

communicate to the Secretary-General, for transmission to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, a list of stations from which they would be prepared to supply seismic records on the basis of guaranteed availability. The representative of Japan has also spelt out proposals for exchange of seismological data on a world-wide basis and the establishment of international centres for processing them promptly, and for monitoring to check against falsification of information (ENDC/PV.424, paras.47 et seq.). We consider those to be highly constructive proposals which would enhance the possibilities of lowering the identification thresholds, thereby facilitating the realization of the total prohibition of underground nuclear-weapon test explosions. In resolution 2455 (XXIII) the General Assembly, recognizing the importance of seismology in the verification of the observance of a treaty banning underground nuclear-weapon tests, expressed the hope that States would contribute to an effective international exchange of seismic data. In that context the concrete proposal made by Canada in document ENDC/251 would, if adopted, constitute a positive step by this Committee towards implementing that resolution and reducing the problems of verifying a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

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101. One of the top priority places among the partial measures that contribute towards nuclear disarmament is assigned to the question of the cessation of underground nuclear tests. Last year's session of the United Nations General Assembly, in resolution 2455 (XXIII) (ENDC/237), called upon "all nuclear-weapon States to suspend nuclear weapon tests in all environments".

102. The Soviet Union once again set forth its position in regard to that question in the Memorandum of the Soviet Government dated 1 July 1968, to which I have already referred. That Memorandum states:

"The Soviet Union has been and continues to be a steadfast advocate of the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests, believing that the banning of all tests will promote the consolidation of peace and the slackening of the arms race. The Soviet Government is prepared to reach agreement without delay on the banning of underground nuclear-weapon tests on the basis of the use of national means of detection to control observance of the ban."

(ENDC/227, p.3)

103. The question of an international exchange of seismic data has been dealt with in last year's General Assembly resolution 2455 (XXIII), to which I have already referred and in the statements and working papers of a number of delegations in our Committee, in particular in the working paper of the Canadian delegation (ENDC/251/Rev.1). We have already set forth our position in regard to this question (ENDC/PV.402, para.72) in connexion with the consideration of the idea put forward by the delegation of Sweden regarding the creation of a so-called "detection club" (ENDC/154). The Soviet side remarked that this idea deserved attention if in that way it would be possible to go as far as to conclude a mutually acceptable treaty banning underground tests of nuclear weapons. In this connexion we believe that participation in an international exchange of seismic data should in no way impose upon the participants in such an exchange any obligations in regard to the carrying out of international inspections on their territories, and that the assessment of the collected data should be carried out, not by any supra-national international organ, but by each of the States parties to the treaty. Of course, the supply of seismic data by States should be carried out on a voluntary basis.

104. However, as practice has shown, the idea of an international exchange of seismic data is usually linked by the Western Powers with the creation of some sort of international centre and with the carrying out of on-site inspection. Thus the United Kingdom