East,

"Desiring to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security by bolstering and expanding the existing regional and global structures for the prohibition and/or prevention of the further spread of nuclear weapons,

"Realizing that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones with an adequate system of safeguards could accelerate the process towards nuclear disarmament and the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control,

"Recalling the resolution adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its sixty-second session, held in Cairo from 1 to 4 September 1974, on this subject,

"Recalling the message sent by His Imperial Majesty the Shahanshah of Iran on 16 September 1974 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East,

"Considering that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the initiative of the States situated within each zone concerned, is one of the measures which can contribute most effectively to halting the proliferation of those instruments of mass destruction and to promoting progress towards nuclear disarmament, with the goal of total destruction of all nuclear weapons and their means of delivery,

"Mindful of the political conditions particular to the region of the Middle East and of the potential danger emanating therefrom, which would be further aggravated by the introduction of nuclear weapons in the area,

"Conscious, therefore, of the need to keep the countries of the region from becoming involved in a ruinous nuclear arms race,"
"Recalling the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa issued by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in July 1964,”

"Noting that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East would contribute effectively to the realization of aims enunciated in the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa,

"Recalling the notable achievement of the countries of Latin America in establishing a nuclear-free zone,

"Also recalling resolution B of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, held at Geneva from 29 August to 26 September 1968, in which the Conference recommended that non-nuclear-weapon States not comprised in the Latin American nuclear-free zone should study the possibility and desirability of establishing military denuclearization of their respective zones,

"Recalling the aims pursued by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in particular the goal of preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons,

"Recalling its resolution 2373 (XXII) of 12 June 1968, in which it expressed the hope for the widest possible adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States,

"1. Commends the idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East;

"2. Considers that, in order to advance the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, it is indispensable that all parties concerned in the area proclaim solemnly and immediately their intention to refrain, on a reciprocal basis, from producing, testing, obtaining, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons;

"3. Calls upon the parties concerned in the area to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

"b. Expresses the hope that all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, will lend their full cooperation for the effective realization of the aims of the present resolution;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to ascertain the views of the parties concerned with respect to the implementation of the present resolution, in particular with regard to its paragraphs 2 and 3, and to report to the Security Council at an early date and, subsequently, to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session;
6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirtieth session the item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East."

51. While referring to the inclusion of this and other items relating to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, Mexico said that non-nuclear States seemed to be prepared to resort to procedures similar to those which apply in the case of an epidemic: to seek gradually to broaden the zones of the world in which nuclear weapons are prohibited for all time, so that the territories of the nuclear Powers would constitute something like contaminated islands, subject to a special régime.1/

52. During the debate, Egypt suggested the following principles for consideration:
   (1) The States of the region should refrain from producing, acquiring or possessing nuclear weapons;
   (2) The nuclear-weapon States should refrain from introducing nuclear weapons into the area, or from using such weapons against any State of the region; and
   (3) An effective international safeguard system should be established.2/

53. Iran recalled the dissemination of scientific knowledge in the field of nuclear energy and said that in view of the political and economic situation prevailing in the Middle East, the introduction of nuclear arms in that area could mean much more than simply a burdensome arms race, which in itself would be catastrophic.3/

54. Yemen held that as the dangers in the Middle East increased, it was the duty of the world and of the countries of the area to try to remedy the situation by banning the production of nuclear weapons in that part of the world, and also to ban their acquisition. If any country acquired these means of destruction, other countries, feeling they were threatened, would try in turn to acquire those weapons.4/

55. Jordan supported the proposal and stated that the Middle East was an area where the introduction of nuclear weapons would mean dreadful complications and the direct threat of sliding into nuclear confrontation. The proposal of denuclearization of the Middle East was therefore consistent with and expressive of the purposes of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The States of the area should all sign and become members of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, in order to fulfil the most basic and essential requirement of the denuclearization of the area.5/

56. Qatar said that it supported the proposal because the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, in addition to contributing to the relaxation of tension, would also constitute steps forward in the area of comprehensive world disarmament. The Middle East could not be exposed to a nuclear arms race and Qatar had a natural

and earnest desire for the stabilization of peace and security. Kuwait maintained that the Middle East was still enmeshed in a conflict of such proportions that it may engulf all its peoples in a horrible inferno. International endeavours designed to wipe out the causes of conflict in the area were essential to contain local passions. Attempts to introduce nuclear weapons into the area would amount to an ominous act of crass insensibility.6/

57. Somalia stressed the importance of the Middle East as a vital source of the world's energy requirements. The security of the area should be guaranteed, and it should be kept free of nuclear weapons of any kind and of any capacity for destruction. The United Arab Emirates held that the Middle East was suffering from the fears of lengthy wars and was in great need, more than any time before, of any steps that could be devised to remove the spectre of a nuclear war.7/

58. Tunisia said that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would be a positive contribution, not only to peace in the region but also for the security of mankind as a whole.8/

59. Israel abstained in the vote of the resolution because, in its view, it did not provide for full and frank consultation between all States concerned, without which the proposal could not be realized.9/

60. The United States supported the resolution, but expressed doubts in connexion with the approach taken in operative paragraph 2, which in its opinion urged States in the region to undertake immediate commitments with regard to the zone, in advance of actual negotiations and the conclusion of an agreement. France also voted for the resolution, although it reiterated its reservations with respect to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It also expressed its wish to see complete agreement among the States concerned. While supporting the resolution, the Soviet Union said that this did not mean agreement with the eleventh preambular paragraph on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America.10/

61. During the thirtieth session of the General Assembly in 1975, Egypt and Iran and subsequently Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and Tunisia submitted a draft resolution later adopted by 125 votes to none, with 2 abstentions (Israel and the United Republic of Cameroon). It reads as follows:

"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,

9/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2028.
10/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2028."
"Taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council and the General Assembly, and the replies contained therein, on the question of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East,

"Recognizing, on the basis of the above mentioned reports, 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 of the potential danger emanating therefrom, which would be further aggravated by the introduction of nuclear weapons in the area,

"Conscious, therefore, of the need to keep the countries of the region from becoming involved in a ruinous nuclear arms race,

"Taking note of the comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, prepared by the Ad Hoc Group of Qualified Governmental Experts pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3261 F (XXIX) of 9 December 1974,

"Recalling its resolution 2373 (XXII) of 12 June 1968, in which it expressed the hope for the widest possible adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States,

"1. Expresses the opinion that the Member States with which the Secretary-General has consulted through his notes verbales of 19 March 1975 and 13 June 1975 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3263 (XXIX) should exert efforts towards the realization of the objective of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East;

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

"3. Recommends that the Member States referred to in paragraph 1 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;
"(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;"

"4. Recommends to the nuclear-weapon States to refrain from any action contrary to the purpose 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. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-first session the item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East."

62. During the debate, Egypt recalled that the resolution adopted the previous year called upon the parties concerned in the area to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It added that Egypt had signed the treaty in 1968 and was ready to ratify it the moment Israel acceded to it.11/

63. In introducing the text of the resolution, Iran said that in the political climate of the Middle East, the introduction of nuclear weapons not only could not be discounted but also would represent the most dangerous aspect of nuclear-weapon proliferation and would seriously complicate the prospects for peace and security in the region. Mere expression of support for the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone was not in itself sufficient to override the existing obstacles; nor could the advocacy of conventional means for the realization of the idea stand the test of credibility in the face of the particular climate in the region. Through actions which could be interpreted unequivocally as gestures of good faith, feelings of trust and confidence among the States of the region could be generated. Adhesion to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by the States directly concerned could produce such a beneficial result. By spelling out the urgent measures to be undertaken by the States of the region, the proposed text tried to prevent pre-emptive action that would defeat the purpose of the zone.12/

64. For its part, Israel reiterated its desire to consult and confer with the Governments of the countries concerned. It held that its Government had voted in favour of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and was continuing its examination of the Treaty's implications and that Israel had solemnly stated that it will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the Middle East.13/

12/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2101.
13/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2103.
65. The United States explained that it had voted in favour of the resolution, although it questioned the approach of asking States to undertake commitments in advance of the negotiations of a zone arrangement.14/

66. During the thirty-first session of the General Assembly in 1976, Egypt, Iran and Kuwait submitted a draft resolution later co-sponsored by Bahrain, Jordan, Mauritania, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates. The draft was adopted as resolution 31/71 by a vote of 130 to none, with 1 abstention (Israel). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 32/63 (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 34/74 (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 the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a means of promoting this objective;

"3. Reiterates its recommendation that the Member States

14/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2106.
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;

"(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;

"h. Reaffirms the recommendations to the nuclear-weapon
States to refrain from any action contrary to the purpose 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."

67. During the debate, Egypt said that Israel was the only country in the area not
to support previous resolutions, which called on the countries concerned to adhere
to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It recalled that Egypt
had stated and continued to state that it was ready to ratify the Treaty the moment
Israel declared its adherence to it.15/

68. Kuwait said that it would become a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation
of Nuclear Weapons, provided Israel also became a party to it. It also believed that
accession to the Treaty by all States of the region was a prerequisite for establish-
ing an effective nuclear-weapon-free zone.16/

15/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first session,
A/C.1/31/PV.31.

69. Iraq, for its part, felt that one way of achieving the goal of declaring the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone would be through the adherence of all to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the renunciation of the production, manufacture or acquisition of nuclear weapons.17/

70. In introducing the text of the resolution, Iran said that no one could entertain any doubt that the consequences of allowing nuclear weapons into the region would far transcend the peace and security of the immediate area under consideration.18/

71. Israel abstained from voting the resolution, indicating that negotiations between all the States of the region was an indispensable requirement for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.19/

72. While voting in favour of the resolution, the United States reiterated the views expressed on the vote of previous resolutions. It also stated that its support for any nuclear-weapon-free zone was contingent upon its compatibility with criteria that the United States had frequently articulated in the past. Those criteria were that the initiative for the creation of the zone should come from the States in the region concerned; that all States whose participation was considered important should participate in the zone; that the zone arrangement should not disturb existing security arrangements; and that the zone should effectively prohibit its parties from developing any nuclear explosive device.20/

17/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.35.
18/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.41.
19/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.45.
20/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.45.
V. PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

73. At the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, the item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone was included in the agenda at the request of Fiji and New Zealand. Both countries also initiated a draft resolution, later co-sponsored by Chile, Ecuador, Malaysia, Peru, Philippines and Singapore. The draft was adopted by the General Assembly by 110 votes (including China) to none with 20 abstentions (including France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States) as resolution 3477 (XXX). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Conscious of the urgent need for agreement on measures to achieve the goal of general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, under effective international control,

"Convinced that the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the continuance of the nuclear arms race are among the greatest threats to world peace and the survival of mankind,

"Noting that article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons acknowledges the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories,

"Noting further the declaration of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the initiative and with the agreement of the directly concerned States of the zone, represents an effective means of curbing the spread of nuclear weapons and could contribute significantly to the security of those States,

"Endorsing the declaration of the Review Conference that the co-operation of the nuclear-weapon States is necessary for the maximum effectiveness of any treaty arrangements for establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone,

"Recalling, in particular, the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its first ordinary session, held at Cairo from 17 to 21 July 1964, and the notable progress achieved by the Latin American States towards the denuclearization of their region,

"Noting, in addition, that the Heads of Government of the independent or self-governing States members of the South Pacific Forum emphasized in their communiqué of 3 July 1975 the importance of keeping the South Pacific region free from the risk of nuclear contamination and of involvement in a nuclear conflict and commended the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific as a means of achieving that aim,"
"1. Endorses the idea of the establishment of a nuclear-
weapon-free zone in the South Pacific;

"2. Invites the countries concerned to carry forward
consultations about ways and means of realizing this objective;

"3. Expresses the hope that all States, in particular the
nuclear-weapon States, will co-operate fully in achieving the
objectives of the present resolution;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to render all necessary
assistance to the States of the region in giving effect to the
purpose of the present resolution."

74. In introducing the text of the draft resolution in the First Committee, New
Zealand stated that every State in every region had the right to do what it could
to free itself from the danger of nuclear conflict over which it could have no control.
The principle that the initiative for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone
should come from States within the region concerned had been given effect in the
case of the South Pacific. The Heads of Government of the South Pacific Forum had
"emphasized the importance of keeping the region free from the risk of nuclear
contamination and of involvement in a nuclear conflict and commended the idea of
establishing a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific as a means of achieving that
aim". As other regions had done, the South Pacific countries had considered that
the first step towards the establishment of a zone in their area was to secure the
endorsement of the concept in principle by the United Nations. The co-sponsors had
conceived their initiative as being complementary to the Non-Proliferation Treaty,
by which almost every member of the South Pacific Forum was bound.1/

75. Fiji held similar views, and added that it was not the intention of its
Government to deprive any State, against its will, of its right to free and unimpeded
passage of the high seas or the right of innocent passage in other waters. However,
it vigorously opposed any emplacement or testing of nuclear weapons within territories
in the South Pacific region.2/

76. Singapore said that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the
South Pacific could make a positive contribution to the peace and security of the
region. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones could be a very effective way
of promoting and strengthening the Non-Proliferation Treaty.3/

77. While understanding the motives of the co-sponsors, the Soviet Union abstained
in the vote of the resolution, since in its view operative paragraph 1 allowed for
the possibility of expanding the zone to the high seas, which could then lead to
attempts to restrict freedom of navigation in the open seas. Mexico supported the
resolution, stressing that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones was an

2/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2095.
3/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2098.
effective means to make progress towards general and complete disarmament via nuclear disarmament. It also stated that the resolution noted article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which acknowledged the right of any group of States to conclude a treaty to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories, and held that one of the best ways of making the treaty attractive would be to give proof that all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, were prepared to comply with the commitments entered into under that Treaty. Japan also voted for the resolution, on the understanding that consultations would be held about ways and means of realizing its objective. Its delegation also said that, in its view, a nuclear-weapon-free zone should be created in accordance with the established principles of international law, including freedom of navigation on the high seas, the principles of the United Nations Charter and fundamental principles guiding mutual relations of States. Also, a nuclear-weapon-free zone should contribute to the strengthening of regional international security and be compatible with the objective of strengthening international security on a global scale with peace-keeping mechanisms.\(^4\)

\(^\text{86}\). The United Kingdom abstained on the resolution, explaining that its Government had consistently opposed the idea of maritime zones covering large areas of the high seas. A maritime zone would interfere with generally accepted principles of freedom of navigation. Similar views were expressed by the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy. The United States also abstained, recalling that the proponents intended to seek extension of the zone eventually to include areas of the high seas. It, therefore, could not endorse a proposal that contemplated restrictions on internationally recognized rights of navigation and over flight of maritime areas, including the rights of innocent passage through territorial seas. France explained that it had abstained from voting the resolution, in view that the exact territorial area of the proposed zone was not clearly stated. In addition, the resolution did not define what rules would be proposed by the countries concerned with respect to the open seas and the international straits.\(^5\)

\(^4\)/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2100.

\(^5\)/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2100.
VI. PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A ZONE OF PEACE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

81. At the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly in 1971, the item "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace" was included in the agenda at the request of Ceylon, later joined by the United Republic of Tanzania. A draft resolution was submitted to the Assembly by thirteen countries and adopted by 61 votes (including China) to none with 55 abstentions (including France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States) as resolution 2832 (XXVI). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Conscious of the determination of the peoples of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to preserve their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to resolve their political, economic and social problems under conditions of peace and tranquillity,

"Recalling the Declaration of the Third Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lusaka from 6 to 10 September 1970, calling upon all States to consider and respect the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace from which great Power rivalries and competition as well as bases conceived in the context of such rivalries and competition should be excluded, and declaring that the area should also be free of nuclear weapons,

"Convinced of the desirability of ensuring the maintenance of such conditions in the Indian Ocean area by means other than military alliances, as such alliances entail financial and other obligations that call for the diversion of the limited resources of the States of the area from the more compelling and productive task of economic and social reconstruction and could further involve them in the rivalries of power blocs in a manner prejudicial to their independence and freedom of action, thereby increasing international tensions,

"Concerned at recent developments that portend the extensions of the arms race into the Indian Ocean area, thereby posing a serious threat to the maintenance of such conditions in the area,

"Convinced that the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean would contribute towards arresting such developments, relaxing international tensions and strengthening international peace and security,

"Convinced further that the establishment of a zone of peace in an extensive geographical area in one region could have a beneficial influence on the establishment of permanent universal peace based on equal rights and justice for all, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

"1. Solemnly declares that the Indian Ocean, within limits to be determined, together with the air space above and the ocean floor subjacent thereto, is hereby designated for all time as a zone of peace;"
2. Calls upon the great Powers, in conformity with this Declaration, to enter into immediate consultations with the littoral States of the Indian Ocean with a view to:

(a) Halting the further escalation and expansion of their military presence in the Indian Ocean;

(b) Eliminating from the Indian Ocean all bases, military installations and logistical supply facilities, the disposition of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and any manifestation of great Power military presence in the Indian Ocean conceived in the context of great Power rivalry;

3. Calls upon the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, the permanent members of the Security Council and other major maritime users of the Indian Ocean, in pursuit of the objective of establishing a system of universal collective security without military alliances and strengthening international security through regional and other co-operation, to enter into consultations with a view to the implementation of this Declaration and such action as may be necessary to ensure that:

(a) Warships and military aircraft may not use the Indian Ocean for any threat or use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of any littoral or hinterland State of the Indian Ocean in contravention of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

(b) Subject to the foregoing and to the norms and principles of international law, the right to free and unimpeded use of the zone by the vessels of all nations is unaffected;

(c) Appropriate arrangements are made to give effect to any international agreement that may ultimately be reached for the maintenance of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session on the progress that has been made with regard to the implementation of this Declaration;

5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its twenty-seventh session an item entitled "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace".

Yugoslavia said that it had great understanding for Ceylon's efforts to save the Indian Ocean from becoming an area of confrontation of foreign powers. The adoption of the proposal would be of vital interest to countries of the region and also to peace and security in the world. 1/

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-Sixth Session, First Committee, 1033rd meeting.
83. Ceylon held that peace could not be established merely by outlawing nuclear weapons from a region. When conditions permitted, as in the Indian Ocean, it was important to outlaw conventional weapons as well and thus hasten the advance towards general and complete disarmament. It also stated that the proposal would, by the common consent of the littoral States, create the conditions in which great Power rivalries would be excluded from the area and ultimately enable the elimination of all military bases in the region. 2/

84. Kenya supported the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, as it would be a step to forestall the possibility of a cold war confrontation and a practical development towards both disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Afghanistan expressed appreciation in principle for the initiative, believing that if such zones could be recognized in different regions, this would contribute to the strengthening of world peace and security. The United Republic of Tanzania said that no great Powers should make the area the scene of their confrontation and recalled that the concept of zones of peace had long ago been proposed as a means of saving selected areas of certain regions from the tragedy of nuclear war. 3/

85. While sharing the legitimate concern of the sponsors, France held that it was in the interest of the international community that certain essential principles remain outside all decisions of a specific nature, such as the principle relating to the law of the sea, especially since this subject was to be considered on a general level. 4/

86. The Soviet Union said that the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean should provide for actual steps to limit the arms race and, above all, for the dismantling of existing foreign military bases in the region. The declaration should not lead to the undermining or weakening of the existing generally recognized principles of international law on the freedom of the high seas. It added that the proposal should obtain the agreement of the parties concerned before the General Assembly reached a decision on it. 5/

87. While sharing the desires of the sponsors that the Indian Ocean should be an area of peace, the United Kingdom said that the resolution did more than request consultations; it also enumerated specific measures which would pre-determine the outcome of the proposed consultations. The United Kingdom had military facilities in the Indian Ocean which did not threaten any littoral States, and could not agree to proposals which prevented it from fulfilling its legitimate responsibilities and commitments in the region. 6/

88. The United States said that it had a number of difficulties with the language of the declaration, particularly with regard to such principles as freedom of navigation on the high seas, and rejected the view that a group of States in a certain region could establish a legal regime for the high seas in the region. New Zealand explained that its abstention was due to the fact that the resolution did not have the support either of the great Powers concerned or of all littoral

2/ Ibid., 1834th meeting.
3/ Ibid., 1836th meeting.
4/ Ibid., 1838th meeting.
5/ Ibid., 1841st meeting.
6/ Ibid., 1848th meeting.
States. Japan said that it had voted in favour of the resolution because of sympathy with the aspirations of the littoral States to maintain and strengthen peace in their area. However, it held that the declaration would need further elaboration.

89. During the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, 29 countries submitted a draft resolution on the basis of which resolution 2992 (XXVII) was adopted by 95 votes (including China) to none, with 33 abstentions (France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971 entitled "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace",

"Noting the report of the Secretary-General submitted in accordance with paragraph 4 of that resolution, in which he was requested to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session on the progress made with regard to the implementation of the Declaration,

"Noting further that the consultations envisaged in paragraphs 2 and 3 of that resolution have not taken place,

"Convinced that action in furtherance of the objectives of the Declaration would be a substantial contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security,

"Noting that, in the Georgetown Declaration of 12 August 1972, the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries took note with satisfaction of the adoption by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and agreed that further steps should be taken at the Assembly's twenty-seventh session towards implementation of the Declaration,

"1. Calls upon the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, the permanent members of the Security Council and other major maritime users of the Indian Ocean to support the concept that the Indian Ocean should be a zone of peace;

"2. Decides to establish an Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, consisting of no more than fifteen members, to study the implications of the proposal, with special reference to the practical measures that may be taken in furtherance of the objectives of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), having due regard to the security interests of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean and the interests of any other State consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session;

"3. Decides further that the Ad Hoc Committee shall consist of the following States: Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen and Zambia;

7/ Ibid., 1849th meeting
4. **Urges** all the States concerned to extend their co-operation to the Ad Hoc Committee in the discharge of its functions;

5. **Requests** the Secretary-General to render all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Committee;

6. **Decides** to include in the provisional agenda of its twenty-eighth session the item entitled "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace."

90. During the debate, which was not particularly active, Sri Lanka said that existing circumstances in the Indian Ocean, as distinct from other oceans of the world, were specially conducive for considering the area as a zone of peace; the countries of the region needed conditions of peace and tranquility in which to transform and modernize their economies and societies. It added that immediate action was considered necessary to arrest and reverse certain trends which had lately become manifest and which, if allowed to continue, would render the progressive militarization of the Indian Ocean unavoidable. 8/

91. The United States abstained, explaining that the reasons for abstaining on the previous year remained valid and applied as well to the resolution. The United Kingdom expressed a similar view. France held that the basic principles of international law could not be modified even in a limited geographical region by any resolution of the United Nations even though, as in this case, it was inspired by peaceful and laudable intentions. 9/

92. Somalia supported the resolution, since in its view the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace was a major contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security, as well as a tangible expression of the principle of regional cooperation. While sharing the hope of the sponsors that the Indian Ocean should continue to be a zone of peace, Sweden explained that it had to abstain in view that the consultations envisaged in the previous year's resolution had not taken place. 10/

93. The Soviet Union declared its readiness to settle, along with other interested States and on an equal footing, the question of declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, but held that it could not support the resolution because it was not fully consistent with the elimination of all foreign military bases in the area, and with universally recognized rules of international law, particularly the principle of freedom of navigation. 11/

94. In 1973, at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, sixteen countries submitted a draft resolution, which was adopted as resolution 3060 (XXVIII) by 95 votes (including China) to none, with 35 abstentions (including France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, entitled "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace",

9/ Ibid., A/1/C.1/PV.1910
10/ Ibid., A/1/C.1/PV.1911
11/ Ibid."
"Reaffirming its conviction that action in furtherance of the objectives of the Declaration would be a substantial contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security,

"Noting the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean established by General Assembly resolution 2992 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 to study the implications of the proposal, with special reference to the practical measures that may be taken in furtherance of the objectives of Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), having due regard to the security interests of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean and the interests of any other State consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

"Noting with satisfaction the progress made by the Ad Hoc Committee in fulfilling its mandate,

"1. Urges all States to accept the principles and objectives contained in General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), entitled "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace", as a constructive contribution to the strengthening of regional and international security;

"2. Requests the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean to continue its work, to carry out consultations in accordance with its mandate and to report with recommendations to the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session;

"3. Urges all States, especially the major Powers, to extend their co-operation to the Ad Hoc Committee in the discharge of its functions;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to render all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Committee;

"5. Decides that the Ad Hoc Committee shall be provided with summary records of its proceedings;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a factual statement of the Great Powers' military presence in all its aspects, in the Indian Ocean, with special reference to their naval deployments, conceived in the context of great Power rivalry;

"7. Recommends that the statement should be based on available material and prepared with the assistance of qualified experts and competent bodies selected by the Secretary-General;

"8. Requests that the statement be transmitted to the Ad Hoc Committee at an early date, if possible by 31 March 1974;

"9. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its twenty-ninth session an item entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace".

95. The debate in the First Committee concentrated mainly on various aspects of the implementation of the Declaration, and only a small number of delegations advanced arguments in connexion with the zone of peace.
96. Japan recalled the aspirations of the nations of the Indian Ocean region to keep themselves out of the great Power rivalries, to create in the region conditions of peace and tranquility, under which they could devote themselves to the constructive task of developing their own societies. 12/

97. The Soviet Union reiterated the reservations expressed in connexion with the previous year's resolution. The United States, for its part, said that the resolution embodied a number of concepts and premises that it had originally found unacceptable. 13/

98. Sweden voted this time in favour, since in its view the resolution enjoyed the support of the countries in the region. 14/

99. Italy abstained, explaining that certain aspects of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace might lead to misinterpretation, particularly in connexion with the freedom of the high seas. France said that it could not support the resolution, in view of its attachment to that principle. 15/

100. At the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Sri Lanka introduced in the First Committee the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and the draft resolution annexed to it. The draft was adopted by the Assembly as resolution 3259 A (XXIX) by 103 votes (including China) to none, with 26 abstentions (including France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States). It reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, contained in resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, and recalling also General Assembly resolutions 2992 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and 3080 (XXVIII) of 6 December 1973,

"Firmly convinced that further and continuous efforts are required to fulfil the objectives of the Declaration, and thus to contribute to the strengthening of regional and international peace and security,

"Noting the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean,

"Further noting the factual statement of the great Powers' military presence in all its aspects, in the Indian Ocean, with special reference to their naval deployments, conceived in the context of great Power rivalry, prepared by the Secretary-General with the assistance of qualified experts pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3080 (XXVIII),

"Deeply concerned that the competitive expansion of the military presence of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean would constitute a serious intensification of the arms race, leading to an increase of tension in the area,

13/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.1956
14/ Ibid.
15/ Ibid.
"Considering that the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean requires:

(a) The elimination of all manifestations of great Power military presence in the region, conceived in the context of great Power rivalry,

(b) Co-operation among the regional States to ensure conditions of security within the region as envisaged in the Declaration,

"Further believing that for the realization of the objective of the Declaration it is necessary that the great Powers enter into immediate consultations with the States concerned with a view to adopting positive measures for the elimination of all foreign bases and of all manifestations of great Power military presence in the region, conceived in the context of great Power rivalry,

"1. Urges the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, the permanent members of the Security Council and other major maritime users of the Indian Ocean to give tangible support to the establishment and preservation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace;

"2. Calls upon the great Powers to refrain from increasing and strengthening their military presence in the region of the Indian Ocean as an essential first step towards the relaxation of tension and the promotion of peace and security in the area;

"3. Endorses the recommendations, concerning the future work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, as contained in paragraph 35 of the report of the Committee;

"4. Requests the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to enter, as soon as possible, into consultations with a view to convening a conference on the Indian Ocean;

"5. Invites all States, especially the great Powers, to co-operate in a practical manner with the Ad Hoc Committee in the discharge of its functions;

"6. Expresses its thanks to the Secretary-General for his efforts in the preparation of the factual statement of the great Powers' military presence in the Indian Ocean;

"7. Requests the Ad Hoc Committee to continue its work and consultations in accordance with its mandate and to report to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session;

"8. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to render all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Committee."

101. Kuwait said it was keenly interested in ensuring conditions of security within the region. In its view, among the means to achieve this end would be a commitment by the nuclear powers not to deploy nuclear weapons in the area, the elimination from the area of all foreign military bases and a ban on the establishment of new bases or the enlargement of existing ones. 16/

102. Yemen recalled that the arms race that developed during recent years in the region and the arrival of international competition had induced the United Nations to declare the Indian Ocean zone of peace. 17/

103. Australia said it would not wish to see an escalation of great Power military rivalry in the Indian Ocean. It urged the major Powers to limit their naval deployments and military presence there in a spirit of mutual restraint and assured other countries of the area of its cooperation in an effort to preserve the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. 18/

104. Bangladesh noted that non-aligned States had advocated the concept of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace because it had become an arena of great Power rivalry. 19/

105. Madagascar held that the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean would make it possible for the countries concerned to get together in order to establish co-operation based on genuine mutual trust. They would be able to utilize their material resources for purely peaceful purposes and to guarantee their independence and sovereignty without direct or indirect interference. 20/

106. Sri Lanka recalled that, in requesting the inscription of the item at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly, it had considered immediate action necessary to arrest and reverse the trend that had lately become manifest, which, if allowed to continue unchecked, could render the progressive militarization of the Indian Ocean unavoidable. 21/

107. Mauritius said that it was deeply concerned that the competitive expansion of the military presence of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean would lead to an increase of tension in the area, and called upon the great Powers to refrain from increasing and strengthening their military presence in the region. 22/

108. China held that the desire of the countries of the Indian Ocean zone to maintain peace in the region should be respected, and that the establishment of the zone also depended on those countries basing their mutual relations on the principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference on each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. 23/

17/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2003
18/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2004
19/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2011
20/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-Ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, A/PV.2139
22/ Ibid., A/C.1/2016
23/ Ibid., A/C.1/2019
109. The Soviet Union abstained from voting on the resolution, explaining that it was ready to take part, on an equal footing with all other interested States, in the search for favourable solutions to the problem of the Indian Ocean, provided that there was observance of the generally acknowledged rules of international law. In drafting the provisions of the Declaration, there should be no infringement of the principle of freedom of navigation, particularly when it comes to the carrying out of scientific research by means of naval vessels. The Soviet Union had never had or created, and was not now creating military or naval bases in the Indian Ocean region and the Declaration required primarily the elimination of all foreign bases in the area. Canada also abstained, although it made it clear that this did not indicate a lack of sympathy towards the intention of the co-sponsors. In its opinion, the responsibility for elaborating specific proposals for demilitarized or demilitarized zones rested primarily with the States of the area most directly concerned and this goal should be substantially achieved before other States were called upon to endorse such arrangements. The United Kingdom shared the desire of the sponsors to maintain and enhance peace and stability in the region of the Indian Ocean, but it had felt obliged to abstain because the resolution might prevent the United Kingdom from fulfilling some of its commitments within and beyond the area which, it stated, presented no threat whatever to any State in the area. France fully understood the anxiety of the States bordering on the Indian Ocean and their desire to rid that area of the seeds of conflict. However, it held that this objective could not be sought by establishing arrangements that would lead to modifying the essential principles of international law, such as the freedom of navigation on the high seas. 24/

110. At its thirtieth session, the General Assembly had before it the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean with a draft resolution annexed to it. The draft resolution was adopted as resolution 3468 (XXX) by 106 votes to none, with 25 abstentions. China voted in favour, while France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States abstained. The resolution reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, contained in its resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, and recalling also its resolutions 2992 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 3080 (XXVIII) of 6 December 1973 and 3259 A (XXIX) of 9 December 1974,

"Reaffirming its conviction that action in furtherance of the objectives of the Declaration would be a substantial contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security,

"Calling attention to the provisions of resolution 3259 A (XXIX), especially paragraph 4, in which the General Assembly requested the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to enter, as soon as possible, into consultations with a view to convening a conference on the Indian Ocean,

24/ Ibid.
"1. Notes the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, in particular section II thereof concerning the consultations entered into by the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean in pursuance of paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 3259 A (XXIX);

"2. Notes further that, as a result of these consultations, an agreement in principle on the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean has emerged among the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean;

"3. Requests the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to continue their consultations on the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean, with particular attention to the following six points:

(a) Purposes of the conference;
(b) Date and duration;
(c) Venue
(d) Provisional agenda;
(e) Participation;
(f) Level of participation;

"4. Requests the Ad Hoc Committee to continue its work and consultations in accordance with its mandate and to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session a report on its work, including the results of the consultations referred to in paragraph 3 above;

"5. Invites all States, in particular the great Powers and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean, to co-operate in a practical manner with the Ad Hoc Committee in the discharge of its functions;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to render all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Committee, including the preparation of summary records."

111. During the debate in the First Committee, Australia urged the major Powers to attempt to exercise mutual restraint against expansion of their military and naval competition in the Indian Ocean. Mutual arms limitation measures could have a regional as well as a global dimension, and Australia would welcome a more positive attitude on the part of the major Powers to the objectives of the plan to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. 25/

112. Bangladesh held that the major objective of the proposal to establish the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and neutrality was to exclude great Power rivalries and competition, as well as bases conceived in the context of such rivalries; the secondary objective was to complement this concept by strengthening regional cooperation and unity. 26/

113. Somalia said that it always supported the Declaration because it gave practical expression to important principles of non-alignment and also because its implementation would be a significant contribution to the goal of general and complete disarmament and the strengthening of world peace and security. 27/

26/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2086
27/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2088
114. Sri Lanka maintained that agreement in a region as vast as the Indian Ocean on the application of the provisions of the Declaration -- resolution 2032 (XXVI) -- could, by the elimination of great power rivalry and military bases from the region, greatly reduce the risks of war. 28/

115. Indonesia held that recent developments in the Indian Ocean had added a sense of urgency to the desire of progress on this issue. Among these factors was the growing concern that big power rivalry was being heightened. Of particular importance was the immediate prospect of a conventional naval arms race, as well as the increasing activities of fleets possessing nuclear capability. 29/

116. India said that manifestations of great Power rivalry in the region had increased. Vast sums of money were being spent in strengthening bases and facilities, and naval activities had also increased. If the Declaration were implemented in letter and in spirit, resulting in the halting of the escalation and the eventual elimination of great Power rivalry in the Indian Ocean, the question of the regional security of the States concerned would pose no problem at all. 30/

117. While introducing the text which was adopted by the General Assembly, Sri Lanka held that the Indian Ocean peace zone was directed to establishing conditions of peace and security which would obviate the need for military alliances or for the acquisition of armaments by countries of the area or for the military presence of any great Powers in the area. As regards fears that the zone would interfere with the freedom of the high seas, it noted that there was no intention of interfering with the peaceful uses of the ocean. It also stated that the sponsors were not seeking to convert the Indian Ocean into a private lake with special rights or privileges for the littoral and hinterland States, but rather the assumption by all States, through international agreement, of certain restraints in the interests of both regional and global security. Such internationally agreed restraints could not be determined unless there was active consultation between the States of the region and those outside it. 31/

118. In explaining its abstention, the Soviet Union reiterated the views expressed in connexion with the resolution adopted the previous year. It also emphasized that the Declaration would require, in the first place, the elimination of all foreign military bases in that region. 32/

119. At its thirty-first session, the General Assembly considered the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and the draft resolution annexed to it. This draft was adopted by 106 votes to none, with 27 abstentions. China voted in favour, while France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States abstained. The text of resolution 31/68 reads as follows:

28/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2089
29/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2094
30/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2095
31/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2098
32/ Ibid., A/C.1/PV.2100
"The General Assembly,

"Recalling the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, contained in its resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, and recalling also its resolutions 2992 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 3080 (XXVIII) of 6 December 1973, 3259 A (XXX) of 9 December 1974 and 3468 (XXX) of 11 December 1975,

"Reaffirming its conviction that concrete action in furtherance of the objectives of the Declaration would be a substantial contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security,

"Noting the resolution adopted at the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries on the subject of the Indian Ocean Peace Zone Proposal,

"Deeply concerned that there has been an escalation of the military presence of the great Powers conceived in the context of great Power rivalry in the Indian Ocean, and believing therefore that the implementation of the purposes and objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace has acquired a new urgency,

"Regretting that, despite repeated invitations, certain great Powers as well as certain major maritime users of the Indian Ocean have not so far found it possible to co-operate with the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean,

1. Takes note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, in particular section II thereof concerning the consultations entered into by the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean in pursuance of paragraphs 3 and 4 of General Assembly resolution 3468 (XXX);

2. Requests the Ad Hoc Committee and the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to continue their consultations with a view to formulating a programme of action leading to the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean;

3. Invites once again all States, in particular the great Powers and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean, to co-operate in a practical manner with the Ad Hoc Committee in the discharge of its functions;

4. Requests the Ad Hoc Committee to continue its work and consultations in accordance with its mandate and to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session a report on its work;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to render all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Committee, including the provisions of summary records."

120. Sri Lanka said that the implementation of the zone of peace in the Indian Ocean had assumed a new urgency. Recent developments could lead to tension and conflict in the Indian Ocean through growing great Power competition for naval superiority in the area. 33/
121. Nepal held that the stationing and strengthening of arms bases and other military installations in the region continued at an unabated rate in total disregard of the Declaration. 34/

122. The Philippines said that the logic was overwhelmingly in favour of arresting a naval arms race in the Indian Ocean, one which would be costly to those involved and threatening to the States in the area and would result in a net decrease in world security. 35/

123. Yugoslavia held that the establishment of the zone would eliminate to a great extent the danger of confrontation between the major military powers and would constitute an essential pre-condition for the dismantling of military bases and the withdrawal of foreign troops from foreign territories in general, and from these zones in particular. 36/

124. Mauritius recalled that the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace sought to protect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States in the region. In calling upon all States to consider and respect the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, it was not intended to limit the right to free and unimpeded use of the Ocean by the vessels of those countries in conformity with international law, as long as such vessels posed no military or strategic threat to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the littoral and hinterland States. 37/

125. Pakistan pointed out that the rivalries of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean were, in part at least, a reflection of the disputes, tensions and conflicts among the States of the region. A zone of peace in the Indian Ocean required that regional States be assured against threats from both within and without the region. 38/

126. While being sympathetic towards the proposal, the Soviet Union abstained from voting on the resolution. It reiterated its views on previous resolutions, explaining also that it would be ready, together with other States, to seek ways of reducing on a mutual basis the military activities of non-coastal States in the Indian Ocean and the areas immediately adjacent to it. Such measures should fully take into account the universally acknowledged norms of international law with regard to freedom of navigation on the high seas, the need for putting into ports of coastal States, and freedom of scientific research. 39/

34/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.21
35/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.22
36/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.25
37/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.29
38/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.42
39/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.44
127. The United States shared the desires of the nations of the Indian Ocean area for peace and tranquility and their wish not to be subjected to military pressure by outside powers. It added that it was prepared to advance the cause of peace and stability in the region, and hoped that a similar commitment will be reflected in the actions of other outside powers. However, it abstained on the resolution because, in its opinion, its preambular reference to the original Indian Ocean Peace Zone resolution of 1971 could be interpreted as acknowledging that littoral States would have the right to establish a legal régime for the high seas in the region. The delegation also had reservations with respect to the multilateral conference contemplated in the resolution, as well as to the reference in its preamble to the Colombo Resolution of Non-aligned countries. 40/

40/ Ibid., A/C.1/31/PV.44
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