

51. As I said in my statement of 15 May:

"Each party to the treaty, whether or not it has the capability for verification through national means, should have the right of verification."
(ENDC/PV.411, para.19)

In this connexion I believe that a proposal was made by a number of countries, including Nigeria, at one of our informal meetings during the spring session. The proposal was intended to improve on the implication of the word "reciprocity" in the Soviet draft. It was further suggested at that time that international arrangements for verification might be made. That latter suggestion, it appears to us, has been misunderstood by some of our colleagues here. The proposal of the delegations — certainly that of my delegation — did not suggest that an international arrangement for verification should be automatically introduced. All that was being sought was that those at present incapable of undertaking such verification themselves should be able to call upon a friendly country, a party to the treaty, to assist in verification, or to call upon an organization if and when it became possible to have such an organization. As we understand it, if one country sought the assistance of another country there would be no obligation on the country so requested to undertake the task.

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98. With respect to the question of verification, my delegation has listened very carefully to the various points of view expressed in this Committee and noted the importance attached to it. Indeed, like all preventive measures of disarmament, a treaty on the demilitarization of the sea-bed should provide for an adequate verification method. In general we feel that the solution to the verification problem in this case should be based on the reaffirmation of the existing rights of observation of activities on the high seas established under a different body of international law applicable to the high seas, and on guaranteed access to the actual activities or emplacements on the sea-bed by all States parties to the treaty on a non-discriminatory basis.

99. In formulating a provision that would reasonably ensure access to all activities on the sea-bed by all the parties to the treaty, thought must be given to the fact that not many States are in a position technologically to carry out verification activities on the sea-bed. That is why my delegation fully supports the proposal that each party to the treaty should have the right to carry out verification with the full or partial assistance of other States and, when it became feasible, through an international organization or arrangement. In that respect we welcome also the suggestion made by the Canadian delegation at our meeting of 31 July concerning the right of every party "to apply to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the co-operation and assistance of other States in carrying out the verification process." (ENDC/PV.424, para.29).