



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 25TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia)

later: Mr. YANGO (Philippines)
(Vice-Chairman)

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Mr. Abulhassan (Kuwait)
Mr. Kengmil (Suriname)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

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

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ALSUWEIDI (United Arab Emirates) (interpretation from Arabic): Sir, it gives me great pleasure at the outset to express to you our warm congratulations on your election as Chairman of this Committee. I am confident that with your qualifications and wide diplomatic experience you will be able to help this Committee crown its efforts with success. I am also pleased to congratulate the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur and to wish them every success in their work.

The question of disarmament, which is currently under consideration by our Committee, is considered to be one of the most important topics dealt with by the United Nations, and one on which the hopes of mankind are pinned.

The world feels great anxiety and fear because of the race engaged in by the big Powers to build up their armaments of sophisticated weapons, which might drag the whole world into further destructive wars. The cost of armaments in 1980 reached about \$500 billion - that is, about 6 per cent of gross world product - and this is in addition to the continued quantitative and qualitative development of weapons, particularly in the field of nuclear microbiological weapons.

My delegation appeals to all countries of the world, particularly the big Powers and the developed countries, to strive to change the existing situation by restricting the production and stockpiling of weapons in preparation for comprehensive disarmament in the future. It also urges countries of the developed world, in particular, to devote the

(Mr. Alsuweidi, United Arab Emirates)

part of their resources earmarked for research programmes concerning the production of destructive weapons to purposes of development, in order to serve humanity instead of leading it to the edge of destruction.

The geographical situation and political circumstances of my country cause it to take a keen interest in the establishment of nuclear-weapon free zones, particularly in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean. Moreover, the fact that we belong to the group of non-aligned countries and the Group of 77, comprising developing countries, gives us a basic interest in making the African continent and Latin America nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The setting up of an Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons during the session of the Committee on Disarmament last year constituted a valuable step forward in the attempt to provide a concrete solution to that problem.

There is ample evidence of the fact that Israel is trying to produce and acquire nuclear weapons, and many delegations at the tenth special session of the General Assembly produced evidence of that fact. Thus, I do not need to repeat such evidence at this session. Everybody knows that the objective of the Zionist entity in acquiring such weapons is to use them against Arab peoples and countries, just as Israel is doing in Lebanon, where it is carrying out strikes against densely populated areas with rockets and incendiary bombs. We, as one of the Arab countries, are one of the targets of such acts of aggression.

The Israeli raid against the Iraqi nuclear reactor, which was designed for peaceful purposes, is one of the best indications of Israeli intentions. Iraq is a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and has accepted the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

(Mr. Alsuweidi, United Arab Emirates)

That attack by Israel constituted a grave challenge to the non-proliferation régime of the NPT. Moreover, Israel's refusal to subject its nuclear installations to international control is clear evidence of that challenge. We call upon the United Nations to take effective measures against Israel and against its acts of aggression.

The close military co-operation between the Zionist entity and the racist régime in South Africa, particularly in the field of nuclear armament, is clear evidence of the fact that Israel is challenging the international will by making an alliance with the racist entity, which has been condemned by the international community because of its inhuman practices in dealing with the indigenous population.

The area of the Indian Ocean and the Arab Gulf has of late witnessed an increased military presence on the part of the big Powers - a fact which exposes the security of those regions to a major threat. My country attaches great importance to the convening of the International Conference on the Indian Ocean, and we hope that that Conference will be convened as soon as possible, in order that the necessary steps may be taken to proclaim the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation has asked to speak on this last day of the general debate in the First Committee in order to share its impression on the discussions which have taken place.

It appears to us that the discussion has revealed the general political mood of those participating in the Committee. During this discussion we have, as it were, delineated the key issues which are of major concern to the overwhelming majority of delegations and which need to be resolved.

(Mr. Issraelyan USSR)

Undoubtedly everyone would agree that the main subject of this concern has become crystal clear and that is the growing threat of nuclear conflict, which may, if steps are not taken to prevent it, become a catastrophe for all mankind. In the Committee, there has also been a convergence of views to the effect that the sources of that danger are the spiralling arms race the aspiration to military superiority, the use or threat of force in international relations and, particularly, the possibility that nuclear weapons will be utilized in the next conflict.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

We have heard the view very clearly expressed that steps must be taken to prevent the danger of a nuclear war and that the nuclear arms race should be curbed. We have also heard appeals to the effect that a way should be found immediately to remove this sword of Damocles which in the form of a nuclear threat hangs over the heads of mankind. That has been the main topic in the discussions we have had. In this connexion, something that was said by the representative of Jamaica is particularly noteworthy, and we believe it reflects the mood and the thinking of many States, great and small, which are convinced that the negative trends in international life can be overcome by the joint efforts of the international community. This is what the representative of Jamaica so aptly said:

"it is important that the General Assembly adopt measures to reverse this trend. There is too much at stake for this Organization to remain a helpless witness to a drift towards a nuclear conflict." (A/C.1/36/PV.15, p. 6)

In this connexion he made an appeal that we redouble our efforts along these lines.

During the general debate views were also expressed concerning the steps we should all collectively take to remove the threat of the annihilation of mankind and to improve the international climate. In this connexion, the indissoluble link that exists between the efforts to strengthen international security and arms limitation measures was stressed. For example, we are in agreement with the view expressed by the representative of Venezuela to the effect that the seriousness of the present international situation should provide additional incentive for carrying out specific measures in the field of disarmament. We also share the view of the representative of Canada that disarmament is a means of achieving our common goal, that is, to ensure international security and stability.

I believe it would not be an exaggeration to say that a significant majority of those that spoke feel that the priority task in reducing the danger of war is to curb the nuclear arms race, which means that negotiations on nuclear disarmament must be initiated with urgency. At the same time, it has been said very pertinently that the elimination of the nuclear potential in the final analysis would provide a material guarantee that the threat of a nuclear catastrophe had been lifted.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Reference was also made to the need to undertake specific partial measures leading to that objective, including the need to take a decision immediately on the matter of a general and complete ban on nuclear weapon testing. We believe that the General Assembly should not go along with the attempts to temporize in regard to achieving the resolution of this question, that is, a nuclear weapon test ban. Negotiations, whether on a trilateral or a multilateral basis, should be held in order to seal off this very dangerous channel for the nuclear arms race.

The Soviet delegation was very pleased to note the statements made by many countries in favour of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world on the basis of agreements reached among the States concerned, including nuclear-free zones in the Balkans, in northern Europe, in the Mediterranean, in the Middle East and in other parts of the world. We support the idea that all nuclear Powers should immediately undertake talks on nuclear disarmament or negotiations on the adoption of partial measures such as, for example, the cessation of nuclear weapon tests. This would mean faithfully fulfilling the obligations under article 6 of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Thus the Soviet Union is very sympathetic to the views expressed by many countries here concerning the need for a general strengthening of the non-proliferation régime.

The Soviet delegation was also pleased to note that the representatives of many different countries favour continuing efforts to limit not only nuclear weapons but also other types of weapons of mass destruction. We have already mentioned our own willingness to be an extremely active participant in efforts to prohibit chemical weapons. We also fully support those who favour a ban on the production and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction, whether they be existing types of such weapons, such as the neutron weapon, or others which may subsequently turn up in the arsenals of States, such as radiological weapons.

Over and above those steps, which I would call key steps in removing the danger of war, proposed by various States, delegations in the Committee also put forward proposals on a number of other disarmament matters. In due course the Soviet delegation will make known its views on those proposals too.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

For its part, the delegation of the Soviet Union did not come to this session empty-handed, as it were. We have put forward for the consideration of delegations two new initiatives in the form of proposals. Their contents are, I hope, quite well known.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

I should simply like to stress that those proposals appear to us to be in complete consonance with the main subject of alarm and concern, as identified in the course of our discussions in this Committee. Indeed, the proposals go to the very heart of present-day world politics: the prevention of nuclear catastrophe.

I think we might say that that subject is beating on the very walls of the room in which we are sitting here. Anyone with misgivings about the urgency of this problem might perhaps carry out a simple experiment: he might go out into the street and ask any passer-by what he would like the United Nations to do at the present time. More likely than not, his reply would be very succinct: to ensure the prevention of nuclear catastrophe.

Various views have been expressed with regard to the proposals we put forward. We should like first of all to thank those delegations that expressed support for our ideas. There were also some words of doubt and of criticism. The Soviet delegation would like to reserve its right to give a detailed reply somewhat later to the criticisms that were made, particularly because many of the delegations that made them stated that they would be expanding their arguments in more detail only after the conclusion of the general debate.

I should like now to refer to one point which we regard as an extremely important one. In the statements of the critics of our proposals, we did not hear any constructive counter-proposals on how to prevent the threat of nuclear conflict and catastrophe. But it is precisely that sort of constructive proposal that was made by the Soviet Union: unambiguously to declare that States should refrain from unleashing nuclear war. As members know, we propose that the first use of nuclear weapons should be proclaimed a crime against humanity, for if there is no first nuclear strike, there can be no second or third or fourth strike; there can be no nuclear war; there can be no nuclear catastrophe.

The fact that the problem of preventing the outbreak of nuclear war has become the subject of talks at the very highest level is both evidence of the extreme urgency of this matter we have raised and the first practical result of its having been included on the international community's agenda. We have seen the beginnings of dialogue during this current debate.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

We are very gratified at the support given by the representatives of all the main groups of States participating in the work of this Committee for the proposals put forward by the Soviet Union with the intention of preventing the use of a newly-discovered space - outer space - as an arena for the arms race and for increasing tension among States. This gives us every reason to hope that the Committee on Disarmament will in the very near future take practical steps along those lines.

Here again, as members know, we made a very specific proposal: a draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

In our view, one of the most important results of the discussions we have had was the removal of all doubt that the prevailing view in our Committee is that there is a need to reactivate talks on arms limitation, nuclear arms limitation and disarmament. We agree with the delegations that emphasized the importance of talks as the only rational tool that will enable us to remove the threat of war and to reduce the degree of tension in international relations. It is our belief that there is no arms limitation matter that could not be resolved through honest and constructive talks held on the basis of the principles of equality and equal security. The First Committee would indeed be making a useful contribution to ensuring the achievement of positive results in the work of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly were it to translate the widespread understanding - I would not risk using the word consensus in this connexion - that has emerged into a factor favouring the holding of talks and into the language of resolutions and decisions.

The next stage in the work of our Committee, and one that carries with it great responsibility, is the drafting and adoption of draft resolutions. The content and basic purpose of those fundamental decisions, we believe, has been very clearly determined in the course of the general debate; we referred to those points in the first part of our statement. We appeal to all delegations to participate constructively in the further work of the Committee.

At the same time, in the initial stage of our work certain rather strange traditions have appeared. For example, the delegation of the United States, as though performing some sort of ritual, has started to exercise its right of reply at the end of virtually every working day of the Committee.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

And, whomever they were replying to, and on whatever subject, it was typical that the leitmotif of every statement made by the United States representative was a blatant attack on the Soviet people and on the Soviet State and its policies. That, apparently, is what the United States delegation regards as its contribution to the work of the current session of the General Assembly. But we regard it as a recurrence of a dangerous and somewhat contagious - although treatable - illness, which, as a former physician, I would term hysteria anti-Sovietica, an illness with which we became very familiar during the time of the cold war.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Of course, we could well overlook the most recent outbreak and recurrence of this illness. However, it is extremely unfortunate that by means of anti-Sovietism the United States is attempting to disguise the complete absence of any constructive proposals or any kind of constructive approach to matters of arms limitation and disarmament.

As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, as Mr. Brezhnev recently stated in an interview given to the West German magazine Der Spiegel, excerpts from which were published in The New York Times today:

"As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, we are, as I have already repeatedly said, seriously prepared to maintain normal relations with the United States based on mutual respect and taking into account the rights and interests of each. More than this, we wish to have good, friendly relations with the United States of America and co-operate with it in the interest of strengthening peace in the world." (The New York Times, 4 November 1981, p. A6)

In conclusion, may I say that the sense of responsibility that has been demonstrated in the statements of the representatives of the overwhelming majority of delegations in this Committee regarding the fate of the world and the prevention of nuclear catastrophe inspires optimism in the Soviet delegation and the belief that the First Committee of the General Assembly will, indeed, take important decisions that will help to limit armaments and remove the danger of war. As far as the delegation of the Soviet Union is concerned, we are ready to participate constructively in the further work of this Committee.

Mr. JAYAKODY (Sri Lanka): As this is the first time that the delegation of Sri Lanka has spoken in the Committee, permit me to offer you, Sir, representative of a friendly country that has contributed so much towards resolving the problems of international peace and security, the warm congratulations of the Sri Lanka delegation on your election as Chairman of this Committee. Your long experience in the work of this Committee equips you admirably to carry out the onerous duties which have been placed on you. We

(Mr. Jayakody, Sri Lanka)

have no doubt that you will ably guide the Committee towards constructive achievements in the weeks ahead. My delegation pledges its fullest co-operation to you in your work as Chairman. My delegation also wishes to congratulate the other officers of the Committee elected to assist you and the Committee.

Exactly a year ago we were addressing our minds to the very items that are before us today. We recall some of the statements that were made here. Many concerns and fears that the world political situation was deteriorating were expressed, but we hoped that there would be improvement. However, it comes as no surprise to us today that the situation confronting mankind is not better but worse than a year ago. This continuing deterioration seems to characterize the 1980s in all areas.

Since this Committee commenced its work we have listened to several assessments of the world security situation and, particularly, of the threat of nuclear disaster that hangs over us. There has been a continuing thread running through these assessments, namely, that the world and mankind continue to stand perilously on a most dangerous threshold - the threshold of annihilation through nuclear weapons. We have been brought to this threshold by the course that has been followed by the nuclear Powers, which try to make us believe that genuine and lasting security can be gained only through the erection of a high platform of nuclear-weapon preparedness. In our view, acceptance of this thesis would amount to saying farewell to arms control and goodbye to disarmament negotiations. It is in our view a self-consuming process that does not deliver the desired results.

The last year has witnessed a worsening and an increase of the threat of nuclear disaster, leaving us even less time on the doomsday clock. The world has moved further away from the possibility of reducing tension, strengthening détente and understanding and avoiding confrontation. We are witnesses to an arms race that is unprecedented in its scope and intensity. Increasing reliance on hoary old theories of the balance of power continues to bolster and justify the production and deployment of nuclear weapons. A search is on to identify emerging windows of vulnerability, new imbalances and gaps in

(Mr. Jayakody, Sri Lanka)

strategic and theatre weapons deployment, and the creation of new triads that are claimed to ensure military superiority, lasting security and durable stability. The nuclear arms race, devoid of logic and clearly out of control, threatens to lead all of us to the nuclear abyss, making the 1980s the execution block of history. The trends are visible to all. A combination of decisions and events can certainly bring us to the brink and over.

We have often heard it said that tired rhetoric and simplistic solutions are not sufficient to deal and grapple with the complexities and intricacies of disarmament questions, particularly nuclear disarmament questions. While we agree that power does not come from the mouth, my delegation is of the view that the rhetoric, tired or fresh, flows from true understanding and genuine concern that the crises of the 1980s are more complex, dangerous and explosive than crises have ever been before. Today there are more conflicts, more tensions, more flashpoints and more nuclear weapons than a year ago. The size and complexity of the problems that we face defy the accumulated stock of analytical and policy instruments at our disposal. There are limits to mankind's capacity to design and manage, through workable political processes, large complex systems. It is possible that we have gone beyond those limits. It is perhaps beyond our imagination to create processes that can manage the systems that are in place already. The options we have for avoiding catastrophe are decreasing. Delays in implementing the options are, in our view, quite literally deadly.

The lessons of history are there for all of us to understand, and what we ask is this: Has not the history of the past 35 years been a continuous drama of failure to meet fundamental challenge? In the past history has been so. Are we to repeat it? Are we to ensure that the will to meet the challenge of the nuclear arms race will come only from the rubble of a nuclear holocaust? And, finally, are we to postpone the adoption of concrete measures towards nuclear disarmament to a time when we have charred hands and a desolate world? These may sound like rhetorical questions, but they are the questions on the minds of millions who wish to be heard.

(Mr. Jayakody, Sri Lanka)

The Final Document that came out of the first special session on disarmament lucidly and cogently identified the nature and extent of the threat that we all face. The first special session on disarmament was indeed a landmark event in our quest for disarmament, nuclear and conventional. The Final Document provides us with a guide and a spur to action. But, regrettably, what has been achieved since then has been little and not significant. We have not been able to move towards accepting any approach to security and international peace other than the conventional one of deterrence and the balance of power.

(Mr. Jayakody, Sri Lanka)

The Final Document, in our view, contains much that has helped to develop and refine an alternative approach to questions of security and war and peace. But what was adopted by consensus in 1978 has not propelled us to achieve much. What other alternative is there to deterrence and the balance of power? Can we not find another approach? It is indeed an irony of human civilization that although contemporary man has overcome barriers in almost every other area, thus surpassing his predecessors on countless fronts, he still holds views and pursues policies in international politics that were held and implemented centuries ago, when human civilization was still young. This is a surprise and could be counted as contemporary man's most outstanding failure. Only one thing is more surprising: we do not yet recognize that failure.

In the view of my delegation the failure can be corrected. The Charter of the United Nations, the resolutions of the General Assembly and of this Committee, the implementation of the innumerable decisions that have been taken by the United Nations is the best corrective. The security of all States, a lessening of and then an end to international tension, an end to the arms race and the establishment of lasting world peace can come only through a return to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and what its Members have adopted over the years. No other course can bring permanent tranquillity and peace to the world. My delegation, therefore, would like to appeal to all Members to contribute towards this fundamental and imperative step which is the corner-stone on which a new world order of peace and development could be built. Failure to do so, in our view, would mean that the new world order would be built on the ruins of the old.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Committee on Disarmament on its work in 1981. The Committee, in our view, has picked up a business-like stride and established a welcome rhythm of work reflecting the serious burdens that have been placed upon it. But we regret to note that in its formal and informal sessions the Committee has not been able to arrive at a consensus regarding the setting up of ad hoc working groups on nuclear disarmament and a comprehensive test-ban treaty. This, however, has not prevented the Committee from holding several sessions at which useful exchanges of view on those two items have taken place. We hope that in 1982 the Committee will be in a position to take up those two priority agenda items in a more formal and detailed way

through new ad hoc working groups. The co-operation and willingness of all members of the Committee are a prerequisite for the success of the Committee's work. We should like to appeal to all members of the Committee to exercise even greater co-operation and stronger political will in 1982 in carrying out the mandate that has been given to the Committee. The exercise of that will is urgently called for on the two priority items of the Committee's agenda. The application of the rule of consensus has stalled consideration and negotiation on nuclear disarmament and a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The Group of 21 in the Committee has taken several initiatives to start work on those items, but our efforts have been frustrated and the hopes expressed at the first special session on disarmament remain unfulfilled. We hope that in 1982 the position will change for the better.

The trilateral negotiators have reached a stage of inactivity. That is having a negative impact on the work of the Committee on Disarmament. We call upon the trilateral negotiators to resume their negotiations while simultaneously co-operating in the Committee on Disarmament on the subject of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The Committee on Disarmament is the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and its mandate is clear. Attempts to frustrate it and to straight-jacket and limit its role are contrary to the spirit and letter of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament. The Committee on Disarmament, in our view, is the vehicle to carry forward the work of the first special session on disarmament. Any attempt to stall the work of the Committee on Disarmament or to frustrate its effectiveness must be resisted by us all.

The Committee's work in the areas of negative security assurances, a chemical weapons treaty, radiological weapons and the comprehensive programme of disarmament are to be welcomed. The level of what has been accomplished falls short of our expectations and those of the first special session on disarmament, but we recognize that complexities and difficulties have emerged. We are confident that the spirit of constructive and co-operative endeavour that animated the Committee's work in those areas will help the Committee to achieve more progress in 1982. Here we should like to emphasize the importance and urgency that is attached to the comprehensive programme of disarmament. The elements that have been identified and the perspective that has emerged are hopeful signs that before the second special session on disarmament we could have

a draft comprehensive programme of disarmament that will contribute to the success of that special session. The preparation of such a draft will demonstrate a willingness on the part of the members of the Committee to translate the hopes of the first special session on disarmament into reality. Such a draft will provide the second special session on disarmament with a starting-point on the long and difficult path of moving towards real disarmament.

It is most heartening to my delegation to witness the growing concern of ordinary men, women and children around the world over the dangers of nuclear war. Growing concern over nuclear disarmament is no longer limited to statesman politicians, diplomats, academics, military personnel and others who are directly involved with it. All people living and working around the world are now acquiring a new awareness and consciousness of the fragility and precariousness of this planet. Those who live in potential war zones are recognizing the direct nuclear threat that would confront them from speculative theories of limited nuclear wars, new weapons and new weapon systems and newly emerging strategies. Those who live beyond the boundaries of the more vulnerable areas recognize that distance alone from the scene of historical battlefields affords no defence, for the oceans are now bristling with the awesome nuclear weaponry that will bring distant corners of the globe within the expanded window of vulnerability.

These fears are real. These concerns of people are rational and justified. In the view of my delegation the United Nations, through its agencies, has a vital and key role to play in assisting in the dissemination of information that will help to stimulate a greater consciousness and awareness amongst people about the need for nuclear and general and complete disarmament. The weight of public opinion must certainly be utilized to stir Governments to respond positively to the genuine concerns of those who fear needless annihilation.

Today's children are the citizens of the twenty-first century. Should we not lead them to the next millennium free of the fear of a nuclear holocaust, free of the fear of war and strife as an instrument for settling disputes? My delegation supports the work that is already under way and would call for a strengthening of United Nations efforts to help all peoples understand the horror of war -- be it nuclear or conventional -- and to assert their right to live in a world of peace.

The first special session devoted to disarmament recognized clearly that the establishment of zones of peace can contribute to strengthening the security of States within such zones and international peace and security as a whole. A decade ago Sri Lanka took the initiative in co-operating with a number of non-aligned countries at the United Nations to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. Today the Indian Ocean area has become one of escalating tensions, making the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace a matter of grave urgency. In that context, the non-aligned group of nations, together with the overwhelming majority of Member States, has called for the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in the firm belief and conviction that such a conference, with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council, the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean and the littoral and hinterland States, is a vitally necessary step for the implementation of the Declaration. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean is currently working towards that goal. It is not the expectation of Sri Lanka or of the non-aligned that the convening of the conference in Colombo will establish overnight a viable and effective zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. It is, however, our conviction that given the tension and insecurity prevailing in the Indian Ocean area the conference could help greatly in defusing tension and reaching broad agreement on a set of principles and practical modalities for the implementation of the Declaration to which all countries concerned can subscribe. We find incomprehensible the argument that the insecurity and instability in the region necessitates the postponing of the conference. On the contrary, we believe that it is the very instability and insecurity which compel the urgent convening of the conference.

(Mr. Jayakody, Sri Lanka)

The second special session on disarmament, towards which we all look hopefully, will have before it a report by the Ad Hoc Committee. It is our expectation that this report will give evidence of a serious exertion of political will by all countries concerned to contribute in a genuine and non-polemical way towards the convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean and the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace contained in resolution 2832 (XXVI) and considered by the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States in 1979.

This Committee has been presented with the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Disarmament and Development, contained in document A/36/356. My delegation wishes to express its sincere thanks to the Swedish Under-Secretary for Disarmament, Mrs. Thorsson, who played a key role in the Group of Experts. We welcome the report and its reasoning, which confirms what we have held all along, namely, the incompatibility of pursuing the arms race and simultaneously pursuing the goals of world economic and social development. Whichever way we look at it, we live in a world of scarce and diminishing resources. We live in a world where poverty, disease, homelessness and early death are the only inheritance of millions. It is in such a world, where millions of children go to sleep each day with the pain of empty stomachs and mothers weep because they cannot feed their children, that we spend over \$500 billion annually on arms. The problems of development are no doubt being tackled in other forums, but we cannot fail to underscore that there can be no lasting security in a world where the minimum needs of life are denied to millions of human beings who know nothing about theories of deterrence, balance of power and the defence of national interests. My delegation is confident that the report on disarmament and development will give a new impulse and direction to the study and discussion of this serious issue, which we hope will come before us at the second special session on disarmament.

(Mr. Jayakody, Sri Lanka)

My delegation welcomes the progress made by the Preparatory Committee for the Second Special Session on Disarmament. This special session must in our view use the basis that was laid down in 1978 to eradicate the scourge of the arms race. We are confident that all Member States will approach the second special session on disarmament with the utmost seriousness and solemnity so as to make it a success in response to the strivings of all people in this world. There is no doubt that all States will come to it prepared and determined to ensure that it is a productive Assembly eschewing polemics and purposeless debate. If we come to it with purposive determination to achieve results our hopes for it can be realized. On the other hand, if our attitude and approach to it are lukewarm and hesitant we shall be ensuring the conditions for a further spurt in the arms race and the escalation of the dangers that confront us. My delegation has no doubt that all Member States will work with vigour and determination to ensure the success of the second special session on disarmament.

My delegation will address itself to the other items before this Committee as they come up. For the present, we would wish to emphasize once again that there is only one viable, rational course before us. That is to abandon the insane rush towards higher, more dangerous levels of armaments and to move towards arms control and disarmament, which can bring us closer to the goals that we all want to reach, namely, peace, security and development for all mankind. Arms control and disarmament will not come from wishful thinking, cold-war language, polemics and assertions of the need to have parity or superiority in weapons. It can come only out of the exercise of political will by the Member States which are responsible for the continuance and escalation of the arms race. We hope that the deliberations of this Committee will help all States to develop a stronger political will to approach the disarmament question in the context of ensuring the survival of all people in conditions of human dignity and tranquillity. My delegation has no doubt that the genius of mankind can develop an approach to human survival which excludes the arms race, theories of deterrence and balances of power and which is based on negotiations, dialogue and effective agreements.

Miss DEVER (Belgium) (interpretation from French): I should like first of all to associate myself with the other speakers who have very warmly congratulated the Chairman and the other officers of the Committee on their election.

The disturbing backdrop against which the present session of the General Assembly opened and the awareness that we have achieved only slight progress in recent times in connexion with disarmament, in spite of the vast efforts devoted to the subject, are hardly conducive to optimism. In speaking on behalf of the ten States of the European Community, the representative of the United Kingdom has already put forward our shared thinking about the agenda item before us.

It should be recalled that the cause of disarmament to which we devote the bulk of our work in this Committee, has already, especially during the 1960s, recorded some progress, making it possible for us to believe that the goal was within reach and that it would be enough to be patient and persistent to free the world from the accumulation of weaponry.

To seek out the reasons why and the ways in which these hopes were frustrated would lead us too far astray. But perhaps we should recall that in respect of disarmament we must also be realistic. Peoples do not arm themselves without reason. Among these reasons there is that which proceeds from the desire for power, the desire to extend domination and to dictate to others. It is here that our Organization must play its role fully. A symbol of the universal conscience, a guardian of law, it must maintain unswervingly the fundamental principle of the primacy of law over force. This is its primary *raison d'être*.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

More often, perhaps, nations seek in power and in the effectiveness of their weapons the best guarantee of their security. This is a fundamental truth and to lose sight of it would lead to deadlock. No one can ask a country lightly to risk its chances of survival.

But, if it is mistrust that induces nations to arm themselves, then a vast field of action offers itself to our Organization: to tackle the very causes of that mistrust, the deep reasons for the arms race, seen not as the disease itself but, rather, as the symptom of a deeper ill, fear.

In Belgium's view, the reduction of weapons is a priority objective, even if elementary good sense indicates that it can only be achieved completely in the long term. The international community will be failing in its duty to future generations if it does not now, through concrete action and not just declarations, as has too often been the case, reduce the growth of armaments.

Naturally, the most heavily armed among us should indicate the path to be followed and take the necessary initiatives, beginning with the reduction of strategic weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

This is the hope of the Belgian Government and that of the vast majority of our population.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

The international community, and the United Nations in particular, must respond to those aspirations of peoples and struggle against the scepticism that has characterized our work.

After more than a year of suspension, we can today express the hope that the process of strategic negotiations will resume in the near future. It is in fact essential that the Soviet Union and the United States resume the thread of those negotiations. It can be hoped that the time spent on thinking in the meantime will have been used profitably by both parties so that the negotiations can quickly lead to genuine reductions, in accordance with the wishes of world public opinion and the commitments undertaken by the nuclear powers that are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We are pleased to see that negotiations on medium-range theatre nuclear weapons will begin on 30 November in Geneva. That was the hope of Belgium and its allies. In that field, as in the field of strategic weapons, the idea of balance is fundamental. Negotiations should be directed in the first place to the maintenance and restoration of that balance where it has been broken. With respect to the level at which that balance should be placed, we hope that it will be as low as possible. In ideal circumstances those negotiations should lead to a zero level. Such a prospect would not only fulfil our wishes as a peace-loving people but would also be an excellent sign for the outcome of future negotiations which are closely related to the aforementioned negotiations and which should involve strategic nuclear weapons. We hope, as I have already mentioned, that those negotiations will also begin in the nearest possible future.

The reduction of weapons of mass destruction is a priority task. But we can have no illusions. Disarmament, just like security, is a global process which should cover all fields of weaponry. The elimination of nuclear weapons cannot be conceived without a balanced reduction of conventional forces.

The growth of conventional weapons in all parts of the world has been extremely rapid in the past years. The arms race, unfortunately, spares no continent. But, worse still, an uncontrolled growth of conventional weapons can lead to a risk of nuclear proliferation. That is the reason why Belgium

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

hopes that this Assembly will also deal directly with the problem of conventional weapons.

In this connexion, we can only express a certain disappointment at the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has not been able to fulfil its task, principally as regards the preparation of a study on conventional weapons.

I have already mentioned the ever crucial problem of nuclear non-proliferation, concerning which Belgium believes that the Non-Proliferation Treaty should remain the cornerstone of the entire non-proliferation system. We are firmly convinced that the international non-proliferation system, as basically organized by the Non-Proliferation Treaty, is at this stage our best collective guarantee, even if the Non-Proliferation Treaty is only one stage. That is why we hope that it will be applied in all its components and that it will become genuinely universal.

When a verification mechanism exists, as is the case for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, we cannot accept calling into question the validity of controls, in this case those exercised by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as happened in connexion with the raid against the Tammuz power plant, which we unhesitatingly condemned.

In more general terms, with respect to disarmament, for any measure of arms control and reduction to be effective, it must be based on a system of credible verification, an essential basis for mutual trust. The verification of the proper implementation of conventions seems to us one of the essential problems to be resolved. It does not lend itself to a study in abstracto. In fact, verification mechanisms must be strictly adapted to the material to be verified; otherwise they would fail in their objective. That is a problem to which we attach particular importance because, in our view, it is the key to the credibility of conventions.

The study under way on the utilization of chemical and biological weapons responds precisely to the doubts and misgivings that plague the conscience of the world when that key is lacking.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

A positive step was taken in the right direction by the adoption in 1978 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That document is, and must remain, the charter governing our action in that field. The next special session planned for 1982 will make it possible for us to take stock of our action during three years and, where results are deemed disappointing, we shall be able to give new impetus to our work and perhaps better adapt it to the patient search for concrete results.

Maintaining security, but at the same time seeking by all means to root out the causes of distrust among peoples and to promote understanding, are the principles which guide our actions both within the defensive alliance to which my country belongs and within the international bodies where we can have our voice heard.

Among the most promising initiatives undertaken by the first special session we should like to mention first and foremost the establishment of a negotiating body, the Committee on Disarmament, of which Belgium is pleased to be a member. Nonetheless, we regret that the results of its work fall somewhat short of our expectations. The projects that it has undertaken, of course, concern important fields, which partially explains the slowness of the progress. It is within the working groups established by the Committee on Disarmament that the progress which we hope for can best be accomplished.

We firmly hope that the Working Group entrusted with the preparation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament will see its efforts crowned with success. The results of that work will, in fact, to a great extent, be decisive for the work of the special session and the new impetus that we expect from it.

In that spirit, Belgium joined the Federal Republic of Germany, Australia, Japan and the United Kingdom in submitting a draft comprehensive programme which may respond to the wishes of the international community. Our goal in taking that initiative is to enable the Committee on Disarmament to submit a credible instrument that will facilitate negotiations in the field of disarmament. That instrument should, in our view, include a permanent element,

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

that is, the major principles that should guide the negotiations. and an element of dynamism, that is, the adaptation of measures envisaged in the programme to changing circumstances. Because of those changing circumstances, we cannot envisage a restrictive time-table for the programme. However, we do believe that meetings to review the implementation of the programme should play an important role in giving the needed momentum to its accomplishment.

In that respect, could we not envisage having the United Nations Disarmament Commission fully play its role in the framework of the Second Disarmament Decade by being entrusted, when the General Assembly sees fit, with a review of the implementation of the programme. We feel that States should also commit themselves to respecting the objectives, principles and priorities of the comprehensive programme and that this should include the firm will of the international community to implement it through specific and verifiable disarmament measures.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

I should like to conclude with a few other remarks on specific points dealt with in the Committee on Disarmament or in negotiations that are of direct or indirect concern to the work of this Committee.

The negotiation of an agreement prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and calling for their destruction is a particularly appropriate example, I believe, of the progressive approach required in a negotiating body. The working group created by the Committee to deal with that question has now drawn up the elements of an agreement. This is a positive development that I am pleased to highlight.

At the next stage it should be possible to undertake substantial efforts to reconcile divergent views. This is above all a question of the scope of application of the future convention and its verification machinery. However, the working group should not go on merely repeating the views already expressed on these matters. We believe that a change in its mandate is required if we are to preserve the bases of negotiations previously established by the Committee.

The will to succeed should make it possible for us to overcome the various obstacles. The resumption of bilateral negotiations between the United States and the USSR should support those efforts. The difficult nature of negotiations on the guarantees to be provided to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is becoming increasingly apparent as the years go by. Belgium believes that we must take every opportunity for agreement, even an interim one, that would enable us to make progress, however slight. In this connexion, we are grateful to Sweden for having suggested that the General Assembly request the Security Council to incorporate the declarations of nuclear-weapon States in a resolution, thereby giving those declarations an international legal status. In our view, this is the way to create a favourable atmosphere. It is also the way in which the non-nuclear-weapon countries that have chosen the path of non-alignment will be able to see the progressive fulfilment of their demands.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

As for the total prohibition of nuclear tests, we believe that further progress should be made in that field.

My country attaches great importance also to all the efforts being made to prepare for, support or complete negotiations. That is the light in which we view the importance that must be attached to all the work in the General Assembly as well as in the Disarmament Commission.

The work of the latter body is justified to the extent that it thoroughly studies certain given subjects. I have already mentioned our disappointment at the fact that at the last session the Commission was unable to fulfil its task, particularly with regard to the establishment of a study on conventional weapons. Belgium hopes that in the future there will be a better understanding of the need to include both conventional and nuclear disarmament in the task incumbent upon the international community.

Among the ways best suited to supporting our efforts, Belgium has always been keenly aware of the possibilities inherent in the regional approach. Such an approach should increase the concrete aspects of the United Nations work towards general and complete disarmament. I should like to say how pleased we were last year to see consensus in the General Assembly with regard to resolution 35/156 D, which dealt with such a study, and to see that many States have now expressed their views on the report of the Group of Governmental Experts. At a later stage, I should like to devote a special statement to that question, given the role my country played in the study on all the aspects of regional disarmament and the interest thus far expressed by many States.

I am convinced that our combined efforts will, on the basis of concrete initiatives, make it increasingly possible for us to achieve the goal of peace which is the very foundation of our Organization.

Mr. ABULHASSAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset, Mr. Chairman, to take this opportunity to express to you our sincere congratulations on your election to lead our deliberations at this important session of the United Nations General Assembly. You represent a friendly non-aligned country that knows the importance of peace and stability, a country that knows that disarmament is one of the most elements of peace and that is fully aware that economic progress for any country is dependent upon the provision to it of the necessary resources. Those resources can be derived, without any adverse effect, from the funds allocated to armament. We are convinced, moreover, that your experience and wisdom will guide our deliberations to the successful outcome we desire. Our congratulations go also to the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur.

During the course of the regular sessions of the General Assembly, our Committee considers a multitude of items under the subject of disarmament. Our delegation has, over the past few days, listened to the statements of many of the participating delegations, all of which have reflected the desire of the international community to turn this hope into a concrete reality, and thereby to promote world stability and peace, on the one hand, and global economic development on the other. Regrettably, however, and in spite of the noble motives underlying those demands and the common aims we have discerned from the statements we have heard so far, the international community has failed to take any effective and practical steps along that lengthy road. On the contrary, the world has witnessed, and particularly during the past year, a serious deterioration in the international situation and the intensification of competition among the big Powers in the world to gain new spheres of influence. Consequently, the arms race between them has intensified. The smaller countries, however, have found that the consequences of the competition between the big Powers for spheres of influence have undermined their security and stability and have forced them to redirect essential portions of their limited resources to armaments in order to preserve their right to a free and independent existence.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

On the other hand, scientific and technological progress has added a new and disturbing dimension to the catastrophes the world might face because of the discovery and development of nuclear weapons. The mere existence of that type of weapons, in the context of deteriorating international relationships, constitutes an unprecedented threat to the international community and to world civilization.

It is imperative that the Governments concerned study and deeply analyse the phenomenon of the hundreds and thousands of Europeans who have staged demonstrations in many Western cities over the past two weeks to protest against the spread of nuclear arms and the threat to use them. Those masses of people have been demonstrating out of their concern for peace and their feelings with regard to the dangerous proclivity being evidenced by some Governments to stockpiling all sorts of weapons.

We believe it is incumbent upon the international community to consider this prevailing threat to humanity as the cornerstone of international relations and to devote to it the appropriate effort and wise consideration in order to preserve the existence of humanity and to ensure the preservation of its resources. We also believe that the assertion made by the principal nuclear-weapon Powers that the policy of nuclear deterrence would fundamentally prevent nuclear war is erroneous and easily contradicted. The prevention of nuclear war cannot be based on the threat of the use of nuclear weapons. For war will occur, and it will affect the belligerents as well as the non-belligerents. Consequently, this argument cannot be maintained. Moreover, the idea recently advanced that a limited nuclear war is possible is fallacious, for whenever the nuclear trigger was pulled the result would be nothing short of certain general and unlimited catastrophe.

In spite of this feeling of concern and unrest, a by-product of the new tendencies in international situations, and because the responsibility for international peace and security and the avoidance of the eruption of a new

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

world war is joint, several and collective, the international community should redouble its efforts to ensure disarmament; it should not be pessimistic or influenced by negative aspects of the situation. It is our duty to the international community to recognize that the five big Powers have a special responsibility in this regard because they possess special capability and unique influence. Hence, if they do not take the necessary measures and undertake adequate and positive negotiations with a view to achieving disarmament and international peace and security, we shall be led to force them to face up to the responsibility they have shouldered as permanent members of the Security Council.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

' The rights that those Powers are given are not privileges without responsibility. On the contrary, they clearly embody greater responsibility for the preservation of international peace. In this regard, we make the following demands.

First, efforts must be redoubled to bring to fruition the various multilateral negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament, with the aim of achieving fruitful results in the shortest possible time.

Secondly, the question of putting an end to the nuclear arms race must be elevated to be the centre of attention at our session. We must remain constantly alert in order to implement the numerous decisions taken so far in this regard, for the decisions become significant and their essence becomes reality only if they are faithfully implemented.

Thirdly, we are duty-bound to make every effort to ensure adequate preparation for the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which is scheduled to be held in the middle of next year. It is our collective responsibility to ensure the success of that session.

Fourthly, the slogan used to mark the current decade, beginning in 1980 - the Disarmament Decade - must be given practical effect and become a reality, for when the United Nations produced that slogan it was responding to the peoples' aspirations and hopes. We suggest the launching of a big publicity campaign to illustrate the benefits that would accrue to States and peoples from a limitation on the level of all forms of armaments and to show that these benefits would easily turn the means of destruction into an opportunity for life and peace.

At a time when we are discussing the question of disarmament, our thoughts are directed to the intimate relationship between it and the policy of economic development in the world in general and in the developing nations in particular. This issue deserves the attention given it. It has become obvious that if part of the tremendous resources currently allocated to armaments were devoted to the programmes for providing nutrition in the world, for example, we should eliminate a phenomenon that threatens to wreak havoc on us all. The culmination of this phenomenon is that 1 billion persons - a quarter of the world's population - will be afflicted by great poverty, hunger and undernourishment before the year 2000; 15 million people, all under 15 years of age, will die of starvation unless a comprehensive food programme is prepared and implemented without delay.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

Hunger and lack of nourishment are without doubt impediments to the fruition of any development policy, for they spawn instability and lessen the effect of that policy in preserving peace in the world. All of this takes place before our eyes and affronts our conscience, at a time when resources are being directed again towards the stockpiling of weapons. Current annual military expenditure globally amounts to about \$500 billion, and it increases by \$40 billion every year. At the same time, development aid has declined to 0.5 per cent of the amount spent on armaments.

The link between disarmament and development leads us to a discussion about the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We must reiterate the right of all States to enjoy the benefits of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which will propel the wheel of development forward. Hence, we reject the impairment of development under the pretext of disarmament. We are against the erection of obstacles to the fulfilment of the desires of States capable of improving their development programmes by using for non-military purposes the advances offered by modern technologies, especially those connected with nuclear energy. We believe that the elimination of such obstacles must be one of the principal objectives of the international community. At the same time, we must refrain from using nuclear energy militarily. In our view that objective can be achieved through, first, accepting the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and strengthening its role in controlling nuclear installations, and, secondly, creating nuclear-weapon-free zones in areas such as South-East Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

Kuwait has demanded on various occasions that the areas of the Indian Ocean and the Middle East are not turned into regions of conflict and military competition, either nuclear or conventional. These regions are characterized by their unique geographical locations and their resources, which ought to be utilized for world progress and peace.

However, the Middle East is unfortunately afflicted by an alien racist régime that knows only the language of expansion and aggression. That régime did not hesitate to introduce nuclear weapons into the area, and it is co-operating with its counterpart, the racist régime in South Africa. The nuclear co-operation

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between Israel and South Africa is no longer a secret. It is a cause for the concern of all peoples, especially since the philosophy of the two régimes depends on aggression and expropriation. Israel has violated the sanctity of international law in its attempts to obtain nuclear weapons. It ignores the rules of the IAEA, will not allow IAEA inspection and refuses to abide by its safeguards. Nor does it hesitate to steal and commit acts of piracy to obtain uranium.

In this respect, we value the study annexed to the report of the Secretary-General in document A/36/431, which was prepared by a Group of Experts in accordance with General Assembly resolution 34/89 of 11 December 1979. One paragraph says that Israel possesses the technical capability to manufacture nuclear weapons and the means of delivery of such weapons to targets in the area. In addition, it has a reactor that is not subject to safeguards and is capable of producing plutonium. The report indicates also that Israel possesses the means of reprocessing plutonium from uranium by means of laser technology, and states:

"Israel appears to have a posture of deliberate ambiguity on the subject, which has contributed considerably to the alarm in the region and to the concern of the world community ... this deliberate ambiguity is ... a factor contributing to instability in the region". (A/36/431, paras. 80,81)

Israel, which wrecked security and stability in the Middle East by its aggression and introduction of nuclear weapons, did not hesitate to attack the nuclear facilities in Iraq, whose purpose was to serve the process of economic development through their purely peaceful use of nuclear energy. Those facilities were subjected to IAEA safeguards.

That Israeli aggression constituted a serious threat to international peace and security and was an affront to every State that attempts to increase its economic potential through the peaceful use of atomic energy, in accordance with a right guaranteed by international law and norms. The act was perpetrated by an aggressive entity which refuses to subscribe to the international Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, against a State which has accepted the Treaty and the IAEA safeguards.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

We call upon the international community, in the name of the right to economic progress, to condemn that flagrant and unprecedented aggression, one object of which was to prevent Iraq and other Arab States benefiting economically from the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which would be bound to advance economic development in the Arab countries.

Mr. KENSMIL (Suriname): Mr. Chairman, I have already had the opportunity of congratulating you and the then elected members of the Bureau on your election. I now merely wish to include in my expression of felicitations the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Carias of Honduras, we are convinced that he will make an important contribution to the work of the Committee.

My delegation is making a statement as the general debate on the disarmament items on the agenda of this Committee is drawing to a close.

Having followed this debate so far, we find that it is not difficult to draw the conclusion that there is a deep sense of frustration on the part of the international community, caused by the lack of progress in our attempts to reverse the arms race. Contributing to this sense of frustration, moreover, is our awareness that the prospects for achieving satisfactory results in this endeavour in the immediate future are far from encouraging.

Disarmament negotiations, which remain the only way to bring this deadly process to a halt, face serious difficulties in view of the recent escalation of the arms race by its main contestants and their respective military alliances. Events that have unfolded during the time that has elapsed since our previous session have confronted the world probably more than ever before with the danger that the huge stockpile of destruction accumulated over the years can ignite just what we have been told it was meant to prevent, namely, a major war involving nuclear weapons.

The world finds itself in this perilous state merely three years after the holding of the first special session devoted to disarmament. That session gave rise to a widely shared optimism that an effective approach to the problem of disarmament would be found.

This optimism was justified, as the session produced a consensus document with specific guidelines for disarmament measures.

(Mr. Kensmil, Suriname)

The failure to achieve major disarmament agreements can therefore be attributed neither to a lack of concrete guidelines nor to a lack of awareness of the dangers inherent in the continuing arms race. We have been reminded of the adverse effects of the arms race on different aspects of life over and over again, through the many studies that have been undertaken over the years. Most recently this was done through the study on the relationship between disarmament and development contained in document A/36/356.

My delegation wishes to note, however, that we realize that the process of disarmament requires an international political atmosphere conducive to the attainment of the goals set forth three years ago.

We cannot realistically expect major breakthroughs in our quest for disarmament when there is a continuing or even increasing reliance on force in international relations and when the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, however small they may be, is disregarded. The fear and insecurity created by this kind of aggressive behaviour in international relations remain serious obstacles to the relaxation of the international political climate which is essential if disarmament is ever to be achieved.

It is evident that the world has moved dangerously closer to a nuclear confrontation which, even if not started as such, will eventually, directly or indirectly, engulf the entire globe.

My delegation, for one, does not believe in a limited nuclear war, as we cannot conceive, taking human nature into account, that the vanquished in an exchange of nuclear arms would resign itself to defeat while still having at its disposal a massive arsenal of destruction with which to retaliate.

A nuclear war of whatever sort must never be started we all agree on that, as has been repeated time and again. Still, the nations of the world and in particular those States which are primarily responsible

(Mr. Kensmil, Suriname)

for this state of affairs, fail to agree on basic disarmament measures or to behave in such a way as to create the climate of trust and confidence in the international system which is essential for this process to move forward.

The present state of affairs of the world requires urgent measures by the international community.

The cessation of all nuclear weapon tests was early recognized to be one of the most effective measures to make a genuine start on the process of nuclear disarmament in order to prevent a nuclear war.

It has therefore come as a major disappointment to my delegation that the Committee on Disarmament in its 1981 meetings could not agree even on the simple procedural steps needed to get the work on a comprehensive test ban treaty, one of its priority items, off the ground.

My delegation views meaningful negotiations on a comprehensive test ban treaty as an essential step in restoring the credibility of the efforts of the United Nations towards disarmament and a safer world.

Progress in the work on the conclusion of the comprehensive test ban treaty will, moreover, strengthen the authority of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which has been seriously jeopardized by irresponsible acts that we have witnessed during the course of this year.

Recognizing the Non-Proliferation Treaty as an important achievement against nuclear weapon proliferation, my delegation does not, however, consider this Treaty as a goal in itself. Rather, this instrument is considered by my delegation as an intermediate step in the process of total nuclear disarmament, to be followed by other steps, of which the comprehensive test ban treaty is the most important one at this stage.

Nuclear-weapon States cannot in good conscience advocate non-proliferation if they themselves steadfastly refuse to be bound by a treaty to stop further nuclear tests.

(Mr. Kensmil, Suriname)

In the approach of creating intermediate steps in the process leading to total nuclear disarmament, the creation of nuclear weapon-free zones is also recognized as an important contribution towards global disarmament. We therefore continue to express the hope that the only such instrument the Tlatelolco Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, to which my country is a party will soon be followed by similar instruments in other regions, particularly such volatile regions as the Middle East and Africa.

We realize that with regard to Africa, serious problems will be encountered in establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone, since there is mounting evidence that the outlaw State of South Africa may already possess a nuclear capability.

My delegation wishes to express its satisfaction with the forthcoming ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Tlatelolco Treaty by the United States, as stated by the delegation of that country.

The high value placed by my delegation on negotiations and dialogue in order to achieve disarmament leads us to express a note of confidence and satisfaction in the scheduled resumption of disarmament talks between the two super-Powers. It is our hope that these talks will lead to a relaxation of tension, assuming that they will not be limited to an exchange of accusations between the parties.

The scheduled talks between the two countries will furthermore prove to have a crucial influence on disarmament negotiations in other forums as well, particularly as regards the conditions under which the forthcoming second special session devoted to disarmament will be held - a session on which hopes to give a new impetus to our efforts to halt the arms race have now been placed.

The same goes for the deliberations in this Committee at this session. It is therefore the hope of my delegation that controversy will be kept out of this room, in order to enable us to take business-like decisions to further the cause of disarmament.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.