

(a) The use of nuclear weapons would be a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and a crime against humanity;

(b) The use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should therefore be prohibited, pending nuclear disarmament;

2. Urges the consideration, at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, of the question of an international convention on the non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war or some other agreement on the subject, taking into account the proposals and views of States in this regard;

3. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-seventh session the item entitled "Non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war".

Recorded vote in Assembly as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian SSR, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian SSR, USSR, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States.

Abstaining: Austria, Comoros, Finland, Greece, Israel, Sweden,

Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe

In recognition that all the horrors of past wars and other calamities would pale in comparison with what a nuclear catastrophe could bring to humanity, the General Assembly, on 9 December 1981,⁽⁴⁾ proclaimed on behalf of United Nations Member States: that States and statesmen that resorted first to the use of nuclear weapons would be committing the gravest crime against humanity; that there would be no justification or pardon for the decision to be the first to use such weapons; that any doctrines allowing first use of nuclear weapons were incompatible with moral standards and the ideals of the Organization; that the leaders of nuclear-weapon States had the duty to act so as to eliminate the risk of nuclear conflict; and that nuclear energy should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

This Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe was adopted by the Assembly by a recorded vote of 82 to 19, with 41 abstentions. The twice-revised text, sponsored by Angola, the German Democratic Republic, Mongolia and the USSR, was approved by the First Committee on 25 November by a recorded vote of 67 to 18, with 37 abstentions. The sponsors incor-

porated an oral amendment proposed by Mexico, adding to a reference to negotiations on the nuclear-arms race, contained in paragraph 4, a phrase specifying that the ultimate goal was the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Declaration was originally proposed by the USSR which requested in a letter of 22 September⁽¹⁾ that an item on this subject be put on the Assembly's agenda at its 1981 session. The request was endorsed by the General Committee on 6 October⁽³⁾ and added to the agenda by the Assembly on the same day.

The USSR stated in its letter that the United Nations should adopt the proposed text so as to exert a restraining influence on the dangerous development of world events. In the First Committee, the USSR said the task of preventing a nuclear catastrophe commanded the highest priority in international relations, particularly because the United States, banking on force as an instrument for achieving political goals, continued to strive for a position of military supremacy. Further, by a letter of 21 October,⁽²⁾ the USSR transmitted to the Assembly the text of a statement by Premier Leonid I. Brezhnev, given to a Pravda correspondent, rejecting the concept of a winnable nuclear war and expressing hope that the United States President would also reject as criminal the idea of nuclear attack.

Several States, particularly from Eastern Europe, voiced strong support for the USSR initiative. Bulgaria saw it as having a moderating influence in the face of mad notions of a limited nuclear war or a pre-emptive attack. In the view of the Byelorussian SSR, the Declaration would remind statesmen involved in the use of nuclear weapons that each of them bore personal responsibility for the fate of humanity. The proposal expressed the vital interests of all peoples, said Hungary, against the background of an intensified arms race generated by those who advocated the acceptability of nuclear war. No country could oppose such a declaration, said the Lao People's Democratic Republic, unless it nurtured the illusion of victory in a limited or widespread nuclear conflict. Mongolia viewed the proposal as a serious warning to those who could not give up the times of the "cold war" and the doctrine of a pre-emptive strike. Such a declaration was needed, said the Ukrainian SSR, because of the unprecedented build-up of nuclear arms, the whipping-up of war psychosis and the reliance on force in international relations.

Explaining its favourable vote, Cyprus warned that the concepts of a limited nuclear war and of victory resulting from a first strike brought the world closer to a nuclear conflagration. Also voting in favour, Jordan expressed sur-