

to seek to render the problem into a negotiable form, taking into account both technical and political aspects of the problems concerned. This is precisely what the Committee on Disarmament has been attempting to do, through discussion, formal statements of position by members, and through informal sessions with experts. In carrying out this task, it was not surprising that the Committee on Disarmament turned its attention to the possibilities offered by an effective international exchange of seismic data, which is directly relevant to the detection and identification of underground nuclear and thermonuclear tests by seismological means.

Secretary-General's Questionnaire

The General Assembly at its last session, recognizing the importance of effecting progress in this clarification process, adopted, by an overwhelming majority, Resolution 2604 A (XXIV), in which it asked the Secretary-General to transmit to governments a questionnaire concerning "the provision of certain information in the context of the creation of a world-wide exchange of seismological data which would facilitate the achievement of a comprehensive test ban".

The purpose of that questionnaire, as set out in the annex to the resolution, was to assist "in clarifying what resources would be available for the eventual establishment of an effective world-wide exchange of seismological information" which information will obviously prove invaluable — indeed, essential — in negotiating any comprehensive test ban or, I suggest, any other measure which might be developed to supplement the Partial Test Ban of 1963. The results so far have been most encouraging, in that more than 85 countries have replied, from all parts of the world, and mostly in a positive and informative fashion.

The results of the first 50 or so replies to the questionnaire have already been analysed by Canadian scientists, and a preliminary assessment of them was circulated to members of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. Our scientists are now engaged in bringing this analysis up to date in order to obtain a more nearly complete assessment of the world's present seismological identification capabilities.

There appears to be a growing recognition of the potential role of seismological-data exchange, on an assured or guaranteed basis, in facilitating the verification of any underground test ban, and thus promoting the long-sought agreement on this question. Alternatively, the international exchange of seismic data on an assured availability basis might contribute to a threshold treaty which would at least impose a limit on the size of the tests carried out in the event that agreement on the broader basis appeared to be negotiable to the nuclear powers directly concerned.

In this regard, we hope very shortly to submit in this Committee, in company with like-minded delegations, a draft resolution which might serve as a useful focus for support for further progress in clarifying the potential