Twenty-eighth Session
FIRST COMMITTEE

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 13 December 1973, at 10.30 a.m.

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

- World Disarmament Conference (continued)
- Conclusion of the Committee's work

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73-71321/A
AGENDA ITEM 32 (continued)

WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE (A/C.1/L.673, L.674)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it a draft resolution, in document A/C.1/L.673, and a statement on the administrative and financial implications of that draft, in document A/C.1/L.674.

I now call on the representative of Mexico, who will introduce the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): When, six weeks ago, the First Committee started its debate on the item, "World Disarmament Conference", I stated on behalf of my delegation that we felt it most desirable that the General Assembly be provided with a subsidiary organ that would devote itself entirely to carrying out whatever activities might be deemed appropriate to facilitate the convening in due course of a World Disarmament Conference so prepared as to allow all States, and especially all of the nuclear Powers, to take part in it; and I added that if that subsidiary organ was to perform its functions effectively, we felt its composition and mandate should be such as to ensure the co-operation of all nuclear Powers. Lastly, I repeated what I had first stated the previous year at the last meeting of the twenty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly, namely:

"That co-operation ... can be offered ... either from within the Committee ... or else, should that be impossible, from outside the Committee. But we believe that will be essential for the nuclear Powers to be in a position to offer that co-operation on a footing of absolute equality." (A/FP.2116, p. 116)
In the light of what I have just recalled, it will be perfectly easy to understand why today, when the honour falls to me of officially submitting to the Committee the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673, co-sponsored by the delegations of Algeria, Argentina, India, Yugoslavia and Mexico, I should begin by announcing that that draft resolution, the outcome of laborious and persevering negotiations carried on by those delegations on behalf and in representation of the Group of non-aligned States, has already won the approval of the five nuclear-weapon States.
What is more, in view of the consultations which the President of the General Assembly has held with the chairman of all the regional groups, in accordance with the terms of operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, we feel that there is reason to believe that this draft resolution has also been approved by all the other States Members of the Organization that have examined it.

Therefore, we believe that consideration of this document could not begin under better auspices. Furthermore, since its text is free of ambiguous wording, I feel that, except on a very few points, all it requires is a brief review, not a detailed analysis.

In fact, the first five preambular paragraphs repeat, in identical terms, what the General Assembly has already stated either in its resolution 2833 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, or in resolution 2930 (XXVII) of 29 December 1972, or in both: namely, its awareness of the responsibility of the United Nations under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and for disarmament; the Assembly's conviction that all peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations; the Assembly's conviction that substantial progress in the field of disarmament can only be achieved by ensuring adequate conditions of security for all States and that all States should contribute to the adoption of measures for the achievement of that goal; and furthermore, the Assembly's belief that it is imperative that all States exert further efforts to adopt effective disarmament measures and, more particularly, nuclear disarmament.

The main idea contained in the next paragraph is also, to a certain extent, one that was inherited from the two earlier resolutions of the General Assembly to which I have just referred, in which it had already been felt that a world disarmament conference could promote the realization of the aims sought. The only novelty contained in the sixth preambular paragraph was the addition of two very brief phrases which sum up the general views expressed since the subject was first discussed, that is to say, that the world disarmament conference should be -- and I will quote the phrase -- "adequately prepared and convened at an appropriate time"; and the other phrase is that the
"co-operation of all nuclear Powers would considerably facilitate their attainment" -- that is, of these same goals.

The next three paragraphs of the preamble, as succinctly and tersely as possible, sum up the most pertinent background material, and the last of the preambular paragraphs is intended to highlight one of the main reasons for which it would be advisable for us immediately to undertake an immediate study of "the relevant existing conditions".

To turn now to the operative part, the terms of reference entrusted to the Ad Hoc Committee, whose creation is decided upon in this paragraph, are the very modest ones of examining "all the views and suggestions expressed by Governments on the convening of a world disarmament conference and related problems, including conditions for the realization of such a Conference, and to present, on the basis of consensus, a report to the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session;".

The only difference between this text and the wording of operative paragraph 2 of resolution 2930 (XXVII), except for the obvious reference to the twenty-ninth session instead of the twenty-eighth referred to in the earlier resolution, is the fact that today we specifically mention the fact that the term "related problems" included, as we felt was the case for the earlier resolution "conditions for the realization of such a Conference".
With regard to the membership of the Committee, in accordance with operative paragraph 2 it would be composed of the 40 States mentioned in that paragraph, which were nominated by the President of the General Assembly after prior consultation with the regional groups; and that paragraph provides -- may I mention incidentally that this is one of the most important new elements in the draft resolution -- that all the members designated to compose the Committee would be non-nuclear-weapon States.

Obviously, what I have just said does not mean that the nuclear-weapon States would be hindered in making valuable contributions and rendering assistance to the Committee; quite the contrary.

Paragraph 3 expressly invites the nuclear weapon States "to co-operate or maintain contact with the Committee." This clearly means that the degree and form of the contribution that each of them might desire or decide to make to the carrying out of the mandate of the Committee would depend solely and exclusively on the decisions which the States might arrive at in the full and free exercise of their sovereignty. Furthermore, the invitation is issued in the light of the understanding that "they will enjoy the same rights as the designated members of the Committee." Obviously, this means that for the consensus required in accordance with operative paragraph 1 for the approval of the report that the Committee would submit to the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session, the opinion of the nuclear Powers would have equal value with those of the designated members of the Committee.

The invitation in operative paragraph 4 to all States "to communicate as soon as possible to the Secretary-General, for transmission to the Ad Hoc Committee, any views and suggestions they may deem pertinent to present for the purpose" of the examination that the Committee would be carrying out is very similar to that contained in the 1971 resolution, which was not included in the 1972 resolution because, at that time, the replies that the Assembly had requested the previous year had just been received. It has, however, been felt appropriate to reiterate that invitation today, bearing in mind that only 34 of the (today) 135 Member States represented in the General Assembly communicated their opinions and suggestions to the Secretary-General in reply to the invitation issued in 1971 and, furthermore, the fact that even the relatively few States that did send in their views might today wish to bring up to date their earlier comments.
Finally, the last two operative paragraphs are basically the same as paragraphs 4 and 5 of resolution 2930 (XXVII). The addition in paragraph 5 of a specific mention of "preparation of summary records" is purely and simply for administrative and budgetary reasons.

The co-sponsors of the draft resolution would like to reiterate to the President of the General Assembly their high regard for the successful and absolutely impartial way in which he carried out the very delicate consultations which led to the nomination of the 40 Member States listed in paragraph 2. We should like also to address to you, Mr. Chairman, our sincere thanks for the spirit of understanding you have shown in agreeing to postpone consideration of this item as long as it was necessary to do so.

To conclude my presentation, I should like to stress the fact that the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673, co-sponsored by five delegations from the third world, will incidentally help to return to its origins the initiative that we are now considering, the deepest roots of which are to be found in the Conferences of Heads of State and Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Belgrade in 1961, in Cairo in 1964, and in resolution 2030 (XX), which the General Assembly adopted in 1965 on the basis of a draft resolution originally co-sponsored by 42 of these same non-aligned countries. If, as we hope, the Assembly now unanimously endorses our proposal, we shall be laying the foundations so that this noble undertaking will one day be brought to a successful culmination and so that, at the appropriate moment, and after the necessary preparation, a world disarmament conference may be convened that will be open to all States and in which an active part will be played by all nuclear Powers, since, as the preamble to the draft resolution states, such a world conference could serve as an important instrument for achieving the aims stated in the fifth preambular paragraph, namely, that it would lead to "the adoption of effective measures of disarmament and, more particularly, nuclear disarmament".
Mr. JAIN (India): The Ambassador of Mexico has most ably introduced the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673 and he has already pointed out that the draft resolution which is now before us is the result of very patient and carefully worked-out informal consultations. I am taking the floor primarily to express our heartfelt thanks -- and I am sure that in that the Committee would join me -- to Ambassador Garcia Robles, who took such tremendous initiative and worked hard consistently to ensure that this difficult exercise would come to a successful fruition, as it promises to do today in the Committee.

Secondly, in so far as operative paragraph 1 is concerned, where the question of "on the basis of consensus" is mentioned, it is just to clarify that the idea is that the recommendations would be based on consensus, and not the question of presenting a report as such.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now proceed to the vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673.

I shall first call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote before the vote.

Mr. HICKS (Canada): Last year, my delegation supported resolution 2930 (XXVII) with the explanation that Canada would be prepared to support a call of a world disarmament conference if the broadest participation, including that of all nuclear Powers, could be achieved.

We are going to vote for the present draft resolution, but, consistent with the views expressed last year, we have serious reservations about the sixth preambular paragraph, which we believe greatly understates the importance of the co-operation of nuclear Powers, which my delegation would consider indispensable to a successful conference.
My delegation has taken careful note of operative paragraph 1, which mandates a committee to be established only "to examine all the views and suggestions expressed by Governments on the convening of a world disarmament conference and related problems, including conditions for the realization of such Conference ...".

In view of operative paragraph 2, which specifically states that the Committee is to be made up of non-nuclear Powers, we believe it essential that all concerned be completely conscious of the fact that this committee is not a preparatory committee for a world disarmament conference. The Canadian Government considers that a preparatory committee, which must be established prior to the calling of a world disarmament conference, would not be likely to be effective unless it were to include all nuclear-weapons States as full participants.

With those reservations then, we shall support the draft resolution.

Mr. CHUANG (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Before the draft resolution on the world disarmament conference is put to a vote, the Chinese delegation would like to make the following comments.

First, the Chinese delegation has always held that in the present world situation, the key to the question of disarmament lies in the nuclear disarmament of the two super-Powers. If a world disarmament conference is to be held, clear objectives must be set and the necessary conditions must be created, so as to break the nuclear threat of the super-Powers and to ensure that the conference will be conducive to the realization of nuclear disarmament. Failing this, the aimless convening of any form of disarmament conference or its preparatory meeting will only suit the super-Powers' needs of deceiving the world's people by their empty talk about disarmament. It is better not to hold such a conference at all.

Secondly, what are the necessary conditions for the convening of a world disarmament conference? They are: all nuclear countries, particularly the Soviet Union and the United States, which possess the largest amount of nuclear weapons, must first of all undertake the unequivocal obligations that
at no time and in no circumstances will they be the first to use nuclear weapons, and they not only will not use nuclear weapons against each other, but, more importantly, will not use them against the non-nuclear countries; that they must withdraw from abroad all their armed forces, including nuclear missile forces, and dismantle all their military bases, including nuclear bases, on the territories of other countries. Only thus will it be possible to create the necessary conditions for all countries, big or small, to discuss and solve, on an equal footing and free from threat, the important questions of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and the reduction of conventional weapons.

Thirdly, the present draft resolution on a world disarmament conference was first proposed by Ambassador Hoveyda of Iran and, later, further efforts have been made, on that basis, by Mexico and other non-aligned countries. The task of the ad hoc committee to be established, according to the draft resolution, will be to examine all the views and suggestions expressed by Governments on the convening of a world disarmament conference, including conditions for preparing the convening of such a conference and other related problems.

The committee's report to the General Assembly will be on the basis of consensus. In the opinion of the Chinese delegation, in view of the fact that a certain super-Power tried hard to turn the Special Committee as proposed in resolution 2930 (XXVII) of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly into an organ which could be easily manipulated by it, and subsequently tried hard to turn the informal consultation of the members of the so-called "Special Committee", which had not been legally and formally constituted into a formal meeting of the Committee, it is obviously appropriate and necessary for the present draft resolution to include the aforesaid explicit provisions in its preamble and operative part.

Moreover, in the course of the consultations on the draft resolution, the representatives of the co-sponsors have made it clear that the ad hoc committee will not be a preparatory organ of the world disarmament conference. Therefore, any attempt to turn the ad hoc committee into a preparatory organ of the world disarmament conference will be in total violation of the letter and spirit of the resolution and is, therefore impermissible.
Fourthly, the Chinese delegation fully understands the good desire of many peace-loving and justice-upholding countries which oppose the super-Powers' armament race and thus demand their disarmament, and we are ready to work together with them to set the clear objectives and create the necessary conditions for promoting the convening of a world conference on genuine disarmament. The Chinese delegation agrees to maintain contact with the ad hoc committee and exchange views on the question of disarmament.

With the above statement, the Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.
Mr. NORBURY (United States of America): My delegation intends to vote in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673, which establishes the ad hoc committee to examine governmental views on the question of a world disarmament conference. We are able to do so because we understand that the draft resolution is acceptable to all five nuclear-weapon States as well as to the membership of this Committee generally, and because we believe it conforms to certain views that we have expressed in our consultations with interested delegations. Specifically we note that, as stated in operative paragraph 1, the ad hoc committee's mandate calls for the examination of views of Governments concerning a world disarmament conference, and not preparatory work for such a conference. In this connexion, the last paragraph of the preamble makes it very clear that there has been no decision to convene or to begin preparations for a world disarmament conference.

We should also like to subscribe to the view expressed by Ambassador Garcia Robles in his statement introducing the draft resolution that any consensus of the Committee will, in accordance with operative paragraphs 1 and 3, include the views of all five nuclear Powers. We note in this respect that operative paragraph 5 states that nuclear-weapon States will "enjoy the same rights as the designated members of the Committee".

With regard to the question of a world disarmament conference itself, the views of the United States have been stated on a number of occasions and need not be repeated now. I should only like to point out that our vote today should not be interpreted as a modification of these well-known views.

Finally, my delegation wishes to pay a tribute to those of our colleagues who have worked so hard over a long period of time to obtain general agreement on this difficult subject. The services performed by Ambassador Hoveyda of Iran are well known to all of us here and I know are universally appreciated. Ambassador Garcia Robles and his colleagues who are co-sponsoring the draft resolution before us today are also to be warmly congratulated for their patient efforts and the great care they took to carry out the consultations necessary to reach the broad agreement that will be recorded here today.
Mr. de CHEVIGNY (France) (interpretation from French): In the general debate held in this Committee a few weeks ago on the problems of disarmament, hardly a delegation failed to express its great disappointment at the results, or rather the lack of results, that marked the attempts undertaken in this field over the last few years. Many speakers expressed their regret that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament presented to the General Assembly this year a report devoid of any substance, thus admitting its impotence at a time when the arms race is continuing, perhaps more in the area of the further improvement of lethal weapons rather than of an increase in quantity. But does not this improvement entail an increasing financial burden to the detriment of social progress and aid for development, while the power, range and precision of weapons constantly increase their destructiveness and the threat that their very existence poses to the world?

In the face of this threat, what can be done by people who are peace-loving but who are also attached to their independence of action and who do not accept the idea of losing the latter because of their attachment to the former? The only thing left for them is to provide themselves with means of dissuasion. In doing so they can give their defence independence and effectiveness and ensure that they do not, when danger looms, become an easy prey doomed to slavery or destruction. It is in these conditions, as members know, that my country embarked on that nuclear effort for which some have reproached it without understanding that today's inactivity may provoke tomorrow's disasters. Our experience has been too painful in this regard, and it would be unpardonable for us not to have drawn the necessary lessons from the last two world wars, in the course of which we almost succumbed twice.

Is there then no other hope than armaments, the squandering of human, financial and technical resources in a sterile work of death, from which all that we can look forward to is to remain useless? After so much hesitation and useless discussion, it is time for a major undertaking to be set on foot that will proclaim to the world the gravity of a threat with which we are only too accustomed to living.
The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has not responded to the hopes placed in it. It has become bogged down in sterile studies of partial measures, and we have repeatedly denounced the ineffective nature of that activity. We must make a new effort in another direction and renew our conceptions and methods, since the ones that we have used so far have proved to be inadequate. We have always contended, for our part, that we were ready to welcome any serious attempt to find, for the vital problem of disarmament, an over-all solution leading to the genuine elimination of the means of destruction stockpiled in the world, and not to the consecration of a balance of armaments of such a magnitude that the peace which it strives to achieve may be compared to the false tranquillity of a town that is built near a slumbering volcano that is ready to erupt once again.

It is for this reason that the French Government welcomed the proposals on disarmament submitted by the Soviet Union on 1 July 1968, when the Treaty on Non-Proliferation was opened for signature, article 6 of which makes it incumbent on the signatories to continue in good faith negotiations on effective general disarmament.
Although we were not a signatory to that treaty, we approved this article and, for our part, we are ready to abide by it.

In our reply to the USSR, published in August 1968, my Government expressed its preference for a meeting of the five nuclear Powers with a view to studying the elimination of this weapon and its carriers. Such a meeting is what General de Gaulle had advocated since 1960. Unfortunately, this did not prove possible. That is why we gave our agreement to another Soviet proposal, once it had become concrete and precise by the inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly of the item entitled "World Disarmament Conference", and by the presentation of a draft resolution relating thereto.

The Permanent Representative of France, in a statement in the General Assembly on 18 November 1971, announced our support for this idea. Subsequently, France participated actively in the inquiry begun by the Secretary-General with a view to gathering suggestions and opinions of Member States in the convening of such a conference.

My delegation also voted in favour of resolution 2930 (XXVII) which, last year, set up a special committee for the same purpose -- an ad hoc committee. We did not stipulate any conditions to our participation in that committee's work, except that all nuclear Powers should participate, as the absence of one of them from the start of the undertaking would remove any chance of its success.

We are all aware of the difficulties which impeded the functioning of that committee. They did not change the position of my Government.

A new organization of that committee has been proposed in draft resolution A/C.1/L.673, which was born of the consultations undertaken, with his familiar skill and sagacity, by the representative of Mexico, Mr. Garcia Robles and, I should like to stress - as the representative of the United States has done -- with the assistance of some of his colleagues. I would mention particularly the role played in the search for a universally acceptable solution, by Mr. Hoveyda, the representative of Iran.

We hope that all the nuclear States will co-operate effectively with this new Committee in the examination of the views and suggestions presented concerning the convening of a World Disarmament Conference
according to the very flexible formula proposed in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. For our part, we are ready to undertake to follow this course resolutely, and we hope that all the other nuclear Powers will give a sense of responsibility and realism to the type of co-operation or contact which they intend to adopt, without which this co-operation and these contacts will lose all their point, value and significance.

My delegation will accordingly vote in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673 in the belief that it gives us a hope of getting closer to the goal to which we have always wished the efforts in the international community to be directed: the goal of disarmament.

Mr. ROYENDE (Iran) (interpretation from French): First of all, I should like to express my thanks to those representatives who have seen fit to mention the modest role that I played in the question before us. As I said at the outset of our debate on this item, my colleagues in the Special Committee entrusted me with conducting the unofficial consultations with the representatives of certain Powers that had not taken part in the composition of that Committee, and I stated then that I would carry out these consultations and inform all the members of the Special Committee of their progress. Therefore, I said that my role was an entirely unofficial one; I was a non-chairman of a non-committee carrying out non-consultations, and as such, at the request of his colleagues, submitted a non-report to the First Committee.

When the debate began on the basis of certain ideals that had been put forward, the representatives of those Powers indicated to me that, with certain reservations, they might be prepared to accept those ideals. However, at that moment I felt that my role as a non-chairman had come to an end and that I possessed no further mandate. Therefore, I believed that I should report back to the true parent of the idea of a World Disarmament Conference, that was to the group of non-aligned nations which, the previous year, had taken the initiative of submitting resolution 2930 (XXVII). I did so, putting before them all the information I had been able to gather.
I must say that the draft resolution before us today is remarkable for its perfect balance, and it is for this reason that I am very happy to be able to support it. I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the group of non-aligned States whose patient efforts have allowed us to achieve this result, and especially to the representatives of the five countries, co-sponsors of the draft resolution, -- and even more particularly, among them, to Mr. Garcia Robles of Mexico, whose patient efforts are known to all of us and whose profound knowledge in matters of disarmament is something that we all admire.

In conclusion, may I express the hope that this new Ad Hoc Committee will succeed in taking steps towards the goal that is so dear to the hearts of all men, which, as the representative of France has just reminded us, is the goal of true, general and controlled disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: May I take it that the Committee is now ready to proceed to a vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673?

May I also take it that the Committee is prepared to adopt this draft resolution unanimously?

The draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673 was adopted unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN: I call now on those representatives who wish to explain their votes after the vote, the first of whom is the representative of Brazil.

Mr. SARDEMBERG (Brazil): The delegation of Brazil is certainly appreciative of the efforts made by the co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673 for the purpose of preparing a text on a very important matter that has gained the unanimous support of the First Committee and, we hope, will also be adopted unanimously by the General Assembly.
My delegation wishes to congratulate the co-sponsors for their achievement which has demanded unusual patience and negotiating skills. We wish also to thank Ambassador Hoveyda of Iran for the strenuous efforts he has undertaken in order to reach a suitable compromise.

With regard to operative paragraph 2 of that draft, I wish to state the belief of my delegation that unfortunately the distribution of seats in the Ad Hoc Committee is not entirely balanced and, therefore, fails to conform to the principle established in the United Nations Charter regarding equitable geographical distribution. The distribution of seats envisaged in the draft resolution just adopted should be understood as a pragmatic arrangement, as it resulted from a compromise arrived at in consultation with representatives of all geographical groups. This distribution, however, will not be considered by my delegation as a valid precedent for the composition of any Committee that may in the future be established by the General Assembly on this or on any other question.

Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In connexion with the draft resolution adopted by the First Committee, which was submitted today by the delegations of Algeria, Argentina, India, Mexico and Yugoslavia on the question of a world disarmament conference, the Soviet delegation would like to make the following statement.

The question of the world disarmament conference, as is shown by the experience of the discussion of this question at the twenty-sixth session, twenty-seventh session and at this session of the General Assembly, is one of the most important and topical international questions.

The attention of the majority of States Members of the United Nations has been focused on this question. And this is shown by the fact that draft resolutions at all three sessions of the General Assembly were supported by an overwhelming majority, almost unanimously, by the States Members of the United Nations,
Today, in the First Committee, the draft resolution on this question was unanimously adopted. The Soviet delegation, representing a country which initiated this question, has every reason to be proud of the fact that this idea was unanimously supported by the United Nations and by all its Member States. Even the opponents of this idea, the opponents of the convening of a Conference, were not able to vote against it, either at past sessions or this session of the General Assembly, of course, with the exception of one delegation which abstained. This is shown, too, by the many statements on the part of many delegations in the discussion of this question in the First Committee and at the plenary of the General Assembly, in the course of the general debate, and at all three sessions of the General Assembly. The essence of what was said amounts to this, not only that theoretically should we study the question of the usefulness of disarmament and the convening of a world conference, but also that we should think in concrete terms of practical steps for preparing for the conference.

Indeed, in the period of United Nations existence, and particularly over the last years, there have been a great number of international conferences on the most varied items and subjects, and many conferences have been proposed on a number of matters. So why should we give preference to any other question, including environment, health, population, urban planning, and disregard the most important problem of the day -- that of disarmament. The fact that the idea of convening the conference, and that the resolution on it has been unanimously adopted by the United Nations, is a clear, striking and cogent piece of evidence of the fact that the world wants disarmament. The people have tired of the arms race and it is time, therefore, to give serious thought to preparing for the convening of a world conference.

In this regard we would express our gratitude to all non-aligned countries and for the initiative and active work on the part of the contact group which included the delegations of Algeria, Argentina, India, Mexico and Yugoslavia. At this session they exerted tremendous efforts to prepare a universally acceptable draft resolution. Under the leadership of Ambassador Garcia Rohles these efforts were crowned with success.
The draft resolution was submitted and symbolically the five co-sponsors of the draft resolution are representatives of non-aligned countries of the third world. Furthermore, no less symbolic is the fact that all the co-sponsors represent all the four main continents of the world: Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. This means that this proposal and the supporting of the idea of convening of the Conference is the voice of the whole world and no slanderous attacks against the Soviet Union on the part of the opponents of the conference can conceal or diminish the significance of this obvious and universally acknowledged fact.

I should like to pay a tribute to the efforts and work put in by the contact group appointed by the delegations and heads of delegations. At the same time, we consider it necessary to emphasize in particular the efforts undertaken by Ambassador Moeveda. He led this work brilliantly and in very difficult conditions, coming up against the stubborn resistance on the part of the opponents of the idea of the Conference and those who reflected the mood of the opponents in the Special Committee created by the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly. In spite of this he held eight unofficial meetings, as it were, a kind of unofficial Chairman of this Committee, and coped most brilliantly with this task. Of course, we always called him "Chairman" without adding the word "unofficial".

We considered that the Special Committee, appointed at the twenty-seventh session, by the President of the General Assembly, was brilliantly set up. And it could have worked, had it not been for the fact that it was blocked and sabotaged by the opponents of the idea of convening a disarmament conference. The fact that the resolution has now been adopted by the First Committee, and it included all the members of the Special Committee, is a confirmation of the fact that the Special Committee was set up on a well-thought-out, rational and sensible basis, taking into account, among others, the principle of equitable geographical distribution and representation and taking into account political factors. Today, the First Committee has confirmed all this.
As to the opponents of the conference, today they raise their voice in objection. One of them compared the problem of disarmament and participation in the work of the organs on disarmament, with people living on the slopes of a volcano. But experience shows that people living near a volcano take self-protection measures and take an active part in seeing to it that they are not victims of this natural calamity.
So why should those who draw this parallel with a volcano not take part in the attempt to find ways and means of saving mankind from the nuclear volcano, such as disarmament, real, practical nuclear and conventional disarmament? No, they prefer to stand aside in the role of critics. They refuse to take part in the work of United Nations bodies on disarmament. This is not the best possible position.

They also assert that this is the idea of the Soviet Union. It is time to understand that this is the idea of the world, of the United Nations, of the entire third world without exception. The initiative of the Soviet Union was taken at the twenty-seventh session, it is true. But it is now today and it is now the idea of the Assembly, of the United Nations, and it is time to stop saying that it is just the idea of the Soviet Union in order to cover up their slander against the Soviet Union. Those who are slandering the Soviet Union in connexion with this idea are slandering the entire world, the United Nations and the whole third world and non-aligned countries. This is the essence of the attacks on the Soviet Union in connexion with this question.

The second opponent to the idea of convening the Conference puts forward in essence his own idea, a thesis: Let others disarm, but my country will continue the arms race. No sensible, right-thinking person or Government that has a serious attitude towards disarmament can agree with such an approach: let others disarm but we shall continue arming ourselves. This approach is the kind that leads directly to the non-nuclear war and not to disarmament, and this is what we will be led to by those who are slandering the Soviet Union. In essence they are really slandering the United Nations, the whole world, the third world, and all those who are seriously in favour and who voted in favour of the idea of disarmament and the holding of a world disarmament conference.

This opponent to the Conference puts forth another idea: that the nuclear-weapon States should undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. But why only the first to use them? The Soviet Union put forward -- as is known by the whole world and by the 135 Members of the United Nations -- another broader, more convincing and more important idea which would save the world from nuclear war: that of the non-use of force in international relations and the permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Not first, second, tenth or one hundredth, but never -- the permanent prohibition of nuclear weapons; that is
our position and our answer to our critics and slanderers. Why should we be limited only to not using them first? Under conditions of war a pretext could always be found to be second in their use. We are against that. What is needed is to save the world from thermonuclear war and we are happy that this idea of ours was also supported by the overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations. It was supported by the third world.

Who voted against it? The representative who spoke today against the convening of a disarmament conference. With whom did he vote? With the enemies of the African people: South Africa and Portugal. This is the face of the one who is slandering us and the whole world and by it seeks to cover up his invidious position with regard to disarmament and the convening of a world disarmament conference. These are the real facts and they are well known, and no slander against the Soviet Union can cover up this invidious and ugly position.

Furthermore, this same opponent of the convening of the conference on disarmament is blocking discussion in the Security Council of the resolution of the General Assembly on the non-use of force in international relations and the permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. It is only because of that sabotage and blockade that the Security Council has until now been unable to consider this resolution of the General Assembly. Well, let them withdraw their blockade and sabotage, and the Security Council will adopt a decision on this question in accordance with the resolution of the General Assembly, a decision that will be in favour of peace. This would be a serious step towards ridding mankind of the nuclear threat and of the threat of the nuclear volcano erupting. Let those who draw a parallel between a volcano and nuclear catastrophe take note of this.

The third argument of those who oppose convening the Conference relates to the elimination of foreign bases on foreign territories. We firmly support that. We are in favour of the elimination of all foreign bases on the territory of other countries. However, let us face facts. When we discussed an extremely important question at this session of the General Assembly and there was a real opportunity for a decision to be taken to eliminate foreign bases in one region of the world and their withdrawal from foreign territory, this opponent, by behind-the-scenes intrigues, undermined the possibility of such a
decision. These are the real facts. Therefore, demagogic attacks against the Soviet Union cannot in any way justify those who oppose the convening of a world disarmament conference. Accordingly, those against holding the Conference and putting down their arms have in their statements today made this obvious to us all. It is therefore particularly necessary for us to concert our efforts in order to overcome, even this year, the resistance of the opponents and to see to it that the Ad Hoc Committee established by the General Assembly to prepare a world conference should get down to practical and effective work. We wish this Committee success with all our hearts.

We understand, of course, the imperfections of this draft resolution. However, we are happy that in support of it we find references to previous resolutions, and that the idea of the need for convening a world disarmament conference is once again confirmed. This is the most important point, and no small-minded considerations can conceal this fact. We consider this modest mandate, which has been assigned to the Ad Hoc Committee by the Assembly, as a real opportunity to study attentively, seriously and in depth the true mood and intentions of the whole world with regard to the idea of convening the conference and to getting down to practical work concerning it.
In any case, as far as the Soviet Union is concerned, I am sure that those who really have a serious attitude towards this idea will try to co-operate properly with the Ad Hoc Committee in the noble task entrusted to it by the General Assembly. The discussion on this question at this session has most convincingly demonstrated the unchallengeable fact that those who are against the idea of convening a world disarmament conference cannot break the will of the overwhelming majority of Members of the General Assembly and the peoples of the world.

The task of the Committee which has been set up is to seek and find ways to ensure, in the final analysis, practical preparations for the world conference.

We are profoundly convinced that the resolution just adopted by the First Committee, which will certainly be adopted by the General Assembly, will finally clear the way for practical work on preparations for the Conference; and it was on this basis that the Soviet delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution. We pay a tribute to its initiators and co-sponsors, as well as to Ambassador Novyidera, who did a great deal of work and whose activities in the difficult post of unofficial Chairman of an unofficial Special Committee over the course of a year have been reflected in this resolution.

As for the Soviet Union and its delegation, we will most actively co-operate with that Committee, and we are profoundly convinced that the Committee will perform its task in the period between the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth sessions of the General Assembly successfully and will submit a positive report on this subject to the twenty-ninth General Assembly session.
Mr. JAMIESON (United Kingdom): I shall confine myself to an explanation of vote -- and a brief one at that.

My delegation has willingly joined in the consensus adoption of the resolution in document A/C.1/L.673, and we should like at this stage to pay a very warm tribute to all those who were involved in its conception and its birth: to Ambassador Hoveyda, in the first place, for his long and patient work, and to Ambassador Garcia Robles and his colleagues, who carried on the good work.

I should like very briefly to recall my Government's attitude towards a world disarmament conference. In summary, we are, in principle, favourable to the idea, provided it is what its name implies: a conference in which all significant States, including the nuclear Powers, take part; and provided, therefore, that there is such participation at all stages of the preparation for a world disarmament conference. The resolution which we have adopted is compatible with these views.

We have noted, I might add, what the representative of Mexico said on behalf of the co-sponsors when he introduced the draft resolution, especially what he said in regard to operative paragraph 3 and its connexion with the consensus provision of operative paragraph 1.

Mr. MIGLIUOLO (Italy): My delegation is already on record in regard to the substantive issues related to the world disarmament conference and has actively taken part in the lengthy and constructive consultations held under the very able chairmanship of Ambassador Hoveyda of Iran. Therefore, I need hardly spend many words in explaining the voting position taken by my delegation this morning.

I should, however, like to reiterate in particular the following points. First, the Italian Government, in principle, has supported, and supports, the proposal to convene a world disarmament conference as indicated in General Assembly resolutions 2833 (XXVI) and 2930 (XXVII). Secondly, in our view,
such a conference could exert a useful and stimulating influence in enhancing the negotiations on disarmament, provided that it is generally supported by the Members of the United Nations, including all the nuclear Powers, and is "adequately prepared", as stated in the sixth preambular paragraph of the resolution we have just adopted -- prepared by a qualified and representative organ with full equality of rights and responsibilities for each of its participants. Thirdly, in this spirit, it is to be hoped that, in particular, operative paragraph 3 of the resolution unanimously adopted this morning will find a meaningful implementation.

May I be allowed in conclusion to express the deep appreciation of the Italian delegation to Ambassador Garcia Robles and the co-sponsors of the resolution in document A/C.1/L.673 for their constructive efforts as well as for their sense of realism.

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the explanations of vote after the vote.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish to congratulate the representative of Mexico and, through him, the other co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.673 on the result just achieved through the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution on the world disarmament conference. In these congratulations I wish to include the representative of Iran for the patient and devoted efforts which he exerted throughout the year and which proved so essential to the final draft.

CONCLUSION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

The CHAIRMAN: With the conclusion of agenda item 32 the substantive deliberations of the First Committee at the twenty-eighth session have now been concluded.

In 1973 the First Committee considered and completed, approximately on schedule, a total of 13 items, heard some 280 statements in 39 meetings of general debate, and produced 14 draft resolutions. On the first item on our agenda, "Reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor ...", the Committee heard 84 speakers in 11 meetings of general debate and produced the draft resolution deciding to convene the Third United
Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. This was an important and forward-looking step and an auspicious beginning to the work of the First Committee. The object of the Conference will be, in the ultimate analysis, to establish a rule of law for the oceans of the world, a new international régime encompassing a multitude of aspects, several of which are not covered by international regulation.

This year the First Committee had before it eight items relating to disarmament and the Indian Ocean. The Committee heard some 80 speakers in 17 meetings of general debate and produced a total of 11 draft resolutions on the subjects of the economic and social consequences of the arms race, the world disarmament conference, general and complete disarmament, napalm and other incendiary weapons, chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, the urgent need for the suspension of nuclear testing, the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

All these draft resolutions are of significance. Throughout the discussions and in all the draft resolutions, one thread was noticeable: the wish and the will of all nations, both large and small, to be actively involved in the question of disarmament. That responsibility has been both claimed and exercised by the United Nations in the disarmament deliberations of the First Committee. While recognizing the continuing need for the smaller negotiating body of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, the First Committee today asserted its belief that a world disarmament conference, adequately prepared and convened at an appropriate time, could promote progress in the field of disarmament and reach full agreement on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee.
On agenda item 41, the question of Korea, the Committee had the privilege this year of hearing the views of the delegations of both the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. For the first time, the Committee was able to welcome both delegations to its deliberations. On this item, 52 speakers addressed the Committee in nine meetings of general debate which was brought to a propitious conclusion in the form of a consensus. Without being over-rhetorical, I believe we can say that this consensus of the Committee marks an important milestone in the relationship of the United Nations to the two Koreas. It is my hope that we may have succeeded by our consensus in strengthening the determination of the two Koreas to seek a peaceful reunification of the country in accordance with the free agreed principles.

On the subject of Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, the Committee heard 26 speakers in six meetings of general debate and produced a draft resolution bearing on the generally respected and recognized Declaration of the twenty-fifth session.

The remaining questions of our agenda were items 30 and 31 concerning outer space. Here again, in an area of international agreements and regulations, we witnessed a determined effort by the international community to keep pace with unprecedented technological progress so as to ensure that this progress will serve the continuing peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of humanity.

I believe that sums up, as briefly I could do it, the major pertinent points of our deliberations during the past month.

Permit me now at this stage to express my thanks to each and every one who has made it easy for me to discharge the task of the Chair and confirm my belief in the usefulness of the work which we are privileged to perform. My gratitude goes first to all members of the Committee. Your courtesy and your unfailing assistance and co-operation have been a daily source of strength. I shall not mention names because although I know where to start, I would not know where to end. Let me just say that I have benefited immensely from those members who have felt a particular responsibility for bringing to this Committee initiatives, proposals and texts of draft resolutions. Such servants of the United Nations have, happily, been present in regard to each and every
agenda item of concern to us. It has been a particular gratification for me
to witness the continuing efforts to seek conciliation and the many instances
in which the Committee has achieved full agreement.

My particular thanks go to the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Rabetafika
and Mr. Mehdì, who were always ready to substitute for me and did so with
expected ability; and to our Rapporteur, whose succinct reports testify to
his superior skill.

To the Secretariat, I wish to express my deep appreciation. I thank my
old friend and colleague, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and
Security Council Affairs, Mr. Shevchenko, for his advice and guidance. The
Secretary of the Committee, Ambassador Banerjee, has continued the distinguished
service which his countryman and our late friend, Mr. Chacko, rendered to this
Committee for many years. Ambassador Banerjee's vast diplomatic experience
and wisdom have been a consistent source of comfort.

Mr. Murphy has assisted me with great circumspection and has greatly
facilitated my task. The same is true of Mr. Kuzbari and Mr. Henry. They
have all contributed significantly to the smooth conduct of our work.

I would also wish to mention in particular Mr. Hall, Mr. Björnerstedt,
Mr. Abdel-Ghani and Mr. Micu, who each in his own way has assisted the
Committee on the agenda items that particularly concerned them.

I wish to thank Mrs. Macedo and Mr. Aslaoui for their efficiency and
good work in order to smooth the work of the Chairman.

I owe my personal thanks to the editor of the verbatim records, Mr. Bove,
and to his assistant, Mrs. Teslenko, who brought order and, where humanly
possible, even style to my oral remarks before they were put into print.

Similarly, I wish to thank our two excellent Conference officers, as
well as the interpreters and translators who have performed their duties with
great talent and diligence. If, through the endless mixture of formal and
informal meetings, we may have taxed you unduly, you should know that but
for your talent, we should still be here long after Christmas.
I should like finally to express, on behalf of members of the Committee and on my own behalf, our gratitude to all members of the Secretariat, whatever their jobs, who have facilitated our work.

Allow me also to express especial thanks to members of my own mission and delegation. Because of their dedication, it has been possible for me to indulge in the chairmanship of this Committee.

I shall now call upon those representatives who have expressed the wish to speak at this stage of our proceedings. I call on the Chairman of the African Group, Ambassador Diallo of Niger.

Mr. DIALLO (Niger) (interpretation from French): The honour has fallen to me in the First Committee, as Chairman of the African Group for the month of December, to express in a few words, Sir, our feelings of profound gratitude and our congratulations to you for having allowed us, under the best possible conditions, to conclude our work successfully.

The atmosphere of détente in which our work took place to the satisfaction of the majority of members, became even more tangible, thanks to your firm but always courteous, methodical and effective chairmanship.

We cannot say that in this Committee we have done any spectacular work. This may be true. But in the field of disarmament and international security, progress was made in that we have kept alive and reinforced the interests of Member States in these problems on which world peace depends, and we have also reaffirmed our collective and individual responsibilities; and furthermore, that we have stated that we would continue to work, bearing in mind the community of our interests and our attachment to the Principles that underlie our Charter. And thus, Sir, the First Committee could not have been better inspired than to have elected you Chairman. Your great talents as a negotiator, your long diplomatic background and your many abilities as a statesman have allowed us to conclude our work within the timetable.
Through you, Sir, I would also like to address our thanks to your Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Rabetafika of Madagascar and Ambassador Mehdi of Pakistan; to our Rapporteur, Mr. de Soto of Peru; the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Shevchenko; the Secretary of the Committee, Ambassador Banerjee; the members of the Secretariat, the loyal interpreters, thanks to whom we were able to understand one another; the translators, the documents officers, and to all the visible and invisible members of the Organization that have allowed us to achieve our targets.
The CHAIRMAN: I thank Mr. Diallo for the generous remarks he addressed to me and to the other officers of the Committee.

I now call upon the representative of Lebanon, as Chairman of the Asian group.

Mr. GHORRA (Lebanon): Another marathon session of this Committee has come to an end. Although our work has been overshadowed at various stages by the grave developments in the Middle East and their aftermath, this Committee has nevertheless performed its tasks with diligence. It may be that the results of our deliberations have not been, on the whole, very spectacular; yet they proved to be useful and constructive and they contributed to our continuing search for solutions to most difficult problems.

The Committee was able to complete the necessary preparations for the Conference on the Law of the Sea, which is already under way in another forum. As a result of long and arduous discussions, the Committee successfully concluded its work on this item and now the laws of the sea are sailing, although in deep and turbulent waters, towards the attainment of the objectives set for the conference.

Our Committee has also adopted significant draft resolutions on various aspects of the strengthening of international security, the peaceful uses of outer space and disarmament, as well as on Korea. Many of our decisions may not be final in themselves as far as their over-all objectives are concerned, but they signify important steps forward in our constant efforts to promote international détente and to widen and deepen our co-operation in the strengthening of international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman, it was thanks to your wise and dynamic leadership that we were able to complete the discussion of all the items on our agenda and to reach positive agreements upon them. Your long diplomatic experience and mastery of the rules of procedure have left their positive imprint on the achievements of this session. In like manner, your courtesy, coupled with skill in conducting negotiations, and your promptness, efficiency and decisiveness, have earned you the respect and admiration of all delegations. The trust that was placed in you by the Committee at the start of this session
in unanimously electing you its Chairman has been confirmed by the high esteem in which you are now held, if such additional confirmation were at all necessary. To you, Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure and privilege to express these views and sentiments, not only on behalf of the Lebanese delegation but on behalf of the entire group of delegations of the Asian States.

I wish also to seize this opportunity to express on their behalf our deep appreciation of the splendid performance of the two Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, our good friends Mr. Rabetafika of Madagascar and Mr. Mehdi of Pakistan. Similar thanks are extended to Mr. de Soto of Peru, who has served as a diligent Rapporteur, to Mr. Shevchenko, the able Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, and Mr. Banerjee, whom we welcome to the United Nations.

Our gratitude is also extended to their assistants, as well as to the staff of the Committee: the conference officers, documents officers, press writers, précis writers, our hard-working interpreters and other members of the Secretariat, both seen and unseen, who have facilitated our task.

As we approach the holiday season, I wish to close my statement with a message of happiness and good cheer to you, Mr. Chairman, and the other officers of the Committee, to the members of the Secretariat and to all delegations, extending to all our best greetings for a happy new year.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Mr. Ghorra for his very generous statements addressed to the other officers of the Committee and myself.

I now call upon the Chairman of the group of Eastern European States, the representative of Bulgaria.

Mr. GROZEV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from Russian): The honour has fallen to me to convey to you, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the delegations of Eastern European Countries and Cuba, our sincere congratulations upon the successful conclusion of the work of the First Committee. We should like to express to you our gratitude and thanks for the great skill, tact and wisdom with which you have conducted our proceedings and led the work of our Committee to its successful conclusion.
We should like also to express our gratitude and satisfaction for the contribution made to the successful conclusion of our work by the two Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, the permanent representative of Madagascar, Mr. Rabetafika, Mr. Mehdi of Pakistan, and also to the Committee's Rapporteur, Mr. de Soto of Peru.

We should like to extend the same expressions of gratitude and thanks to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Comrade Shevchenko, to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Banerjee, to the interpreters, verbatim reporters, secretaries and other members of the Secretariat who by their tireless toil and skill have done so much to assist in the successful performance of our tasks.

The First (Political) Committee, as one of the most important organs of the General Assembly, has had as one of its principal tasks that of promoting the expansion and strengthening of the positive trends in international developments which are leading to the establishment of durable peace and security throughout the world. The task of our Committee this year was greatly facilitated by the positive changes which have occurred in international relations. The adoption of a new draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security was yet another expression of satisfaction at the détente which has developed in international relations and we very much hope -- indeed we are convinced -- that it will spread to embrace the whole world. We are convinced that the draft resolution reflects the determination of the vast majority of Member States of the United Nations to continue to make efforts in the future to attain further progress in the strengthening of international peace and security.

The adoption of the draft resolution on the continuation of work on the preparation for the convening of a world disarmament conference has been undertaken by our Committee and constitutes a serious contribution towards efforts to add military détente to political détente. We hope that the Ad Hoc Committee will be able, in the near future, to work normally in order to accelerate the holding of this extremely important international meeting.
We would once again express our hope that all the nuclear States permanent members of the Security Council will find appropriate ways and means of co-operating fully with the Committee.
Our delegation once again would like to indicate the important positive fact of the inclusion on the agenda of the Committee and the General Assembly of the consideration of the Korean question, which was debated for the first time in the presence of a responsible delegation from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The dissolution of the so-called United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea clears the ground for the solution of other questions which have been impeding the peaceful unification of Korea. Important decisions were also taken in the realm of the peaceful use of the seas and of outer space.

Now, at a time when the first stage of the Third Conference on the Law of the Sea has already begun, we would like to hope that by our combined efforts, we will find solutions acceptable to all countries for the fundamental problems of the law of the sea, for the good of all mankind and in the interests of peace and international co-operation.

It is neither possible nor necessary for me to comment on all the resolutions adopted at this session of the Assembly by the First Committee. But what we have said so far fully suffices to warrant describing our work this year as successful and as having met the requirements with which we have been confronted. Once again I should like to stress that in the achievement of this progress a great contribution has been made by you, Mr. Chairman.

To you, to the officers of the Committee, to the representatives of the Secretariat, and to all my colleagues, I should like to wish good health, success and happiness on the occasion of the approaching New Year.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Groznev for the generous remarks he addressed to the officers of the Committee and to myself.

I now call upon the representative of Argentina, Mr. Molteni, as Chairman of the Latin American group.
Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, my delegation has the privilege, on behalf of Latin America, to extend to you our congratulations for the efficient and competent way in which you have presided over the work of our Committee. This allowed us to attain the concrete results of our negotiations which you yourself summed up to us today.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the remarks that delegations have already made regarding our appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, stressing your personal and diplomatic qualifications.

Thus, too, I should like to express our appreciation to both Vice-Chairmen, the Ambassadors of Madagascar and Pakistan, and also to our Rapporteur, Mr. de Soto, of Peru. I should also like to add our congratulations and thanks to the members of the Secretariat which have so effectively and efficiently co-operated with us in our work and made our tasks easier. Our appreciation must also go to the interpreters and other assistants of the Committee which have indefatigably co-operated with us.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Mr. Molteni for the generous remarks that he addressed to the officers of the Committee and myself.

I give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany as Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. GEHLHOFF (Federal Republic of Germany): The First Committee this year again has carried out a great amount of work highly important to the peoples of our world. Mr. Chairman, it was very impressive to listen to the summary you just gave on the meetings of this Committee. It is a privilege and a pleasure for me to extend to you, on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, our sincere thanks for the excellent work you have done, during this year's session, as Chairman of the First Committee.

We all know how intricate this task can be and indeed has been at times. All the more so, my colleagues and I admired the exemplary manner in which you presided over our meetings. You did so with expertise, impartiality and, last but not least, a high degree of efficiency. Mr. Chairman, in the resoluteness you displayed, you have been, if you will allow me to say so, the complete opposite of your famous compatriot Hamlet.
Although the countries represented in our Group were not always in a position to agree to the resolutions adopted by the First Committee, they felt that the discussions in the Committee were particularly constructive and useful. That we succeeded in bringing our work to a good conclusion is to a large extent due to your personal achievements, Mr. Chairman.

We are also indebted to our two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Rabetafika of Madagascar and Mr. Mehdı of Pakistan; to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Shevchenko; to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Banerjee; to the Rapporteur, Mr. de Soto of Peru, as well as to the entire staff of the Secretariat, for their valuable service which greatly contributed to the positive outcome of our work. I wish to express to all of them our deep gratitude.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Gehlhoff for the generous remarks that he addressed to the officers of the Committee and to myself.

I give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. ABDUL-LATEEF (United Arab Emirates): Since the beginning of history, peace has been regarded as a blessing, and its opposite, war, as a scourge. Yet, it is only since the end of the Middle Ages that philosophers and statesmen have reflected systematically on the problem of peace. Attempts to establish worldwide international peace securely, through deliberated political action, had to wait until the idea of finding an international organization within the scope of which the maintenance of the international peace and security can be achieved.

That idea crystallized and gave birth to what we now know as the United Nations, whose Charter begins with the declaration that the people of the United Nations are determined "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war"; and Article 1 places the maintenance of international peace and security first among the purposes of the Organization, followed by the development of "friendly relations among nations" and the achievement of "international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character". In the long run the secondary purposes may be more important than the first, but it is only through peace that the United Nations can function and then achieve its secondary purposes in order to reach that main goal of the United Nations, namely peace and security.
We find ourselves obliged to refer to the disarmament question since the former is a direct effect of the latter. There is another factor inherently linked with both peace and security and disarmament, which cannot be ignored. It relates to the existence of millions of peoples who are still under colonial or foreign rule. They are denied the enjoyment of their inalienable rights and the exercise of the right of self-determination. No international peace and security can be achieved without the full participation of all peoples of the world in this endeavour, under conditions of freedom and equality to all, without any exceptions.

Realizing the importance of the problems in maintaining peace and security in this wider scope, my delegation, in its capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group, would like, in the name of all Arab countries, to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the officers of the Committee, for your tireless and significant contribution to the achievement of the tasks entrusted to this Committee. The dynamism and the flexibility with which you have been presiding over the First Committee, and the manner in which you have conducted its work, reflects the mood and seriousness of the struggle we are leading here to reach the goals of peace and security for the benefit of mankind.

In reiterating our profound thanks, let me express to you, Mr. Chairman, our sincere and best wishes.
The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for his very generous remarks about the Bureau and myself. I call on the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Mehdi.

Mr. MEHDI (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, I wish to thank you for the kind sentiments that you expressed with regard to my modest role. In all the years that it has been my privilege to know you, I have never known you to exaggerate, except on this occasion.

I was able at times to substitute for you in the Chair, but not with respect to ability. Your standard of performance cannot be easily achieved, and it will long be remembered and emulated. However, I am deeply touched by what you said about me.

On a personal note, I wish to say that the opportunity to work in close cooperation with you has been a real experience for me. I have derived inspiration from your devotion and your contribution to the ideals that we all cherish -- from your guidance, from your wisdom and from your tact. Your deeds and words indeed have been a great credit to you and to the country that you have the honour to represent. I wish most sincerely to thank you for the understanding and cooperation that you have extended to me in the discharge of my duties.

I also wish to offer my gratitude to my very able colleagues, Mr. Rabetafika and Mr. de Soto, for the courtesy they showed me. They in their own right so very ably discharged their own onerous duties.

Each member of the Secretariat at all times gave me wise counsel and help, for which I am most grateful.

Above all, I wish to offer my heartfelt thanks to the members of this Committee for their understanding, patience and, most particularly, their indulgence.

In closing, I should like to thank the representatives of Niger, Lebanon, Bulgaria, Argentina and the Federal Republic of Germany, who, speaking in their capacity as Chairmen of their respective regional groups, expressed very kind sentiments to me and to my colleagues on the Bureau.
The CHAIRMAN: I thank Mr. Mehdi for his personal and generous remarks addressed to me.

I call on the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Rabetafika.

Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): I have little to add following the statement of my colleague, Mr. Mehdi of Pakistan, and also the statements made by the Chairman of the African group on behalf of the African members of the First Committee. However, I feel that personally I should pay a tribute to you, Mr. Chairman, for the way in which you made it easy for the members of the Bureau, who were elected by the First Committee, to assist you.

I wish to say that under your very skilful guidance -- and I believe that Mr. Mehdi will agree with me -- we, the two Vice-Chairmen, had, if one might say it, the best part of the duties. That is a tribute that we pay to your qualities, but it is also a tribute that we pay to the trust which the First Committee placed first and foremost in you. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that you will not be staying with us much longer here in New York. I must say that the years that we have spent with you and during which we have co-operated very closely, both in the First Committee and in other committees, I shall retain as a very dear memory and as a very valuable personal experience.

I should like also to thank most sincerely the members of the Secretariat, who, when I had to take your place, guided me in performing my duties, and in particular, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Shevchenko, Ambassador Banerjee, whom we know very well and with whom I worked elsewhere, Mr. Murphy, who always sat behind me to remind me of what I had to do, as well as the interpreters, the secretaries at our meetings, the précis-writers, the verbatim reporters and all the members of the Secretariat who made it easier for me to perform the duties that you entrusted to me when you were called upon to perform other duties outside the First Committee.

Finally, I should like to thank the representatives of the regional groups and of other groups for the very kind and generous words that they addressed to me. I do not believe that I deserve these remarks for they should rather be addressed to you, Mr. Chairman, and I shall accept them in a collective sense. Therefore my thanks must go to the Ambassador of Niger, to the
Ambassador of Lebanon, to the Ambassador of Bulgaria, to the representative of Argentina, to the representative of the United Arab Emirates and to the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany.

In conclusion, I should like, Mr. Chairman, to offer you my warmest personal good wishes on your next post and my best wishes for the new year.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Rabetafika for his personal and generous remarks.

I call on the Rapporteur, Mr. de Soto.

Mr. de SOTO (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like very sincerely to thank the Chairman of the regional groups and the other speakers who very generously referred to me in their statements. To serve as a member of the Bureau of the First Committee, with the members of this Committee, with the colleagues on my Bureau, and particularly with you, Mr. Chairman, has been an experience that has enriched me personally, and I should like to thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Rapporteur for his generous remarks.

I should like now on behalf of the Bureau, the members of the Secretariat and on my own behalf, to thank all the representatives who have spoken. The remarks, all too generous, that have been addressed to me personally, have moved me deeply. I have to admit that though I know that the words were unmerited and generous, I agree, nevertheless, with Adlai Stevenson when he once said that he did not mind a little praise provided that it was fulsome. I take them as another testimony of the co-operative atmosphere in which we have carried out our deliberations.
I should like to make one brief final remark. We are living in a time of new departures. To seek a consensus of basic values is therefore our primary obligation. This task is not only more difficult, but truly more important than ever before in the history of mankind.

On entering into new areas we would be well advised to keep in mind and apply the norms of the Charter in our search for trust, co-operation and international harmony. This world Organization is essential for many reasons. Speaking as I do in the First Committee, may I single out two fields in which the United Nations is required: in the search for the greater security of its members and for the extension of the range of tasks that can be carried out in common. In both fields we made some progress.

To achieve these aims we need, in the larger perspective, as one of my quite realistic friends said recently, to supplement the balance of power politics with a gradual evolution of world order politics. Limited though our results may appear, they have, I believe, been in that direction.

We are faced with the human task of extending the area of our compassion from our birthplace and our region to encompass the community here represented -- indeed, to make it a true community. In this process we should not lapse into cynicism about our failures, but take comfort from our daily working together -- in itself, a historic revolution of the century. Through our daily endeavours, through the development of mutual understanding, through the refining of techniques and common practices, marked as they must be both by our failures and our strength, we may be shaping the tools and attitudes essential for moving towards a genuine international organization. Happily, this remains my belief. And if I hear no objection, I shall consider it the belief commonly shared.

On this confident note, then, the First Committee of the twenty-eighth session has now concluded its mandate. I extend season's greetings to you all and wish you a Happy New Year.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.