Twenty-eighth Session
FIRST COMMITTEE
PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 10 December 1973, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. BORCH (Denmark)
Rapporteur: Mr. de Soto (Peru)

- Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security (continued)
- Programme of work

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75-71311/A
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY (A/C.1/L.670)

The CHAIRMAN: Since there are no further names on the list of speakers on this item, may I take it that the general debate has now been concluded?

Mr. OZGUR (Cyprus): My delegation along with a few others intends to submit a draft resolution on this item. We shall probably be introducing it today, but would ask that it not be put to the vote until tomorrow.

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of Cyprus is of course entitled to submit a draft resolution on this item, particularly since no time-limit for the submission of draft resolutions had been set. But I would draw attention to the fact that we are scheduled to conclude all our work tomorrow. I think, therefore, that we should declare the general debate on this item concluded and that we should proceed to vote on the draft resolution before us in document A/C.1/L.670. Tomorrow we would conclude our consideration of the item by hearing speakers, if any, on the draft resolution to be introduced by the representative of Cyprus.
Mr. SAVROMCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to be clear about the procedure we are to follow on this item. My understanding is that the general debate on this item has been concluded and that as soon as there is a quorum present we shall proceed to vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670. Subsequently, any further draft resolutions to be submitted would be introduced, discussed and put to the vote.

The CHAIRMAN: That is indeed the position.

As I hear no objections, I declare the general debate on item 39 concluded. Since no one has expressed a desire to speak on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670, we are now in the voting stage in accordance with rule 130 of the rules of procedure. I should like to announce that the name of the following countries should be added to the list of co-sponsors of that text: Brazil, Cameroon, Cuba, Guyana, Indonesia and Sudan.

I call on the representative of the United Kingdom to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.
Sir Donald Maitland (United Kingdom): My delegation will abstain in the vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670. Our attitude on this item is well known: we value the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1970 with only one negative vote. But we doubt whether this Committee's annual discussion of the so-called implementation of the Declaration adds anything to its value. Indeed, we believe that the reverse is the case and that this Declaration being steadily devalued by this annual debate. Particularly is this so when specific passages from the Declaration are selected arbitrarily for re-emphasis or reformulation in an annual resolution.

I do not propose to comment in detail on the draft resolution. I must, however, comment on one particular paragraph. As the United Kingdom representative in this Committee said last year, we have strong reservations with regard to the language which appears in the draft resolution before us as operative paragraph 5 and which appeared in resolution 2993 (XXVII) as operative paragraph 4. Had there been a separate vote on that paragraph we would certainly have voted against.

We cannot accept that the resort to international bodies or to the courts of other nations in order to assert rights under international law is in any way a threat to international peace and security. To suggest this is to stand the United Nations Charter on its head; and to persist in articulating such propositions is the surest way for this Organization to continue the deplorable process of undermining its own authority and prestige. My delegation believes that the reverse of the proposition in operative paragraph 5 is true: the cause of international peace and security can only be strengthened and advanced when attempts are made to settle disputes within the framework of law.

Moreover, underlying this paragraph there seems to be an implicit rejection of the concept of partnership in the matter of solving the world's economic problems. If words mean anything, then the doctrine of sovereign equality applies to all countries. It is illogical, unreasonable and unrealistic to suggest that all the rights are on one side and all the duties on the other. It is only in a spirit of real partnership with mutual respect for each other's legitimate interests that the problems of development can be solved.
The CHAIRMAN: As no other representatives wish to speak in explanation of vote before the vote I now put to the vote the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670.

The draft resolution was adopted by 50 votes to 2, with 14 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on representatives who wish to explain their votes after the vote.

Mr. VALENZA (Italy): I wish to explain briefly the reasons behind our abstention on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670.

I do not think I need emphasize the importance that we attach to the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, particularly in its aspects related to the strengthening of the role, structure and functions of the United Nations, and to the Declaration on principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The Italian delegation proved its profound interest by making a substantial contribution to the drafting of the aforesaid Declaration at the twenty-fifth anniversary session. However, since then, we have found that the selective approach chosen by some delegations in implementing it has not taken into account all aspects of the Declaration, which, in our view, can bring about peace and security only if carefully implemented as a whole. We feel that the selection of aspects included in the body of the Declaration can only prove detrimental to the goal of the Declaration itself and, therefore, to the cause of strengthening international security.

However, we find highly commendable certain considerations included in the present draft concerning the necessity of full implementation of the Declaration, the strengthening of trends towards international détente, the desirability of participation by all States on a basis of equality in the settlement of international problems, the reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and independence of each State and the right to self-determination.
On the other hand, my delegation considers certain statements included in the draft resolution to be quite questionable, for even if they were inspired by good intentions, in our opinion, they fall short of their goal and tend to stress the controversial issues instead of the wish to compromise and find equitable solutions by peaceful means. These last elements, which contrast with the spirit of the United Nations Charter and, above all, with the Declaration itself, made it impossible for my delegation to vote in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670.

Mr. Hansen (Denmark): Ever since the adoption of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security by the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations this item has been on the agenda of all succeeding sessions and has given rise to additional resolutions elaborating on the general principles of the Declaration.

Denmark voted in favour of the Declaration and the consecutive resolutions, 2880 (XXVI) and 2993 (XXVII). Our positive vote was first of all an expression of our general support of the efforts designed to provide broad recognition by the international community of the responsibility of all countries to conduct their relations with other countries in accordance with the principles of the Charter, and in a way conducive to the strengthening of international security.

It is, however, no secret — it indeed was stated in our previous explanations of vote in 1971 and 1972 — that we voted in favour of the consecutive resolutions with mixed feelings, mainly because those resolutions not only repeated principles already laid down in the United Nations Charter and in the Declaration, but also tended to be somewhat selective in their concept.
With regard to the present draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670, not only is my declaration of the opinion that it reflects the same weaknesses as the previous ones, but it seems to us to be still more ambiguous in scope and in concept, and so even less fortunate. In this connexion it should be borne in mind that the widespread adherence to the Declaration was based upon a carefully balanced wording of compromise, reflecting, originally, quite differentiated viewpoints.

Accordingly, any additional elaboration or selective interpretation of the fundamental principles might tend to weaken the Declaration.

Generally, we maintain our doubts about the advisability of these annual attempts to improve on a widely accepted Declaration, thereby jeopardizing a desirable consensus on ways and means to attain peace and security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. We therefore abstained from voting on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670.
Mr. JACOVELLA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution that the Committee has just adopted on the strengthening of international security.

With regard to operative paragraph 5, we should like to stress that we supported it because the text is practically a repetition of that of the relevant paragraphs in resolutions 2880 (XXVI) and 2993 (XXVII), which were co-sponsored by Argentina.

However, I should like to state that the interpretation we give to the principles enunciated therein apply to the natural resources of each State; in no way do they oppose, contradict or undermine the principles also adopted at the present session of the General Assembly regarding natural resources shared between two or more States.

Mr. SCALABRE (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation associated itself with the almost unanimous view on the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security contained in resolution 2734 (XXV), when it was adopted three years ago. We were forced to abstain subsequently on resolutions 2880 (XXVI) and 2993 (XXVII), which added to this Declaration controversial notions whose conformity with the Charter is arguable. These notions, in our view, are not involved in international security in the strict sense which we want to attach to this term so as not to dilute its important value.

For the same reason, my delegation abstained on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670, which departs even further from the initial Declaration, to which we remain faithful.

Mr. LOPES DA FONSECA (Portugal): The draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670 contains provisions in both its preamble and its operative part that are unacceptable to my delegation.

These provisions are as follows: the reference to last year's resolution, which was not accepted by my country; the wording of operative paragraph 3; and the mention of links between the strengthening of international security and decolonization, as well as operative paragraph 7, with which we agree when rightly understood and implemented in a context and interpretation that is unprejudicial to my country -- a context and interpretation which regrettably does not prevail here.
In view of that, the Portuguese delegation cast a negative vote on the draft resolution.

Mr. STEWARD (South Africa): The unfortunate thing about the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670 — and this is true of its predecessor resolutions, 2880 (XXVI) and 2993 (XXVII) and, indeed, of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security itself, with none of which my delegation was able to associate itself — is that the favourable impression generated by its constructive elements, whose intention is admirable, is marred by the addition of controversial and contentious riders the objectives of which are suspect and the effect of which, far from strengthening international security, is in some respects to introduce a note of discord and to undermine the concept of the peaceful and negotiated settlement of differences.

The endorsement of détente and of friendly relations between States is, for example, a positive step and can be satisfactorily related to the Charter. The idea that all States should contribute to efforts to ensure peace and security and that peace and security should be based, inter alia, on respect for the sovereignty and independence of each State is also constructive. On the other hand, the singling out for critical attention of the domestic policy of one country, my own, is unwarranted and negative, and, together with several other unacceptable provisions, notably the reaffirmation of the Declaration with its tendentious reference in operative paragraph 3, accounts for my delegation's negative vote on the draft resolution.

The interpretation that some delegations would attach to the more controversial phrases used in the draft resolution is clear from their statements in the general debate on the item during the course of which critical allegations and inferences were made concerning the motives and the foreign and domestic conduct of my country which my delegation rejects as in contradiction with the factual situation.

Mr. FADHLI (Democratic Yemen): I should like to say that my delegation would have voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670 had it been present during the vote.
Mr. ZEMAN (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from French): My
delegation was unable to participate in the vote but I should like to say that had
we been here we would of course have supported the draft resolution in
document A/C.1/L.670, since we are one of the sponsors.

Mr. RASOLONDRAIBE (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): I have
no right to explain my vote since my delegation is a sponsor of the draft
resolution in document A/C.1/L.670, but I should like to say that had I been
here I would have voted in favour of it.

Mr. CLARK (Nigeria): Had I been here, I would have voted in favour
of the draft resolution because my delegation is a co-sponsor.

Mr. BEAVOGUI (Guinea) (interpretation from French): I was not here
when the vote was taken, but had I been I would have voted in favour.

Mr. GUVEN (Turkey) (interpretation from French): Had I been here,
I would have abstained in the vote on the draft resolution in document
A/C.1/L.670.
Mr. HESTIRI (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): If my delegation had been here at the time of the vote, since it is one of the sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670 it would have voted in favour.

Mr. ZAIH (Morocco) (interpretation from French): If my delegation had been here at the time of the vote, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670.

Mr. KAM ESUNGU IFER NGALAPIER (Zaire) (interpretation from French): If my delegation had been here at the time of the vote, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670.

Mr. TRAORE (Mali) (interpretation from French): If my delegation had been here at the time of the vote, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been requested to announce that had he been present the representative of Bhutan would have voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670. The representative of Belgium, had he been present, would have abstained.

I now declare that the Committee has concluded its consideration of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.670.
PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I have been informed that the co-sponsors of the
draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.669, relating to agenda items 30
and 31 on outer space, have made progress on the issue that is still
outstanding — namely, the question of the enlargement of the Committee on
the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. I should like to ask whether there is a
possibility that a revised text will be introduced this afternoon.

Mr. CHRISTIANI (Austria): Consultations on this question are still
going on. However, I am confident that complete agreement will be reached
very soon. I cannot be completely sure, but I would say that there is a
strong probability that a revised draft resolution will be submitted this
afternoon.

The CHAIRMAN: Since, as I understand it, the purpose of the revision
is to secure greater support for the draft resolution, I would suppose
that if the revised text can be introduced this afternoon it will also be
possible to put it to the vote immediately.

I would therefore suggest that, if there are no objections, the
meeting this afternoon should be scheduled for 4 o'clock in order to give the
co-sponsors time to complete their consultations and the Secretariat time to
circulate the document in all the working languages.

I would also inform members that consultations are still going on with
regard to item 32, the World Disarmament Conference. I hope that they will
be concluded this afternoon so that we may take a decision on the item
tomorrow. If that is the case we shall be able to conclude our work for this
session tomorrow, since I am informed that the representative of Cyprus
will be introducing his draft resolution on item 39 this afternoon and we shall
therefore be able to vote on it tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.