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Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace: report
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1. Mr. ENE (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): The
problems of disarmament occupy a prominent place among
the basic concerns of the United Nations. They are always
timely and are of vital importance to the achievement of
genuine security and lasting peace in the world.

2. The Romanian delegation will set forth its position later
on the entire group of problems connected with disarma-
ment, on the state of the negotiations and also on the
direction in which, in our view, we ought to address our
efforts in this field.

3. For the moment, we should like to dwell on only the
point concerning economic and social consequences of the
armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world
peace and security. And this is not only because at its very
origin there lies an initiative of the Romanian Government,
taken three years ago, although that explains why we have a
particular interest in this question. In our view, permanent
attention should be paid to this subject so as to create a
better understanding, among Governments and on the part
of public opinion, of the gravity of the dangers involved for
international peace and security and the economic and
social development of all nations of the continuous
acceleration of the arms race and particularly the massive
stockpiling of nuclear weapons.

4. Emphasis on the frightening scale of the arms race and
the heavy burden it imposes on all nations should, we
believe, be the point of departure for the efforts required
by the United Nations and all Governments, in order,
without delay, to secure the adoption of effective measures
that will halt the arms race and lead to disarmament,
especially nuclear disarmament.

5. In the light of what I have just said, the debates in our
Organization aimed at giving new impetus to the nego-
tiations on disarmament reveal their great importance,
indeed their indispensability to the cause of international
peace and security for the future of human civilization.

6. While discussions and speeches have gone on year after
year, the arms race, particularly in the nuclear field, has

continued at a constantly accelerated speed. The arsenals of the most modern weapons of ever greater destructive capacity grow bigger and bigger, while the military budgets of all States have continued to expand.

7. The partial agreements so far achieved are far from having made any practical contribution to the strengthening of international peace, the solution of the most urgent problems of disarmament or the removal of the heavy burden that the arms race and military expenditures impose on the peoples of the world. Here it would be well to recall certain conclusions in the Secretary-General's report on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and military expenditures, submitted to the General Assembly two years ago.¹ Those conclusions have been confirmed by subsequent developments and are certainly as apposite today as they were then.

8. We are witnessing a continuous process of qualitative perfection of nuclear weapons which has as its consequence the accumulation of stockpiles possessing an infinitely greater destructive capacity than that of all other weapons combined. The principal Powers behind the arms race are in a permanent state of competition to acquire not only quantitative but above all qualitative advantages. The arms race has thus become, basically, a technological race.

9. The material resources being consumed reach astronomical proportions. According to the Secretary-General's report, the total amount spent on armaments rose to \$200,000 million in 1970. Today it has reached approximately \$225,000 million. The enormous resources squandered for military purposes are resources that have been taken away from the development and the welfare of nations.

10. The poverty and hardships from which a great part of the world suffers have become worse, and the gap between the developing and the developed nations grows wider. As the Secretary-General emphasized in paragraph 107 of his report: It would take only a 5 per cent shift of current expenditures on arms to development to make it possible to approach the official targets for aid in the Second United Nations Development Decade.

11. Although the arms race has shown a continuous acceleration, the degree of security in the world has not shown any parallel increase; on the contrary, it has diminished.

12. If we can speak today of prospects for a process of détente, for understanding and co-operation among peoples, it is certainly not because of the existence and growth of military arsenals which, on the contrary, engender distrust and represent a constant threat to peace. At the root of this process lie numerous other factors: the social revolution that has brought about profound changes in society, the technological and scientific revolution, and the will of all peoples to live in an atmosphere of peace, understanding and co-operation and their determined efforts to do so.

13. In our view, all these conclusions represent a particularly important contribution to the direction nego-

tiations on disarmament must take. In this regard, one conclusion in paragraph 115 of the report is of signal importance, namely that "The military expenditures which cast the greatest shadow over the world are those of the major Powers, which between them account for the bulk of all such spending." Hence the first natural conclusion of the report, in paragraph 120, that "A substantial reduction in the military expenditures of all countries, particularly of those whose military expenditures are highest, should be brought about as soon as possible. The sooner concrete measures of disarmament, particularly of nuclear disarmament, are achieved, and the arms race is thereby halted and reversed, the faster will be the progress towards the goal of general and complete disarmament."

14. We must stress the fact that, in resolution 2831 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, the General Assembly recommended that note be taken of these conclusions in the negotiations on disarmament, but that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has not paid adequate attention to the recommendations which referred specifically to it.

15. The Romanian delegation considers that the time has now arrived for the United Nations to tackle the problem of the consequences of the arms race on international peace and security with determination and also to assess their effect on the development of nations and to strengthen its own capacity for action in the field of disarmament and to end the immobility of these negotiations.

16. As we have stressed on other occasions, Romania is in favour of the adoption and implementation of measures to put an end to the arms race, to end the production of armaments, particularly nuclear weapons, and to freeze and gradually reduce military budgets, beginning with the budgets of the heavily armed great Powers, on the basis of a specific programme.

17. This approach is also based on the report on disarmament and development prepared by a group of experts under the chairmanship of Mrs. Myrdal, where it is stated:

"One measure which might help the transition from partial measures to general and complete disarmament would be an agreement to limit and reduce military budgets. Without comprehensive over-all economic limitations of this kind, arms limitation agreements expressed in terms of numbers of specific types of weapons cannot prevent an arms race in the form of expenditure on the development and production of entirely new kinds of weapons not covered by existing agreements. Because of that, the question of budgetary limitations deserves serious further study."²

18. We believe that the implementation of such measures would create a solid obstacle to the arms race and free enormous financial, material, and human resources which could then be directed towards peaceful construction and the raising of standards of living in all countries, the reduction of the gap between the developed and the developing nations and in general towards a solution of other problems on which the achievement by mankind of progress and civilization depends.

¹ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.72.IX.16.

² *Idem*, Sales No. E.73.IX.1, para. 10.

19. Recently the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, in its political declaration, once again stressed the enormous contribution that nuclear technology used for peaceful purposes and the liberation of resources resulting from disarmament could make to the welfare of all peoples and to the economic and social development of the countries of the third world.

20. According to the views of the Romanian Government, the United Nations has an enormous responsibility in the eyes of all people to contribute to stemming the arms race and to reducing military expenditures.

21. We are convinced that constant awareness of and a continuation of the study of the effects of the arms race and military budgets, particularly in the nuclear field, will to a large extent facilitate progress in the negotiations on disarmament in general and the achievement of agreements on the subject.

22. It is for these reasons that we attach enormous importance to the recommendations contained in paragraph 120 of the report of the Secretary-General on the consequences of the arms race and of military expenditures, which states:

“In order to draw the attention of the Governments and peoples of the world to the direction the arms race is taking, the Secretary-General should keep the facts under periodic review.”

It was that recommendation that the General Assembly endorsed in its resolution 2831 (XXVI), when it decided to retain this question constantly on its agenda and was later reiterated in the report on disarmament and development that I have just cited.

23. We believe that any assessment of the consequences of the arms race should stress the study of the effect on nuclear weapons, since they represent the most dynamic and dangerous component of the arms race.

24. At the same time, as I have already stated, it is imperative that pride of place among the concerns of the United Nations and its family of organizations be given to measures to stem the arms race, particularly in the nuclear field, including the identification of the most appropriate ways and means of tackling the problems of freezing and reducing military budgets, beginning with those of the great, powerfully armed nations.

25. To go on to effective measures and to the achievement of effective progress in the field of disarmament, we believe, calls for a persevering search for solutions and modalities. The Romanian delegation is ready to contribute as best it can, with other delegations concerned, to the implementation of measures that will eliminate the heavy burden and the dangers endured by mankind because of the arms race.

26. Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (*interpretation from Russian*): Mr. Chairman, I should like to begin by congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee and also the Vice-Chairmen, the representatives of Madagascar and Pakistan.

27. In today's statement my delegation would like to refer to the question of convening a world disarmament conference. This session of the General Assembly is continuing its active discussion of this matter, which was introduced upon the proposal of the Government of the Soviet Union. In the course of the general discussion, it again emerged clearly that there was great interest on the part of the overwhelming majority of States Members in the convening of a world disarmament conference. Speaking in favour of such a broad forum, its advocates were guided by the noble purposes of strengthening international peace and security and progress in the cause of general and complete disarmament in the interests of the whole of mankind.

28. Once again the heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries categorically expressed themselves in favour of the speedy holding of a world disarmament conference, and that demonstrates the interest of these countries in taking effective measures in the field of restraining the arms race and, in the final analysis, of disarmament itself, which is so essential for the creation of more favourable conditions for their economic and social progress. The Mongolian People's Republic, like other socialist countries, has complete sympathy with and respect for this realistic position of the non-aligned countries.

29. We are convinced that the present world situation is favourable to the successful convening of a world disarmament conference. At the same time, the holding of the conference itself would promote a further improvement in the international climate. The easing of international tension can and must be strengthened and supplemented by concrete disarmament measures.

30. As we know, the Mongolian People's Republic has from the very beginning welcomed and wholeheartedly supported the proposal for convening a world disarmament conference. In a letter from the Foreign Minister of the Mongolian People's Republic, Mr. Rinchin, dated 30 August 1972 and addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and also in the statements of our representatives on this subject in this Committee, the position of our Government was set forth in detail with regard to the purposes and tasks of a world disarmament conference and also our views on the practical aspects of convening such a conference. In particular, this letter stressed that the fundamental task of a world disarmament conference is the combining and intensifying of the efforts of all States of the world in order to achieve substantial progress in disarmament.

31. Therefore, in my statement today I shall confine myself to just a few remarks with regard to the existing state of affairs. We should first of all like to point out that the need for holding a disarmament conference with the participation of all States of the world is something that is constantly growing for a simple reason, that is, that in spite of the important partial measures which have already been achieved the arms race is still going on and, in circumstances where hotbeds of tension continue to survive, and in places where the atmosphere is artificially being exacerbated, States to one extent or another are involved and drawn into the orbit of this dangerous race, some in spite of their own will.

32. We should draw attention also to the fact that in such meetings and assemblies, as the General Assembly of the United Nations or the Disarmament Committee, perceptible progress has not recently been observed in resolving the urgent problems of disarmament. By saying this I in no way intend to diminish the role of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which has shown itself to be a useful and effective instrument for harmonizing measures in this vital area. I should just like to stress that one of the fundamental reasons for the absence of positive achievements in disarmament lies in the refusal of certain nuclear Powers to take part in talks, and even more in the actual sabotaging by some of them of the results which have already been obtained in this area. Similar circumstances place before the world community the task of intensifying efforts to find new effective ways and means of resolving the topical problems of disarmament and the strengthening of international security. It is precisely such purposes as these that would be served by the convening of a world disarmament conference with the participation of all States, great and small, nuclear and non-nuclear. I think it is gratuitous here, in fact, to stress the decisive role of active and constructive participation of all the nuclear Powers in such a meeting in order to ensure that it achieves concrete results. However, the facts unfortunately indicate that at least at the present time there is an absence of desire on the part of certain nuclear Powers to take part in the proposed conference. It is an extremely regrettable fact that four nuclear Powers, permanent members of the Security Council, are taking no part in the work of the Special Committee established under General Assembly resolution 2930 (XXVII), for the purpose of considering the positions and views of Governments on the question of holding a world disarmament conference. This was the principal reason which prevented the Special Committee from functioning normally and effectively.

33. The arguments of those who have adopted a negative attitude to the holding of a world disarmament conference are not sensible or cogent. Primarily they are not sensible, in our view, because the fact that such complex problems will have to be the subject of discussion at forums such as the proposed conference is being laid down as a precondition for the holding of the conference.

34. Some people are apprehensive about the fact that the conference may prove ineffective. Such apprehension, in our view, should not serve as a basis for refusing to hold the conference. First of all, if we want to be realistic, it is quite clear that just by holding one conference we obviously cannot resolve all the problems of disarmament. Secondly, we consider that the very fact of a more orderly and purposeful consideration of the fundamental problems of disarmament at such a forum would be an event of positive significance and would provide a considerable impetus for the subsequent search for concrete ways and means of resolving the urgent problems of the day. Experience has shown that in resolving such difficult and complex problems as the question of disarmament every positive step forward, even the most insignificant, is liable to serve as a good start for the implementation of major measures.

35. In the light of what I have said, our delegation once again expresses its support for the view that it is advisable

to hold a world disarmament conference periodically, that is, to transform it into a permanently operative international organ. A conference of this kind could become, as it were, a kind of supreme organ where all States of the world would, on an equal footing, take part in the conduct of the main lines of negotiations and determining priorities for the concrete problems in the field of limiting the arms race and of disarmament itself.

36. On the basis of this reasoning, the delegation of the Mongolian People's Republic is firmly in favour of proceeding at once to the practical preparations for the world disarmament conference. In this regard an urgent appeal to renounce their negative position on this matter, which is so vital to all peoples, should be addressed first and foremost to those permanent members of the Security Council which are disregarding the views of the overwhelming majority of the States of the world. We should not forget that the major responsibility for the fate of the world and for international security lies with the permanent members of the Security Council.

37. The question of bringing all the permanent members of the Security Council into the work of the Special Committee is, of course, extremely important. Our delegation well understands the good intentions of those who, in the interest of trying to involve the nuclear Powers in preparations for the conference, are seeking a compromise method of resolving the issue. We also understand that for the sake of achieving an important purpose it is possible to resort to compromise. But we are against doing that to the detriment of the fundamental aims.

38. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the Special Committee it might be advisable to expand its membership somewhat so as to include an additional number of countries from those geographical areas which consider themselves inadequately represented in the Committee. But here the most important thing is for the Special Committee to begin functioning on an official basis. We consider that this session of the General Assembly should clarify and expand the terms of reference of the Special Committee so that it can undertake practical preparations for the world disarmament conference.

39. In this regard we should like to point out that the broad exchange of views among members of the Special Committee, at the unofficial meetings, was useful and in the course of its work the Committee accumulated considerable experience in the consideration of the practical matters involved in preparing for the conference. We associate ourselves with those delegations that have paid a tribute to the efforts of Mr. Hoveyda of Iran and his colleagues in that work.

40. The delegation of the Mongolian People's Republic expresses the hope that the concerted efforts of the majority of the States of the world will overcome the resistance of the opponents of convening a world disarmament conference. We hope that the conference will actually be convened in the near future. The Mongolian People's Republic, as a member of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and of the Special Committee, is ready to co-operate in the achievement of this noble goal.

41. The CHAIRMAN: Could I be allowed to remind the Committee that the list of speakers will be closed at the end of tomorrow afternoon's meeting? We are supposed to conclude the debate on disarmament in time to allow for the discussion of the next item on the agenda, the question of Korea, to begin on 14 or 15 November. We have first to conclude the general debate and we shall also have to have time to deal with draft resolutions that may be presented to

this Committee. In these circumstances I would suggest that we close the general debate by the end of 8 November.

42. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees with me that we close the general debate by 8 November.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.