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Chairman: Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 39 TO 56, 128 AND 135 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ORTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I have asked to speak in this debate in order formally to introduce and submit to the First Committee for consideration document A/36/392, which contains the study of the institutional arrangements relating to the process of disarmament.

But before I go on to the heart of the matter, I should like to make a small digression in order to convey to you, Ambassador Golob, my warmest and most fraternal congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. Some years back I had the honour to sit in the place you now occupy and I know from personal experience how difficult it is to conduct the deliberations of the Political Committee. Because I know you well and have had an opportunity of working side by side with you in various United Nations forums, I also know from personal experience how wise was the decision to elect you as Chairman. Your equanimity, acumen and knowledge of procedures are but a few of the qualities that we all know you will show in discharging your responsibilities. Let me assure you, Sir, that the assessment that I have just made and the congratulations that I am happy to extend to you are in no way influenced either by the friendship that unites us or by the admiration and respect I have for the country you so ably represent.

My congratulations go also to the Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Yango of the Philippines and Ambassador Carias of Honduras, and to our Rapporteur, Mr. Makonnen of Ethiopia.

And now, after this deliberate but harmless breach of our procedural norms and rules, let me turn to the item which is the reason for my presence in this room.

Actually, the study I have the honour to introduce by virtue of having presided over the Group of Governmental Experts which prepared it is sufficiently self-explanatory and requires no tedious presentation by me.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

But I believe that I would be failing in my duty to the experts who worked on it with such great devotion and keenness were I not to highlight some of its principal aspects. I shall, however, endeavour to confine my comments to the absolute minimum.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas,  
Argentina)

The General Assembly, in its resolution 34/87 E of 11 December 1979, requested the Secretary-General, with the assistance of qualified governmental experts, to carry out a comprehensive study assessing current institutional requirements and future estimated needs in the United Nations management of disarmament affairs. In addition the study was to outline possible functions, structure and institutional framework that would meet those requirements and needs, including legal and financial implications, and to formulate recommendations for possible later decisions on the matter.

Pursuant to that mandate, the Secretary-General appointed the 20 governmental experts who are listed on page 3 of the document now under consideration.

The Group held four sessions during the years 1980 and 1981. For the carrying out of its task, it had before it a large number of documents, placed at its disposal by the Secretariat, as well as the reviews of Member States communicated in response to the request of the Secretary-General. The experts also compiled additional information from certain United Nations organs that deal with disarmament matters.

Confronted with this mass of previous documentation, in order to follow a logical and coherent course, the Group organized its work so that the study would be divided into three major sections. The first, which corresponds to Chapter I, covers present institutional arrangements. This gives a factual and detailed account of the situation, covering two central themes: on the one hand, the structure and functions of the Secretariat and, on the other hand, the very important aspect of co-ordination of disarmament-related activities within the United Nations system. It contains a description, which is not too lengthy, of the tasks carried out by those organs directly or indirectly dealing with disarmament matters.

Chapter II deals with the same question of present institutional arrangements but based on the opinions given by the experts who, on that basis, pronounced themselves with regard to foreseeable future needs.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

To obtain a better understanding of the views expressed in the Group, they were distributed in accordance with an order encompassing the fundamental disarmament functions or activities, that is to say, deliberation, negotiation, application or implementation, verification, information - with special emphasis on dissemination, studies and training - infrastructure and lastly, co-ordination.

Needless to say that, as is obvious from the study, it was in this chapter that divergent views on the part of the experts were recorded. While in some cases they were completely opposed to one another, they all had ample opportunity to make known their valuable opinions and the fact that there was no uniformity of views among the members of the Group should, in the final analysis, should be regarded as a positive factor which should make it possible to examine the situation in the light of a whole spectrum of different possibilities.

It is not my intention, nor do I think it appropriate, to mention or describe the various proposals, which may briefly be reduced to three or four alternatives. The Assembly will have to undertake its own analysis with a view to making a decision when it deems fit.

While Chapter II indicates the divergencies that arose, Chapter III, on the other hand, reflects the consensus of the Group on a whole series of conclusions and recommendations in regard to points of considerable importance.

Under the terms of resolution 34/87 E, the final report, with the study completed by the experts, was to be presented to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, and that has in fact been done. However, I must point out that, in making the respective evaluations of the items with which it was requested to deal, the Group took particular account of the fact that the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is to be held next year and that it will offer a propitious opportunity to debate and consider that study in detail.

For the present I believe that the best course at this session would be to adopt a procedural resolution transmitting the study to Governments for consideration in order to give them sufficient time to study it and to be in a position to give their comments and views on it at the special session that is to be held next year.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

The Final Document adopted with the consensus of all the Member States that took part in the special session of 1978, among its many important provisions, established the necessary machinery for the indispensable and vital disarmament undertaking.

The study I have introduced is, in my view, a useful supplement to that document inasmuch as it offers a broad spectrum of proposals and recommendations designed to improve the institutional supporting arrangements. I am convinced that the efficient work done by the Group will be interpreted in that spirit and will represent an important contribution which will command the attention of delegations represented here.

I should like to conclude by expressing my appreciation to all the governmental experts who gave their unswerving co-operation to the carrying out of the study in perfect harmony and showed great understanding for the positions of others. Similarly, although it is already stated in the report I should like to reiterate the gratitude of the experts, and in particular my own, to the Secretariat officials who gave us their co-operation and assistance. In particular I believe I should mention in this context the Assistant Secretary-General and Chief of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament, Mr. Martenson, and Mr. Csillag of that Centre, who acted as Secretary of the Group.

Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic)(interpretation from Russian):

Permit me, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the important post of Chairman of this important Committee and to express our conviction that under your wise leadership our work will be successful. I should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee upon their election.

Peoples all over the world are deeply alarmed at the increasing threats to peace, the exacerbation of international tensions and the aggravation of regional conflicts. This has been borne out by the general debate at this thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly and also by the communiqué of the non-aligned States (A/36/566). The United Nations is therefore expected to prove its worth as an instrument for ensuring and enhancing international peace.

The ensuring of peace, however, in turn requires a cessation of the arms race - not an increase but, rather, a reduction of military arsenals. Every day of the continuing race adds to the dangers to international peace; every new type of weapon which swells the military arsenals, and every decision which ushers in a new round of the arms race is a further impediment to disarmament and, consequently, to the ensuring of peace.

The reasons for this dangerous course of events are well known. They lie exclusively in the ambitions of aggressive imperialist circles to gain world-wide military superiority, something which is supported by the Peking hegemonists.

Leading political figures of the major imperialist Power openly announce their intention to disrupt the existing approximate military-strategic balance. Their whole line of thinking became apparent when the representative of the United States declared in this Committee that it would have been best for mankind if the United States had retained its monopoly over nuclear weapons. The figures of the United States military budget are eloquent proof of that country's striving for military superiority: they amounted to more than \$180 billion in last year's budget, and by 1982 more than \$220 billion will be spent. Further, over the next five years, appropriations on armaments will reach \$1,500 billion - that is to say, an average of \$300 billion per year.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

These enormous sums are earmarked for the development of invulnerable strategic offensive weapons of superior striking power, and of new precision weapons. Existing bases are being expanded and new installations erected to support the increased presence of American troops in various parts of the world. More than 150 United States Naval and Air Force bases are located around the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. More than 500,000 American troops are permanently stationed in 16 countries outside the United States. In order to enhance their striking power, NATO's armies are constantly receiving huge supplies of new types of tanks, planes, guns and other materiel. Moreover, there is an obvious tendency to bring other States into that aggressive military pact and to extend the scope of NATO. New military groupings in the southern Atlantic, the Middle East, the Indian Ocean, Central America, as well as other parts of the world, are all designed to promote the hegemonistic interests of imperialism.

At the same time, there is growing opposition on the part of imperialist States to international legal treaties on the limitation of the arms race. Understandings or agreements already reached, are being regarded as inconvenient fetters which restrict the buildup of an overwhelming military potential. It is common knowledge that it was not the fault of the Soviet Union that the SALT-II Treaty did not become effective. As a matter of fact, influential presidential advisers in the United States are already voicing opposition to the reliability of understandings or agreements adopted in the SALT-I Treaty.

In recent years, again against the declared will of the USSR, talks on a wide range of important matters relating to the limitation of the arms race came to a standstill. They related, inter alia, to a reduction of the military presence in the Indian Ocean, the transfer of armaments, the prevention of an extension of the arms race to outer space, the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests and the prohibition of all types of chemical weapons.



(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

With a view to impeding the resumption of disarmament negotiations, the proponents of an intensified arms race are calling for a policy of linkage in the field of disarmament. Disarmament negotiations, they claim, should be made dependent on so-called acceptable conduct on the part of the socialist States. And it is they - the other side - who intend to judge whether this condition has been fulfilled. In doing so, that side apparently wishes to use as a criterion its policy of arbitrarily proclaiming regions in all parts of the world as spheres of interest and of pursuing the capability to wage any war whatsoever, in any region, successfully. To surrender to such hegemonistic aspirations would be tantamount to permitting a new Munich.

Another alternative amounts to wearing out the patience and energy of the international community in pseudo-negotiations: the idea is to replace negotiations on concrete measures to halt the arms race by endless futile debates on transparency, research on the situation in the armaments field and discussion of matters of verifications as such, in isolation from concrete disarmament measures. In this regard, the question arises about the compatibility of these demands with the content of the Final Document adopted at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Are they not just intended to feign willingness to negotiate, in order to be free to implement decisions on super-armament?

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

The socialist States have put forward the strategy of dialogue to promote peace as against the policy of confrontation. The meetings which Erich Honecker, Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, had this year with leading representatives of Austria, Japan and Mexico, have shown that, especially in a situation of strained international relations, dialogue at the highest level is possible and profitable for the continuation of détente and the encouragement of international co-operation. The will to resolve international disputes by peaceful means remains an unchanged maxim of our foreign policy.

In their joint communiqué of 13 September 1981, the German Democratic Republic and Mexico stated that the most urgent task of the present time was to take concrete and effective measures to put an end to the arms race, particularly in the field of weapons of mass destruction. Both States emphasized the need for continuing talks on the cessation of the arms race.

Readiness to engage in unprejudiced serious negotiations on effective measures against the arms race, it should be noted here, is not a gift or a favour for which some service should be demanded in return. It is, on the contrary, an obligation that ensues from the United Nations Charter, from the principles of international law and from the established legal bases of the process of détente. Negotiations must be based on the equality of all participants. The envisaged agreements must not procure unilateral advantages.

As history teaches, genuine steps towards arms limitation and détente became possible when an approximate military balance was reached. This balance must be preserved in the interest of ensuring international peace.

There is an almost endless stream of lies emanating from certain quarters that seek to discredit that historic achievement. Constant arithmetical acrobatics are employed to furnish proof of an alleged military superiority of the East. Decades ago, a so-called "bomber gap" was detected; later, there was a "missile gap" and, most recently, a "window" of vulnerability has been discovered - anything, in fact, to avoid stopping the arms race.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

It is all too obvious what the Pentagon is attempting to achieve with the publication of its tendentious paper on "Soviet Military Power". What it fails to mention is the enormous quantity of nuclear warheads possessed by the United States, which is the figure that has overriding importance. Again, it fails to mention the additional military strength of its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies. It is also silent about the numerous bases set up around the USSR and directed against that country, as well as a host of facts that would be apt to disprove the assertions made by the Pentagon propagandists. Still, the authors of the aforementioned booklet maintain that the United States is nevertheless superior to the Soviet Union in the field of advanced arms technology.

Let me add here a few remarks on the SS-20 missile. The Soviet Union developed and deployed medium-range missiles to counteract the nuclear threat created by the West. The SS-4 and SS-5 missiles, which have been operational for 20 years, are now outdated and require replacement, particularly because NATO has continuously been modernizing its own missile systems. So long as NATO continues to maintain its existing nuclear capacity, the Soviet Union and its allies cannot forgo an appropriate counter-capacity. However, it would be possible to reduce those opposing potentials to a lower level. To achieve that end, serious negotiations are needed which could include all relevant types of nuclear weapons.

A Western political figure recently told an interviewer:

"It would be ideal if the Soviet Union dismantled all its Backfire planes and SS-20 missiles pointed at Europe."

One is entitled to ask here why he did not bluntly state that it would also be ideal if columns of Leopard II tanks moved through the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin? It goes without saying that the principle of equal security must always be given due attention.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic  
Republic)

In his address in 1979 in Berlin to mark the anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic, Leonid Ilyitch Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, expressed the shared position of all States of the socialist community when he said:

"We do not seek military superiority. We have never entertained the idea of threatening any State or group of States. Our strategic doctrine is purely defensive in nature."

Together with all the other socialist States, the German Democratic Republic speaks out in favour of agreed disarmament steps that would ensure a military balance at a lower level. Our efforts in the field of disarmament are designed to serve that purpose.

Up to the present time, the socialist States have put forward more than 30 proposals in international bodies for negotiations on halting the arms race and on disarmament. The substance of those proposals is the limitation and reduction of both nuclear and conventional weapons.

Nuclear disarmament deserves the highest priority. Our aim is to stop the production of nuclear weapons and the gradual reduction of stockpiles of such weapons until they have been totally eliminated. The definition of the partial measures to be taken in that process is a substantive task that must be undertaken in serious negotiations. The socialist States have put forward concrete proposals for such negotiations as well.

It is necessary to resume negotiations between the USSR and the United States of America on the subject of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), preserving all the positive results that have been achieved so far. Because of its military and political significance, the SALT process has great importance for international relations as a whole and, specifically, for all negotiations on disarmament. The subject-matter of SALT is the most powerful and dangerous weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

It is therefore the height of irresponsibility simply to scrap the SALT II treaty after it has already been acknowledged to be acceptable. If that treaty were implemented it would constitute the basis for follow-up negotiations on the further reduction of the weapons concerned and would be in the interest not only of both States parties to the treaty, but of all States and peoples of the world.

Years ago renowned scholars and scientists of the German Democratic Republic already pointed out the huge danger to all forms of life which would result from the simultaneous explosion of a large number of super-powerful nuclear bombs. The numerous simultaneous explosions which would be probable in the case of a nuclear war would release enormous quantities of energy which in turn would provoke unimaginable transformations in the earth's surface.

Military strategic plans to carry out a nuclear first strike against States in different regions are creating a particularly dangerous situation. The aggressive plans of imperialism, hatched long ago, are to be made practicable by the development of new weapons systems such as the MX and Trident missiles and the deployment in Western Europe of Pershing-2 and cruise missiles. The doctrine on the use of these weapons was made public in Presidential Directive No. 59, which proclaims the possibility and the admissibility of a geographically limited nuclear war. An essential element of such a nuclear first strike is what it calls "selective strikes" against sensitive military and civilian targets and military installations. When illusions about the possibility of limiting such a conflict burst, like the bubbles they are and people are faced with the harsh realities, it will be too late.

With a view to averting the dangers to Europe and every other region of the world stemming from nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union has once again come forward with an extremely important initiative. Its proposal to adopt a declaration on the prevention of a nuclear catastrophe deserves full and unreserved support. The world expects the United Nations to act without

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

delay to avert the outbreak of a nuclear war before it is too late. The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers that the draft resolution submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which emphasizes the personal responsibility of the leaders of the nuclear-weapon States to prevent nuclear war, meets the urgent requirements of the present time.

Recently too there has been a significant growth in connexion with certain United States projects in the danger of the spread of the arms race to outer space. The underlying purpose of such projects, namely, to seek military superiority in that area also, is clear from, among other things, the electoral programme of the present governing Party of the United States of America, which calls for massive efforts to ensure American superiority in the military uses of outer space. This, however, would lead to the spread of the arms race to outer space. For this reason the German Democratic Republic welcomes and supports the Soviet initiative on the conclusion of a treaty which would prohibit the deployment in outer space of weapons of any kind.

The draft treaty respects the interests of all countries which are interested in using outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes. It is an expression of a constructive approach to the issues of armament limitation and disarmament and of strengthening international peace and security. It is still possible to prevent the arms race from taking on a new dimension and to stop its spreading into outer space. Once measures are adopted, however, with a view to gaining military advantage by putting weapons in outer space, this will provoke countermeasures. An escalation of the spiralling arms race into that environment would have incalculable consequences in the political, military economic and social fields for all States and peoples of the world.

The same could be said about a new link in the chain of the ominous North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) measures on an arms build-up, namely, the decision of the United States Government concerning the production of more than 1,000 neutron weapons.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

The wave of protest aroused by this fateful decision not only in Europe but in other parts of the world indicates an awareness of the dangers flowing from that decision. The United States of America is producing the neutron weapon not for use on American Territory but to be deployed in Europe and other regions which have been declared "spheres of United States vital interests".

Together with the other socialist States, the German Democratic Republic made a proposal in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva for the immediate adoption of measures with a view to prohibiting the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of the neutron weapon. It would be desirable for this step, which won the support of numerous States, to meet with similar response from the United Nations General Assembly.

As it is situated next to the line which separates the two major military groupings, the German Democratic Republic attaches special priority to the questions of enhancing peace and curbing the arms race. The German Democratic Republic is the immediate neighbour of the NATO State which has the highest concentration of nuclear weapons and which, according to the 1979 NATO decision, is to absorb the greater part of a new generation of United States medium-range strategic missiles. The reduction and elimination of the danger of nuclear war which flows from this is in the most vital interest of the German Democratic Republic. For this reason, we support all proposals which call for the limitation, reduction and final elimination of nuclear weapons in Europe. The German Democratic Republic has every sympathy with the endeavours of the Nordic States to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Despite all the juggling with figures and manipulation carried out by NATO countries to mislead public opinion, we believe that, taking into account all NATO and USSR medium-range weapon systems based on the European continent or on aircraft carriers and submarines in waters adjacent to Europe, there is a balance of some 1,000 delivery systems on each side, while NATO has a 50 per cent superiority in warheads. The appeal to ignore United States forward-based systems, in place for more than 20 years, and nuclear delivery devices of other NATO States is tantamount to an invitation to suicide.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

The carrying out of the NATO decision for the deployment of about 600 units of the carrier system of an entirely new type in Western Europe would change the existing balance and the strategic balance over-all. The socialist States would be forced to take appropriate response measures to restore that balance.

The time has come for the United States to conduct substantive talks on limiting nuclear weapons in Europe and should do so in a business-like and serious manner. Only the search for mutually acceptable decisions on the basis of the principle of equality and equal security would make it possible to achieve progress. The German Democratic Republic welcomes the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States of 23 September 1981 to embark on substantive talks on 30 November 1981. We accompany that with an expression of hope for early tangible results.

The German Democratic Republic is guided by those principles also as a direct participant in the Vienna talks on the reduction of troops and armaments in Central Europe. In the light of the present status of the talks and in the face of the numerous proposals made by the socialist countries that are participating, it should be possible to achieve an initial partial agreement, also in accordance with the proposal of the socialist States, on the withdrawal of a further 20,000 Soviet military personnel with the simultaneous withdrawal of 13,000 United States military personnel, while other States parties would freeze the strength of their troops at the current level until a further agreement could be concluded.

That, however, requires a constructive reaction to the concrete proposals of the socialist States, most of which have been awaiting a response for years. Unfortunately, NATO in this regard also is pursuing a policy which impedes effective reduction measures. Furthermore, to this very day the troop strength of the United States in Central Europe has increased by 25,000 men, while the Soviet Union, in agreement with the German Democratic Republic, has unilaterally withdrawn 20,000 military personnel and 1,000 tanks from the German Democratic Republic in the period 1979-1980.



(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

One of the key issues for security and a further expansion of co-operation in Europe in the face of the constant stepping-up of the arms race, and hence the growing danger of military confrontation, is without any doubt the convening of a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe. Numerous proposals on that subject have been submitted at the Madrid conference. The Soviet Union has shown great willingness to accommodate the other partners. The resumed talks in Madrid should lead to agreement on a mandate for such a conference.

The German Democratic Republic is in favour of strengthening existing disarmament organs and enhancing the effectiveness of their work. The German Democratic Republic, for its part, will do everything possible to make a fruitful contribution to preparations for the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which will be of particular significance in the current international situation. The Final Document of the first special session on disarmament furnishes a scale and a long-term series of bench-marks for the activities of the United Nations in that field. It represents one of the most important results of the work of the United Nations, the fruits of which must be preserved.

We shall be able to judge from positions taken in the establishment of priorities for that programme of action who really has a genuine interest in limiting armaments and in bringing about disarmament. The German Democratic Republic believes that the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament should focus its attention on the implementation of the Final Document adopted by the first special session and also on consideration and adoption of decisions on new initiatives, for example, the important document submitted on the initiative of the non-aligned States, the comprehensive disarmament programme, on which the socialist States took a very active and constructive part. The German Democratic Republic hopes that the forthcoming special session will provide fresh impetus for the opening, resumption or continuation of disarmament talks. As far back as the thirty-fourth session, the German Democratic Republic presented initiatives on those subjects, and it will continue to do so in the future.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic  
Republic)

In conclusion, I should like to say that we must not forget the experience of mankind. At the dawn of civilization, man learnt to master fire and to use it. Now man is already in a position to destroy our planet in the flames of an atomic holocaust. That fact is increasingly alarming public opinion in my country and in many other countries more and more strongly. The indignation of an alarmed public is reflected in appeals, petitions and demonstrations, and the United Nations should see that as an injunction to step up the struggle for effective disarmament measures.

Mr. LA ROCCA (Italy): Mr. Chairman, at the outset, I should like to avail myself of the opportunity to express my personal satisfaction and that of my delegation at your election as Chairman of the First Committee. It is a matter of particular satisfaction to see a representative of a great neighbouring country, Yugoslavia, with which Italy maintains and develops strong ties of friendship and co-operation, presiding over our deliberations. I am sure that under your experienced guidance this session will achieve positive results.

May I also congratulate the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur of the Committee on their election to their important posts. We wish them every possible success.

At our fourth meeting on 20 October, the representative of the United Kingdom, Mr. Douglas Hurd, delivered a statement on behalf of the member States of the European Community, with which we fully associate ourselves. As he pointed out in his statement, the First Committee opened its proceedings against a background of increased tensions throughout the world:

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

The failure to respect the Charter of the United Nations and to abide by the principles of international law, the continuing reliance on the threat or use of force, the military invasion and continuing occupation of a non-aligned country, as in the case of Afghanistan, the attacks against the territory of other States, such as the one perpetrated by South Africa against Angola, are all alarming facts which are gradually eroding the mutual trust and confidence between States and therefore jeopardizing the very foundation of international relations. Such circumstances cannot fail to have a negative influence on arms limitation and disarmament efforts. It is the urgent task of the international community to exert every possible effort to reverse, through concrete and appropriate deeds, these alarming trends, and to promote in particular a renewed dialogue that would set the necessary conditions for effective progress in disarmament negotiations. In the present situation, certain elements seem to point to this possibility.

The first element is represented by the convening next June of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. It will represent a unique opportunity to review the progress achieved so far and to outline programmes for the future. The extent of the success of the special session will be measured by its ability to channel efforts into an agreed and dynamic framework which takes into account the legitimate security requirements of all States. Such a result, which could be embodied in a balanced and realistic comprehensive programme of disarmament, would mark the beginning of an important phase in the disarmament process, representing the logical development of the first special session.

Another element of fundamental importance is represented by the beginning on 30 November in Geneva of negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on longer range theatre nuclear forces.

Italy attaches the utmost importance to the undertaking of such negotiations, which represent the implementation of the other volet of the double-track decision taken by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries in December 1979. They are aimed at restoring, at the lowest possible

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

level, the balance in theatre nuclear forces which has been seriously altered by the deployment of a steadily increasing number of highly precise MIRVed and mobile SS-20 Soviet missiles.

Besides the specific relevance they may have for the European continent and its adjacent areas, the opening of such negotiations acquires special importance in view of the early resumption of the SALT process, which provides the framework within which theatre nuclear forces negotiations eventually have to be inserted. Progress in these negotiations will undoubtedly pave the way for further concrete initiatives in the broader context of nuclear disarmament.

At the multilateral level, the question of nuclear disarmament is based primarily on the identification of specific measures which can ensure a gradual and verifiable reduction of nuclear arsenals, preserving at every stage of the process the basic principle of undiminished security. To avoid destabilizing effects, such a principle requires a careful and constant comparative assessment of the effects on the over-all balance of forces. Nuclear disarmament cannot be treated in isolation. In this regard, the relation between nuclear and conventional armaments is of particular importance. Although such a relationship should not be construed as a mechanical one, measures in both categories should proceed in parallel in order to maintain throughout the process a balance compatible with the principle of undiminished security, and possibly to strengthen that very security.

The first preliminary step in the direction of nuclear disarmament is indeed the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. Though not a nuclear-weapon State, Italy has exercised its best endeavours to contribute to an early achievement of a comprehensive test ban treaty. Such a treaty would not fail to produce immediate and positive effects, in terms both of enhancing trust between parties and of slowing down the trend towards the continuous growth of nuclear arsenals.

For these reasons the interest of the international community in being directly involved in the negotiating process on this subject is fully justified. Such interest has been clearly signified by the highest priority assigned to this item and by the reiterated appeals addressed by the General Assembly to the Committee on Disarmament.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

With regard to the substance of the matter, we believe that solutions can be found for the complex issues which are still controversial. We therefore appeal to the nuclear-weapon States most directly involved to spare no efforts to overcome the remaining difficulties. A comprehensive test-ban treaty would indeed prove an effective means of checking the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons as well as of preventing the appearance of additional nuclear-weapon States.

The prevention of horizontal proliferation remains a major concern of our time. The conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty could also contribute to the universalization of the adherence to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It would constitute a concrete demonstration of the political will of nuclear-weapon States to implement with stronger determination all provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The effectiveness of the Treaty as a whole would thus be enhanced and its fundamental principles confirmed: inter alia, the inalienable right of States to develop through international co-operation the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the appropriate régime of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

In this context, we cannot but recall our strong condemnation of the attack against the Tammuz nuclear reactor in Iraq, an attack which aroused most serious concern about its possible negative consequences on the credibility of the IAEA safeguards system.

The questions of negative security guarantees and of nuclear-weapon-free zones are closely related to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

The search for negative security assurances originates in the natural concern of the non-nuclear-weapon States to be assured against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. By removing this preoccupation negative security assurances can also contribute to improving the general conditions of security and stability, thus fulfilling a wider role in the interest of the entire international community.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

Italy, which was entrusted with the task of presiding over the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Working Group in Geneva this year, is convinced of the usefulness of continuing to pursue this important objective with the necessary determination. We confirm in particular our interest in an approach designed to identify a common formula to be incorporated in an international instrument of binding character. Such an exercise would, however, be bound to be repetitive and sterile unless it were taken up in a realistic and balanced manner.

We do hope, therefore, that certain new elements which emerged in the course of the discussions on a common formula during the 1981 session of the Committee on Disarmament and which are consistent with this approach can be further explored and developed with the decisive contribution of all nuclear-weapon States.

Whenever the necessary conditions exist, particularly in those regions where no systems of nuclear alliances are present, the security of States may be adequately preserved and enhanced through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. That solution would be likely to produce positive effects in terms of horizontal non-proliferation, of greater stability, of an improved climate of trust among the parties and, in general of the promotion of the disarmament process. The precedent represented by the Treaty of Tlatelolco provides an instructive reference for similar initiatives in other areas.

The specific interest so far expressed in the First Committee by various quarters in the problem of arms control in outer space is a matter of particular satisfaction to my delegation. Italy has over the years constantly advocated further efforts to secure outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes.

On 9 September 1968 the Italian delegation put forward a proposal for the review of Article IV of the 1967 Treaty (A/7221). On 1 February 1978, both in New York and in Geneva, Italy suggested the adoption of further measures to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space (Working Paper A/AC.187/97). That suggestion is reflected in paragraph 80 of the Programme of Action of the Final Act of the first special session on disarmament.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

Lastly, on 26 March 1979, Italy submitted to the Committee on Disarmament for consideration a memorandum and attached draft protocol with a view to supplementing the rules of the 1967 Treaty.

In this regard we share the opinion expressed by His Excellency the Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh, who, speaking on 19 October last, said:

"It is our firm conviction that as a point of departure an anti-satellite weapons treaty should be concluded." (A/C.1/36/PV.3, p. 53)

We too are inclined to think that in order to prevent outer space from becoming an arena for arms competition the first and most urgent steps that should be taken is the negotiation of an effective and verifiable agreement to prevent the development, testing and deployment of anti-satellite systems. Such systems constitute a most dangerous and potentially destabilizing factor that has emerged in recent years in the field of military applications of space technology. Anti-satellite systems are aimed at interfering with or destroying space objects which have a fundamental role in, inter alia, the field of communications, observation and verification. The stabilizing effect of the functions carried out by these satellites is well known to the Member States of the United Nations, which voted overwhelmingly in favour of a study on the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency.

Thirty-five years after the United Nations Commission for Conventional Weapons defined chemical warfare agents as weapons of mass destruction, and more than 20 years since the beginning of negotiations on the subject, the international community can only acknowledge the distressing fact that no agreement has yet been reached.

The General Assembly should strongly appeal to the Committee on Disarmament to fully discharge the responsibilities assigned to it and to negotiate the actual text of a treaty with the greatest sense of urgency.

This is all the more necessary at a time when allegations of the use of chemical weapons in various parts of the world are becoming increasingly frequent and worrisome. In this regard the Secretary-General of the United Nations is currently conducting an indispensable investigation which in our view ought to be given the widest possibilities of being carried out.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

Unlike the issues of nuclear disarmament, those of conventional disarmament have not yet been subjects of an in-depth analysis within the United Nations. The complexity of the matter and its connexions, still largely undefined, with the whole range of disarmament issues would suggest the desirability of urgently undertaking the study that Denmark proposed on this subject last year.

While we have noted with regret that a limited number of States have not associated themselves with the compromise proposals put forward in the United Nations Disarmament Commission and have thus delayed the undertaking of this study, we remain confident that during the present session the General Assembly will take a positive decision on this issue. A further delay would reflect negatively on the disarmament process itself, which is still lacking an indispensable element of clarification. The need for adequate measures of conventional disarmament has been constantly recalled by my delegation. Whereas the catastrophic consequences of nuclear war are clearly perceived, the scale of destruction which would be brought about if the most sophisticated conventional armaments were to be used in war is not always fully recognized. Nor is there sufficient recognition of the relationship between the conventional-arms and the nuclear-arms build-up. The growth of conventional arsenals and their qualitative refinement can in fact provide impetus to the expansion of nuclear stockpiles and the temptation to redress a substantive imbalance in the conventional field through a parallel increase in and improvement of nuclear arms.

Being aware of the general importance of this question, at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament Italy introduced a proposal aimed at limiting and controlling the transfer of conventional weapons under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Italian proposal, which was also introduced in the Committee on Disarmament during its 1980 session, in document CD/56, calls for the establishment within the United Nations framework of a body structured in regional commissions composed of suppliers and recipients for the purpose of monitoring, controlling and limiting, through agreed procedures, the international arms trade.



(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

The question of the reduction of military budgets to be undertaken in the first phase by the militarily most significant States can be considered, though not exclusively, in the broad context of conventional disarmament.

There is no doubt that a reduction in defence expenditures could be achieved without excessive difficulties if States were able to rely on the absolute reciprocity of neighbouring countries or in any event of those from which they perceive a potential threat. It was precisely in order to give States assurances that individual or collective security would be maintained at lower levels of expenditures that at its thirty-fifth session the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General's Group of Experts to further refine the standardized reporting instruments for military expenditures and to propose effective solutions to the related fundamental problems of comparability and verifiability of military budgets.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

We believe that this line of action ought to be pursued since it is the only one which can be conducive to the reduction of military expenditures - a growing and often unbearable burden for all countries. The release of resources to the benefit of the economic and social development of all countries, in particular of developing countries, and the undiminished security which would be guaranteed by the strict application of the standardized instrument would constitute a further step in the improvement of international relations and in effective progress in the field of disarmament.

The steady development of disarmament-related activities makes us all the more aware of the important role that our Organization can play in this field. In order to enhance such a role and to ensure an increasing effectiveness of United Nations action, the functioning of the existing structures and the institutional arrangements should be reviewed and, if necessary, improved. Furthermore, we should consider the possibility of entrusting the Organization with new appropriate and specific functions.

It will be up to the forthcoming special session, in the context of the consideration of disarmament mechanisms, to provide appropriate indications and to find the most adequate solutions. At this stage we should like to draw attention to the need to re-examine carefully the functioning of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, to adopt the solutions that might become necessary for the proper fulfilment of the important tasks of the Secretariat's Disarmament Centre and, finally, to evaluate carefully which additional functions of common interest to all States - for instance, in the field of verification - might be given to the Organization.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

I have set forth Italy's views on some points which we believe to be particularly significant and on which we hope to see rapid progress. My delegation reserves its right to intervene again on these issues as well as on other points of the agenda.

Mr. KRISHNA (India). Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the delegation of India and on my own behalf, I should like to offer to you, the representative of friendly Yugoslavia, our warm congratulations on your assumption of the high office of Chairman of the First Committee for the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. During the weeks ahead we shall rely on your well-known diplomatic skills and wisdom to steer us to a successful and fruitful conclusion of the work before us. This session of the First Committee is a particularly crucial one in view of the impending second special session devoted to disarmament, which the United Nations will convene in mid-1982. All delegations represented here have, therefore, the responsibility to co-operate with you, Sir, in laying a firm basis for the success of the second special session, of which the international community has justifiably such great expectations. You can rest assured that you will have the full co-operation of the Indian delegation in the discharge of your functions as Chairman.

Many representatives present here have deplored the increasingly negative trends that have recently been manifest in the international arena. The arms race, particularly in its nuclear aspect, has acquired a new and more dangerous momentum. The relations between the two major nuclear Powers and the alliance systems headed by them have taken a further turn for the worse during recent months. The language of the cold war of the 1950s, which many of us hoped had been buried once and for all, is being heard again with a new stridency.

(Mr. Krishna, India)

What is worse, the spirit of confrontation and rivalry between the major Powers is being increasingly manifested in all parts of the globe, exacerbating local conflicts and engendering new disputes among States. It is not unnatural, therefore, to react to this new situation with concern and even a degree of anxiety when the very future of humanity seems to be at stake.

We cannot close our eyes to these negative trends. Nevertheless, it is also the contention of my delegation that the international environment is not determined and should not be allowed to be determined just by the twists and turns in the relationship among the major Powers and their allies. In encouraging contrast to the re-emergence of great-Power confrontation, the 95 members of the Non-Aligned Movement have again demonstrated their commitment to the principles of peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding and co-operation, most recently at the Ministerial Conference of Non-Aligned Countries held in New Delhi in February this year. It is not as if there were no differences within the Movement. However, what keeps the Movement together and enables it to play an influential role in the preservation of international peace and in the building of bridges of understanding among States is its ability to take a larger view, its commitment to ensuring our common survival and progress. The relations of mutual understanding and co-operation, the commitment of our countries to seek the peaceful settlement of disputes and work together for the achievement of general and complete disarmament, are a crucial positive dimension of the international environment which must not be ignored.

There is yet another hopeful sign on the international scene which should also be taken into account. While a frenzied build-up of armaments is taking place, there is at the same time a growing public awareness of the dangers of war, particularly of a possible nuclear holocaust. Ordinary people belonging to every political persuasion are coming out in their thousands to protest against the insane race to disaster to which the entire world is being subjected by votaries of the arms race. The man in the street is at last prepared to stand up and say "No" to those who play games of nuclear deterrence and balance of power at the risk of our collective survival.

(Mr. Krishna, India)

It would be a mistake to interpret these sustained and spontaneous waves of popular dissent from the arms race as either pacificism or unrealistic idealism. They are in fact an expression of man's basic instinct for survival. Ultimately what we do here in the international forums will have little relevance if we do not pay heed to the common man's yearning to live in a world free from the fear of a cataclysmic war. Let us therefore draw strength from the fact that in our endeavours to achieve disarmament we have the active support and encouragement of the ordinary citizen of the world.

The greatest threat to human survival today stems from the danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war. It is for this reason that the Final Document adopted at the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament gave the highest priority to the achievement of nuclear disarmament. Despite this clear-cut commitment of the international community to achieve the urgent elimination of nuclear weapons, attempts are still being made to shift the focus of disarmament efforts to such issues as conventional disarmament. India is by no means opposed to conventional disarmament, but it believes that efforts in that direction must be conceived of in the over-all context of achieving general and complete disarmament in conformity with the clear-cut priorities already accepted by consensus in the Final Document. Those priorities are nuclear weapons; other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons; conventional weapons and reduction of armed forces.

It should also be borne in mind that it is the same nuclear-weapon Powers with massive arsenals of nuclear weapons which also produce and sell the bulk of conventional armaments. Any measures of conventional disarmament must first and foremost be the responsibility of those States. If we do not therefore approach this question with caution, we may find not only that the goal of nuclear disarmament is relegated to the background but that we also at the same time bring about another discriminatory and inequitable régime in the area of conventional weapons such as we have today in the nuclear field. Clearly, developing countries, many of which have only recently emerged from colonial rule, cannot be denied the means to defend their political independence and territorial integrity while a handful of States continue to retain and to accumulate vast arsenals of weapons of global destruction as well as sophisticated conventional armaments.

(Mr. Krishna, India)

At the recently concluded Melbourne summit of Commonwealth Countries, the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, pointed out that the world is being threatened by two major dangers. One is the confrontation between the big Powers and the increase in nuclear and conventional arsenals, and the other, a major issue, is the economic distress among large sections of mankind and the widening gap between developed and developing countries. The Prime Minister of India went on to point out that a consequence of the revival the cold war atmosphere was a setback to the process of building stability through negotiations and the enlargement of co-operation among neighbouring countries. The pursuit of policies of rivalry and confrontation in various regions of the globe by the major Powers without regard to local realities would, in her assessment, 'spark off explosions which will damage their own interests and the interests of those in the region'.

Recent events in various regions of the world testify to the correctness of that assessment. What we in India seek to promote is the relaxation of tensions throughout the world. At a time when détente was a more respectable word, India had pointed out that, to be enduring, détente must extend to all parts of the globe. Détente among the big Powers, limited to the European region, has proved fragile precisely because great-Power rivalry and confrontation in other parts of the world were not taken into consideration and covered by the same rules of conduct. It was only a question of time, therefore, before the antagonistic interests of the great Powers resulting in local conflicts rebounded on their central relationship.

Détente, as it was sought to be practised, was limited also in a qualitative sense. While there came about an appreciable relaxation of political tension between the rival military alliances, this was not translated quickly enough into the military field by reductions in the vast arsenals of nuclear and conventional weaponry deployed by both sides. Here again it was only a question of time before the relentless build-up of armaments once more fanned the underlying mutual distrust and suspicion.

In an interdependent world, a planet that is constantly shrinking under the pressures of modern technology, partial or regional measures of disarmament have only limited relevance. The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in

(Mr. Krishna, India)

various parts of the world, for example, makes sense only if accompanied by measures of nuclear disarmament. If a nuclear war should break out, nuclear-weapon-free zones would not escape its cataclysmic effects. Similarly, regional measures of disarmament would have some relevance only if conceived within the framework of a process of achieving general and complete disarmament.

(Mr. Krishna, India)

To disarm some regions of the world while others continue to accumulate growing arsenals of sophisticated weaponry cannot, in the long run, serve the cause of achieving enduring peace and stability all over the globe.

There is another aspect of the problem which must also be borne in mind although it does not fall within the category of disarmament and international security per se. This is the problem of economic distress among large sections of mankind that the Prime Minister of India referred to in her Melbourne speech. We live in an interdependent world. In such a world islands of affluence and prosperity cannot be sustained while surrounded by a majority of countries and peoples that grind out their daily existence in abject poverty. The glaring disparities of income and wealth among countries of the world today are a perennial source of international tension. Yet nations continue to seek security through even greater accumulation of armaments, the total expenditure on which has surpassed \$600 billion annually. Enduring international peace and security can be achieved only by providing a framework within which political security and economic well-being are assured to all nations of the world in a just and equitable manner. The achievement of general and complete disarmament would serve both aims at the same time, by eliminating the danger of war and the use of force in international relations while at the same time releasing adequate real resources for the economic and social development of the depressed countries of the South.

In this context, we consider the release of the report of the Secretary-General on a study on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/36/356) both significant and timely. India had the privilege of providing an expert to the Group that prepared the study. The conclusions and recommendations of the study generally reflect the preoccupations and concerns of all countries, particularly those in the developing world. The study has demonstrated conclusively the incompatibility between the continuing arms race and the objectives of the New International Economic Order. We endorse the assertion of the experts that:

... the world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed



(Mr. Krishna, India)

toward a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order. It cannot do both. It must be acknowledged that the arms race and development are in a competitive relationship, particularly in terms of resources but also in the vital dimension of attitudes and perceptions". (A/36/356, annex, para. 391)

The study recognizes that the arms race has complicated the process of stabilization of the international monetary system, aggravated the balance-of-payments problems of nations and distorted the evolution of international exchange in a period of growing economic interdependence. It further correctly points out that not only would disarmament act as a catalyst for broadening the basis for détente but the utilization of the released resources for the achievement of economic development of the developing countries would further strengthen this process.

Our assessment of the international situation, therefore, leads us to certain definite conclusions which we believe must be taken into account while determining our approach to problems of security and disarmament.

First, we believe that the achievement and maintenance of a new structure of détente must necessarily involve its extension to all regions of the world. The creation of artificial zones of stability in one part of the world while the rest of the world is left open for great-Power competition and confrontation would never prove enduring. Détente, therefore, must be global in character and content.

Secondly, experience has shown that political détente can survive only if it is accompanied by military détente. This implies that, side by side with the relaxation of tensions among States and the building up of mutual confidence, there should be concrete progress towards the reduction of military arsenals. Otherwise the continued build-up of arms will, in time, inevitably undermine whatever trust and confidence may have been built up among States in their political or economic relations.

(Mr. Krishna, India)

Finally, the whole process of achieving international peace and security must be underpinned by progress in establishing a new international economic order in which the vast majority of developing countries will have the opportunity to ensure a better life for their peoples. Political security would have little meaning without economic security. Both in turn underscore the interdependence of peoples and countries on our shrinking planet.

My delegation has noted with satisfaction the successful conclusion of the recent session of the Preparatory Committee for the Second Special Session on Disarmament to be held in June-July next year. Thanks to a spirit of constructive compromise we now have a well-balanced agenda for the second special session, which should enable us not only to consolidate the gains made since the first special session but also to address ourselves to the major topical issues facing the contemporary world in the field of disarmament and international security. The main item of work for the forthcoming special session will no doubt be the adoption of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, at present being negotiated in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. In our view, such a programme must necessarily involve a further elaboration and concretization of the Programme of Action contained in the Final Document of the first special session. Measures of disarmament ought to be specific in character, and States must undertake clear-cut obligations for their implementation within a reasonable period of time. An open-ended programme which was merely a statement of intent, without even an indicative time-frame, would fall far short of the expectations of the international community. We are confident that the Committee on Disarmament will be able to produce a mutually acceptable document will meet the urgent concerns of our time.

My delegation is aware of the fact that the endeavour we are engaged in is a difficult and arduous one. It will take time and effort before substantial progress can be achieved in evolving a more equitable, a more enduring structure of international peace and security. We must, however, avoid repeating the mistakes to which history so clearly bears witness. The path to security does not lie in more weapons. The pursuit of narrow security concerns by each country can result in insecurity for all.

(Mr. Krishna, India)

We are today closer to a nuclear catastrophe than at any time since the dawn of the atomic age. This is the result of the policies of confrontation followed by the major Powers and the relentless build-up of armaments that they have been engaged in. In formulating a fresh approach to the problems that confront us, therefore, let us avoid the pitfalls we have learnt to identify by our study of history. And let us not mark time on the pretext that the time is not yet propitious for achieving disarmament.

I should like to remind my colleagues of a story about a well-known general. When the general visited a detachment stationed in an inhospitable desert area, he suggested to the commandant in charge that he should plant some trees for providing shade and shelter. The commandant was taken aback and told the general: "But, sir, do you not realize that it would take them 100 years to grow?" "Indeed," replied the distinguished general, "then you have no time to lose".

Mr. de SOUZA e. SILVA (Brazil): May I express the satisfaction of my delegation, Mr. Chairman, at seeing you presiding over our deliberations and at the same time pledge the full co-operation of my delegation in the discharge of your important functions.

The annual review undertaken in the First Committee provides the opportunity for the international community to acquaint itself periodically with the progress achieved and with the difficulties encountered by the various multilateral bodies on disarmament questions. The framework for this task is the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, which set out the conceptual foundation of and established the multilateral organs for disarmament and related problems.

As we start our work, my delegation and, I believe, many others once again experience a deep sense of concern and disappointment. It is not only the lack of concrete results that disturbs us, but, rather, the failure on the part of some of the major Powers to live up to the commitments they accepted at the first special session devoted to disarmament. Although it was unanimously agreed in a solemn declaration only three and a half years ago that

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"... the accumulation of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, constitutes much more a threat than a protection for the future of mankind" (resolution S-10/2, para. 1) and notwithstanding the fact that in 1978 all nations gathered here subscribed to the statement that "The time has come to put an end to this situation" (ibid.) the vast majority of nations continue to witness an unprecedented escalation in the size and destructive power of the nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States and a massive build-up of their armed forces.

Astonishing as it may seem, the unmitigated military efforts of the super-Powers, which involve the expenditure of staggering amounts of real and financial resources, is being justified by their particular perception of security and by the alleged necessity of modernizing defensive capabilities, as if their ability to destroy each other several times over, together with the rest of the world, had not yet reached an adequate level. Even more astonishingly, mankind is being asked to believe that the stepping up of the nuclear arms race will increase, not decrease, the chances of its survival, and that peace should be sought through armaments, not disarmament, as if the current arms race were nothing but a myth. To further compound this ominous picture, we are being asked to forgo our own security concerns, both in a global and in a national sense, in order not to disturb the arena of bilateral rivalry and confrontation.

One instance of that situation is the fact that the Committee on Disarmament, established only three and a half years ago, with the consensus of the nuclear-weapon Powers, is being prevented by some of them from discharging its main responsibilities. By the same token, the negotiated text of the 1981 report of the Disarmament Commission, which attempted to give satisfaction to the expressed views of a large group of non-aligned and other nations on nuclear and conventional disarmament, was subjected to a last-minute veto by one of the super-Powers, providing a melancholic note in the wee small hours of a disappointing session.

In our opinion, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) should be given a fair chance at its next session to take decisions on the items entrusted to it, since the report of the 1981 session does not provide a basis for further action by the General Assembly. The report of

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Group of Governmental Experts on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development, introduced last Tuesday in this Committee by Mrs. Inga Thorsson, was the subject of innumerable reservations by some of the major Powers, which did not agree with the report's treatment of some pressing issues of disarmament. When examining the items connected with the Committee on Disarmament, the UNDC and the study on disarmament and development this Committee cannot fail to take account of the sad reality that activities in the field of disarmament seem doomed to paralysis.

There is an imperative need to restore faith in the institutional framework for deliberations and negotiations on disarmament. International public opinion must be reassured that nations remain committed to the principles and purposes hailed as crucially important, indeed vital, only three and a half years ago. The world needs to be confident that even in this era of the diplomacy of confrontation the permanent interests of mankind are not being discarded in exchange for a precarious equilibrium of forces on a higher plateau of destructiveness. The international community must be satisfied that negotiations envisaged in the framework of relations between the two super-Powers do not aim at the perpetuation of the nuclear threat by a handful of nations to the rest of the world, thus freezing for ever the present structure of power based on the possession of the means to dictate the will and make the law.

The notion of arms control as advocated in some quarters assumes that nuclear armaments will remain indefinitely in the hands of their present possessors. If the disarmament process is to have credibility the nuclear-weapon Powers, instead of merely aiming at the management of their military competition, must effectively engage in meaningful action on nuclear disarmament; the world must be further reassured that such a process takes into due account the security interests of nuclear and non-nuclear nations alike and that it does not seek maintenance of existing imbalances among nations.

Bilateral negotiations and productive talks among the powerful are, of course, a desirable development. Negotiations between the super-Powers on questions directly pertaining to their relationships, including the strategic equation that holds the world hostage to terror, are necessary and urgent would certainly help the achievement of progress in the multilateral spheres.

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

The mere fact that the two super-Powers are once again willing to talk to each other reflects a positive attitude that should be respected and encouraged. In this process, however the vital interests of other nations which have so far elected to forgo the nuclear military option should not be overlooked. The interests and concerns of the rest of the world are as worthy of respect and attention as those of the nuclear-weapon Powers. One cannot expect the rest of the world to have to adapt itself as best as it can to the concerted will of the armed and of the powerful.

Humanity, in its quest for civilization, long ago discovered that negotiation is the only viable solution for international problems. Accordingly, it solemnly decided in 1945 to outlaw war as an acceptable way of resolving disputes among nations. In the field of disarmament and the related question of international security, the Member States of the United Nations have also realized, sometimes through bitter experience, that there can be no lasting agreement which is not based upon the fair recognition of the aspirations and interests of all its parties and prospective adherents.

The forthcoming second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament can provide the proper scenario for progress in the field of disarmament through the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the first special session on disarmament and through the adoption of a comprehensive programme on disarmament. But the special session on disarmament will only become a meaningful and worthwhile exercise to the extent to which States, particularly the nuclear-weapon Powers, will be prepared to acknowledge the widespread concern for positive steps. The endless haggling over procedural details, the empty rhetoric of declaratory resolutions and the worn-out accusations by each side that the other is the only one to blame for the arms race in which both are engaged, must give way to a constructive attitude to negotiate in good faith on the substance of the problems. In this spirit We should examine the reports of the Preparatory Committee for the second special session on disarmament. If the substantive aspects of nuclear disarmament

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are not taken up by the nuclear-weapon Powers at the second special session on disarmament with a view to achieving meaningful progress, the world community will be justified in its misgivings about the opportuneness and usefulness of holding the special session next year, and even more so should some of the nuclear-weapon Powers not be prepared, at the least, to build on the commitments accepted at the first special session.

In the negotiating forum of the Committee on Disarmament, the delegation of Brazil, together with the delegations of the Group of 21, has pointed out the incongruousness of an approach that tends to dismiss as little more than a nuisance the participation of the non-nuclear-weapon States in negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Especially with regard to the nuclear test ban, participation of the nuclear-weapon Powers in whatever agreement is finally achieved is obviously crucial. But then, so is the participation of the non-nuclear-weapon States. Notwithstanding that simple truth, two parties to the interrupted trilateral negotiations have blocked consensus on the establishment of a working group on a comprehensive test ban, based on the contention that their restricted negotiations offer the best way forward. Since no concrete agreements have so far resulted from their negotiations and since the scant information provided to the Committee on Disarmament has given rise to strong doubts, to which the trilateral negotiators have not seen fit to respond, the stand taken by them is puzzling, unless their objective is to achieve a treaty to which they would be the only subscribers.

With regard to multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament, the Committee on Disarmament was also prevented by the same two nuclear-weapon Powers from taking a procedural decision to look substantively into the question on the basis outlined in paragraph 50 of the Final Document. Do those attitudes suggest a willingness to pursue the objectives of the Final Document itself or to fulfil the commitments undertaken in at least one treaty text originally intended to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons? The international community, as well as the signatories of that treaty, seem to entertain increasing misgivings as to the value accorded to such commitments by those who undertook them.

The four informal meetings held by the Committee on Disarmament on the question of the comprehensive test ban and of the cessation of the nuclear arms race were summarized in a document originally intended for the information of Committee delegations. When the suggestion was made that such a summary be conveyed to the General Assembly, some nuclear-weapon Powers strongly objected. Would it be reasonable to suppose that its contents were so sensitive that it should be kept a close secret, away from the membership of the United Nations, so as not to jeopardize delicate negotiations? The eventual reader of that document would certainly be disappointed, for it amounts to nothing more than the factual record of the informal discussions held on the two questions. As to the formal proposals for the establishment of the respective working groups in the Committee on Disarmament, no decision could be reached. Why should the nuclear-weapon Powers so adamantly refuse to take into consideration the continued and growing concern, not only of the Governments of the vast majority of nations, but also of public opinion in their own countries and those of their allies, in favour of urgent multilateral action on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament? Are we to believe that the nuclear-weapon Powers and some of their allies do not consider the Committee on Disarmament an adequate forum for negotiations on those two priority questions and, for that matter, on disarmament issues in general? My delegation does hope that the debates in this Committee will contribute to dispelling the serious apprehensions of the international community in that connexion and will help to promote an atmosphere of trust and co-operation towards the common objective of disarmament and of the strengthening of the security of all nations.

During the forthcoming discussion of the specific items included in our agenda, my delegation will offer its contribution to the furtherance of our common endeavours, which have been unmistakably endorsed by the international community. We expect that all those who have accepted in the not too-distant past the commitment to take action in the pursuance of the same goals will respond constructively to the aspirations and concerns of the peoples of the world.



Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius): The issue of disarmament is probably the only one that has never been dropped from the agenda of the General Assembly since its very first session. In spite of this, and the large number of resolutions dealing with disarmament, the Assembly last year adopted no fewer than 42 such resolutions. We have to admit that there was no progress towards disarmament and by its dimensions and implications this situation constitutes the greatest failure of our Organization.

We should no longer accept this situation. We should also reject the idea that the mere continuation of a number of formal or informal gatherings constitutes proof of disarmament progress. In fact, over the years peoples of the world have been lulled into a false sense of security by the rhetoric that has constantly accompanied, for political reasons, the launching of disarmament deliberations and negotiations or the conclusion of some agreements that have done nothing but regulate the armaments race in its upward spiral.

It is high time to address the issue in a new, radical way, and we are not short of proposals to this end. A 50 per cent across-the-board reduction of the destructive arsenals of the major Powers, which would maintain the military balance and strengthen their own security and that of other States has been proposed recently by Mr. George Kennan and welcomed by many peace-loving organizations all over the world.

A glance at the reality of weapons cannot but disturb even the coolest and most distant observers. Figures relating to the huge nuclear arsenals of the two major Powers have been quoted again and again here. They are madly high, and in spite of this their number continues to grow and their qualitative improvement is even speeded up. The new nuclear weapons, strategic and tactical, pose an increased threat of nuclear war since by their capabilities they are likely to be more suitable for fighting a nuclear war than deterring it.

Peoples of the world have realized the danger of these developments, and the huge mass demonstrations in favour of nuclear disarmament are larger than ever in the history of the disarmament effort. We place our hopes in the possible impact of such mass movements in bringing reason into international politics and bringing about the long overdue beginning of the process of meaningful disarmament.

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

At current prices world military spending is this year approximately \$600 billion, as I am sure figures produced by various research organizations will show. This waste of resources for totally non-productive purposes is in glaring contradiction to the development needs of the world, which is facing a crisis affecting every country, every nation.

Looking now at the agenda of the First Committee, we cannot but wonder whether we really grasp the dimensions of the problem and of the danger facing all of us. Do we indeed think that the policy of small steps - which was pursued for years and which failed to produce any meaningful disarmament measure - would all of a sudden result in something significant? We doubt that this would be the case. What is needed is a totally new approach, one that would aim at substantial reduction of armaments, armed forces and military expenditures within a strategy that would ensure that the armaments race as a whole was stopped and not merely reoriented.

We do indeed think that the leaders of today's world do not envisage a nuclear war by design, but man makes mistakes and it is impossible to ensure a completely accident-free type of human activity. What we have to realize is the dimensions of the consequences of a possible accident involving nuclear weapons. Data available to use from a report by the Armed Services Committee of the United States Senate indicate that in a period of 18 months the North American Air Defense Command recorded 147 false alarms which were sufficiently serious to require an evaluation as to whether or not they represented a potential attack. Some four other alarms during the same period were so serious that orders were given to nuclear bomber crews and intercontinental ballistic missile units to be ready to go into action. Similar developments are taking place, I feel sure, in other nuclear-weapon States.

Indeed, the issue before us is such that we are running out of time. In spite of this obvious conclusion, we must nevertheless admit that the political will and other conditions are not here to give any hope for meaningful progress at this session. That is why it might be useful - and the sooner the better -

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

to go back to square one and consider the security preoccupations and policies of various States, the currently prevailing doctrines and concepts and the danger perceived by various States or groups of States, and against this background to start something new, of completely different dimensions from anything we have had so far. We attach particular importance to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which in our view should mark a turning-point in our common efforts. It is in this context that I should like to express the appreciation of my Government for the very timely initiative of the Government of France that brought about the setting-up of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as a centre for reflection on and analysis of present and future problems relating to the armaments race and disarmament. The interest shown by the Government of my country in opening new, promising avenues for disarmament efforts is reflected in its decision to support the work of the Institute, and it will no doubt soon make a symbolic contribution to assist the Institute's activities. Since individuals are allowed to make contributions, I shall myself make a token contribution to this noble cause as an example to others.

I do not wish, by not addressing the individual items on our agenda, to produce the false impression that I am underestimating them, especially as my views on them have been well known for the last 13 years. On the contrary we would very much like to see concrete results from our deliberations on each of them. I just wanted to stress here today that we look forward to a new consensus that will be adequately realistic and backed by action, so that the armaments race may be limited and disarmament started.

The meeting rose at 1.00 p.m.