

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**
THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION
*Official Records**



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FIRST COMMITTEE
4th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 19 October 1982
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 4TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GBEHO (Ghana)

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Statements were made by:

Mr. Rossides (Cyprus)
Mr. Golob (Yugoslavia)
Mr. Fischer (Austria)
Mr. Jaroszek (Poland)

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Distr. GENERAL

A/C.1/37/PV.4
20 October 1982

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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

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GENERAL DEBATE

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to remind representatives that the list of speakers for the general debate on all disarmament items will be closed on 29 October at 6 p.m. I hope that those delegations that have not yet inscribed their names on the list will do so as soon as possible so that we can make full use of the time available to the Committee and plan the programme of work for the coming meetings.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): First I wish to extend our warm congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election. We are confident that under your wise guidance the deliberations in this important Committee during the present world crisis will be effectively and appropriately conducted. Our congratulations of course extend to the other members of the Bureau.

Further, we wish to express our grief at the loss of an outstanding British personality, Lord Noel-Baker. His exemplary devotion to and work for international understanding and peace in the world is well known. A descendant of the poet Noel, Lord Byron, from whom "his life-blood tracked its parent lake", Philip Noel-Baker devoted his life to the cause of justice and freedom, for which that great poet and philhellene heroically gave his life.

We wish to extend our heartiest congratulations to the recipients of the Nobel Prize award, Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles and Alva Myrdal, for a highly merited recognition of their important contribution to world peace through persistent, devoted and meticulous efforts - which, in the case of Ambassador Garcia Robles, continue today - against tremendous odds, to achieve agreement in disarmament negotiations spread over many years.

This award has two aspects of vital significance. First, the Nobel Prize Committee has demonstrated that at this time of crisis we must realize that peace

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

can come only by consistent work in and through the United Nations. Hence, for the first time the Committee has turned to those labouring in the United Nations and duly rewarded the persistent efforts of these two eminent personalities, in particular Ambassador Garcia Robles, who is continuing his valued endeavours to achieve agreement on a comprehensive programme of disarmament. This award shows that Ambassador Garcia Robles has reached the highest possible point of excellence in persevering to attain a noble purpose through a long negotiating process.

Having regard to the fact that the present situation has reached the lowest possible ebb of understanding and co-operation for peace in the disarmament negotiations, the award acquires a further significance: namely, that if, despite the excellence of performance by Ambassador Garcia Robles, there are to this day no results, but on the contrary there is a decline, as reflected in the total failure of the second special session on disarmament, then something must be radically wrong with the United Nations itself. So the award also contains a warning: namely, that excellence in performance is not enough. Therefore, we have to examine what is wrong with the whole structure and functioning of the United Nations. I consider this award to be particularly significant in that respect.

The Nobel Prize Committee, as representing world public opinion, has given us this warning: something must be done to make the United Nations effective before it is too late. We are already well advanced into a situation in which the survival of this world becomes extremely precarious.

Of great significance in this respect are the wisdom and forthrightness of the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly. In that report the Secretary-General boldly points out what is actually wrong with the United Nations. Thus, he emphasizes that

"... our most urgent goal is to reconstruct the Charter concept of collective action for peace and security so as to render the United Nations more capable of carrying out its primary function". (A/37/1, p. 5)

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

The Secretary-General points out that, as an important first step in this direction, there should be a conscious recommitment by Governments to the Charter concept of collective action for peace and security. He also stresses that

"It was the lack of an effective system of collective security through the League of Nations that ... led to the Second World War". (ibid.)

That brings us to a point that needs explanation, because it is very relevant to the present world situation.

The Charter of the United Nations provides for a security system resting on the effective implementation of the decisions of the Security Council. This system constitutes the central axis around which the whole structure of the United Nations for peace and security revolves. This is in contrast to the Covenant of the League of Nations, which looked to disarmament measures per se as the way to peace, and made it an obligation on its members to reduce their armaments on the basis of plans formulated for them by the League Council (article 8).

The Charter, as distinct from the Covenant, does not require the Members of the United Nations to reduce their armaments but provides the above-mentioned system of collective international security and makes it an obligation on United Nations Members to comply with the requirements of that system (Article 1 (1)). The principles of disarmament are treated in the Charter as part and parcel of this system of collective international security, as flowing from and dependent on it. Thus, Article 11 of the Charter provides that

"The General Assembly may consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments ...".

The operation of the security system, however, was aborted from the very start of the United Nations as a result of the fact that the Security Council evaded the conclusion of the agreements for a United Nations force so necessary for the effective implementation of the Council's decisions, as required by Article 43 of the Charter. In consequence, the whole structure of international security through the United Nations has remained inoperative, and the basic change introduced by the Charter prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations has become obscured if not practically eliminated.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

Nations have thus regressed to the pre-United Nations era by centring all their efforts on disarmament measures without reference to the need for concurrent efforts toward international security - as though we were operating under the obsolete League of Nations Covenant, which failed lamentably, and not under the United Nations Charter. This present situation of actually ignoring or bypassing the need for international security explains the Secretary-General's reference to the lack of an effective system of collective security through the League of Nations as leading to the Second World War.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

It should be emphasized that when the United Nations was established everything was done in accordance with the Charter except for one fundamental provision, that calling for a system of international security, which was the very basis of the Charter. The Security Council, whose responsibility it was to take effective measures to provide a United Nations force to give effect to the Council's decisions, evaded that responsibility. Thus, Security Council decisions remain without the support of enforcement action and have little more validity than the decisions of any debating society.

This had passed almost unnoticed until recent years, but lately the contemptuous disregard of unanimous decisions of the Security Council - disregard in the form of continuing aggression, amounting even to genocide - has become so notorious that the situation cannot be allowed to continue. The remedy lies in proceeding to the measures of international security, in accordance with the Charter, to halt a downward course to utter insecurity and anarchy. Such measures would also serve to advance the process of disarmament, in parallel.

What is the present state of overall progress in the disarmament effort? There is a Committee on Disarmament, which has been conducting negotiations for many decades in an attempt to reach agreement on the reduction of armaments. But there has been no reduction of armaments whatsoever. Meanwhile the arms race has been continuing, and indeed escalating by leaps and bounds. We are now on the threshold of a new escalation of the arms race, with the possibility of an approaching nuclear war - something which was not envisaged before. We are now even considering aspects of limited nuclear war as a possible way out of the deadlock, with mini-nukes and other devices that are really the means of destroying the whole world - nothing else - because there can be no winner in such a war. All will be lost. Nor can the quantity of nuclear weapons - even with an overkill capacity of 15 times, or more or less - have any relevance to the situation. Even if the major Powers agreed to reduce stockpiles by half, that will not save the world from catastrophe. The reduction of armaments can be meaningful only if it flows from an international security system, through an effectively functioning Security Council. Only a Security Council so functioning, a Council whose decisions are respected and enforced, can give any hope for peace and security in the world.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

We are gratified to see that the Secretary-General has now said in a forthright way that we have to do something. The Secretary-General suggests using his authority under Article 99 of the Charter to bring to the attention of the Security Council the intolerable situation of Security Council decisions remaining unimplemented and of little practical worth. World opinion has become conscious of these realities and of the need to exercise its influence to restore to the United Nations, and more especially the Security Council, the meaningfulness and effectiveness prescribed by the Charter as the only way towards international order, security and peace.

Accordingly, I believe that at this session of the General Assembly this Committee must not waste its time with agenda items that have no relevance to the present, imminently dangerous, situation in the world. We have to take account of world developments, of what is happening in the world. We cannot continue routinely doing what was done last year, the year before, and for many years before that, without results. We have to accept the challenge and act positively and effectively to support the Secretary-General in his effort to bring to the attention of the Security Council the need for action by the Council itself to ensure the effectiveness of its own decisions.

Consequently, I shall not proceed to discuss any item on the agenda. I shall reserve my right to do so if the need arises. Now, however, I wish to make it clear that we accept the challenge presented to the Committee by the present situation. A number of members of the Committee will introduce a draft resolution here that will encourage the Secretary-General in his efforts to ensure that the United Nations comes into its own. I am sure that his work in this respect will prove historic at this critical time.

Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia): I wish at the outset to express my congratulations to you on your assumption of the high office of Chairman of the First Committee at the current session of the General Assembly. Ghana, the country you so ably represent, has a consistent record of a non-aligned and constructive approach to world problems. I am confident, and we of the

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

Yugoslav delegation are confident, that your skill, diplomatic experience and tactful guidance will enable this Committee to deal seriously and efficiently with the important and urgent problems on its agenda. My congratulations and best wishes also go to our Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur.

There is another reason for congratulations. Our good wishes go this time to Alfonso Garcia Robles, Ambassador Emeritus of Mexico. He shares with Mrs. Myrdal the prize awarded to them for their most important and creative work in favour of disarmament.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

Ambassador Garcia Robles has, with distinction, made the cause of disarmament his own. It is important for us all that he should be here in this Committee in future to give us inspiration. Fifteen years after the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, he, the architect of that edifice of denuclearization, has received an international acknowledgement of his renown. It is fitting that he should have it now, but, as an afterthought, I wonder if he should not have received it earlier. Had he worked in the field of applied science he would have received that acknowledgement in the year in which he made that significant breakthrough. As a political scientist and diplomat of great distinction and creativity, he had to wait 15 years to reap the harvest of his achievement as one who made the Treaty of Tlatelolco what it is today.

I take this opportunity to congratulate him.

The consideration of questions of disarmament has this year again a particular importance and urgency. The international community is faced today with the gravest threats to peace. This is a direct consequence of the policy of force and domination, of the division of the world into blocs and of the political, economic, ideological and military confrontation accompanied by an unprecedented strengthening of military forces and accumulation of weapons. International security is being violated in the ever more numerous armed conflicts and in direct threats to the independence and even survival of some peoples and countries. The latest Israeli aggression in Lebanon and the genocide perpetrated against the Palestinian people are drastic examples of such a situation.

Détente, limited to relations between the super-Powers and between the blocs, has reached a dead-end. In order to become a positive factor in the development of international relations détente should affect the relations of all countries, spread to all regions and be applied to all international conflicts and hotbeds of crisis.

The deterioration of international relations is accompanied by the strengthening of the role of military power, which is increasingly used as a political instrument. The threat or use of force and military interventions are becoming ever more frequent. At the same time, there is growing opposition

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

to these acts. Peoples are standing up in defence of independence and sovereignty and against intervention and aggression.

Tension and rivalry between blocs remain high and contribute to the general atmosphere of insecurity and mistrust. They have brought about a new phase in the spiralling growth of expenditures on and technological innovations in armaments, which are in turn producing destabilizing effects on the international situation. It is obvious - and it has long been obvious - that lasting peace and security in the world cannot be built on the accumulation of armaments and the maintenance of the so-called balance of deterrence. Attempts to explain the production of new weapons and the arms race in general as requirements of national defence and as a way to obtain military balance are in fact meant only to justify the arms race.

The arms race has become a global phenomenon and weighs heavily upon the independence and sovereignty of countries. It represents a constant and ever-present threat to peace in the world. It jeopardizes the security of all countries and produces, not the means of legitimate defence, but rather the means for intervention and aggression. It is an instrument of terror, a lever of the policy of the threat or use of force and a vehicle to maintain and enlarge spheres of influence and areas of domination.

We have lately been witness to an accelerated and unprecedented nuclear arms race. New programmes for the development of nuclear potential are either under way or have already been implemented. The arms race is escalated further by the doctrine of local and limited nuclear war. The calls for the halting of the nuclear arms race and for the launching of nuclear disarmament have received no response.

A particular threat lies in the development of new chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction, whose lethal power blurs their distinction from nuclear weapons.

There is now a growing tendency to use all elements of the human environment from the sea-bed to outer space, for the testing and deployment of lethal weapons. These weapons are being made and stationed, and it is beyond comprehension why they are needed for the defence of those who are installing them. Furthermore, we are witnessing an ever more intensified militarization of outer space.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

Unless we arrest the arms race in time we shall have to face new aspects of that race.

In parallel with the nuclear arms race, the race in conventional weapons is evolving with much the same intensity. Therefore, the problem of conventional armaments is assuming increasing importance and should be treated as such. Peace and security in the world are constantly being endangered by the ever more frequent use of conventional weapons in armed interventions, and these are answered by wars of resistance and in defence of independence. Non-aligned and developing countries are the most frequent victims of such intervention and wars and they bear the burden of such wars.

The arming of those countries is closely related to the fact that the global nature of the arms race of the leading Powers is making the world increasingly insecure. So sometimes the smaller and non-bloc countries have no recourse other than to arm themselves when it is a matter of their independence and sovereignty, no matter how costly that may be. Safeguarding one's freedom and independence is no luxury; nor can it be left to the care of the mighty and powerful.

We can either do something to stop the arms race or helplessly watch it develop further. This latter alternative would have the gravest consequences for the prospects of peace and for the future ability of the United Nations to deal with disarmament.

Thus we feel that it is incumbent upon all Member States to resist the erosion of the international system of security embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and continue the attempts to settle disputes by peaceful means.

The Programme of Action adopted by the first special session on disarmament is not being implemented. In the past four years no practical measure has been undertaken to meet the demands for the effective halting of the arms race and the reduction of armaments.

The second special session on disarmament ended in failure. No agreement on the assessment of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the first special session was reached and the session failed to elaborate and adopt a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Therefore, the main goals of the second special session on disarmament have not been achieved.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

In spite of its failure to fulfil the hopes placed in it, the second special session on disarmament had a few positive aspects. One of them is the fact that the session was an occasion for a true outpouring of public support throughout the world for the goal of disarmament, and particularly nuclear disarmament. If that public support maintains its strength and clarity of purpose, that interest of world public opinion must surely help bring governments to look at their policies from a fresh perspective. The continuing and widening expression of public conviction, sustained by a growing knowledge of the facts about the arms race, its causes and effects, cannot but help in the search for some means of agreement by which the risks that the entire world is now facing can be reduced.

The reasons for the failure of the second special session are numerous. Some of them are the result of the negative development at a broader level of international relations, particularly of relations between the two leading Powers. Others are the result of different approaches to ways of solving the issue of disarmament, as well as of the different opinions about the causes of the present international tension and methods for overcoming it.

However, the main reason was the fact that the big Powers have neither shown the political will to conduct substantive negotiations nor to accept the orientation to the limitation of military forces. Their approaches to security from bloc positions, based on an illusion that it is possible to control the so-called balance of force, on the doctrines of deterrent and of local and limited nuclear wars, have again proved to be at variance with the basic interests of the international community. In such circumstances, the efforts of the non-aligned countries at the second special session aimed at achieving a significant step towards the elaboration of joint international action for disarmament and to adopt concrete decisions to that end could not possibly have yielded results.

The work of the Committee on Disarmament, the unique multilateral negotiating body in the sphere of disarmament, has been blocked, and that body has been prevented from achieving any concrete results. Attempts

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

to obstruct the work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission are also apparent. They are contrary to the position of the entire international community that the United Nations should play a central role in the field of disarmament.

We are deeply concerned at the present state of the negotiations on disarmament at the bilateral and multilateral levels; they are at a complete standstill. Multilateral negotiations on priority issues of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, are practically still in the initial phase; so are the bilateral ones.

But it is our view that the failure of the second special session should not discourage us and bring about a lessening of activities in the field of disarmament. On the contrary, it is indispensable now to give new impetus to the efforts for the solution of the problems of disarmament. This can be done by launching new and intensifying the existing negotiations on disarmament at all levels - bilateral, regional and, particularly, multilateral.

In order to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control, we should exert efforts in the following directions: in the elaboration and adoption of the comprehensive programme of disarmament; and in launching the process of disarmament and, in that context, the immediate completion of negotiations on the prohibition of certain types of weapons or on reduction of armed forces and armaments.

We attach great significance to the full discharge of the responsibilities of the Committee on Disarmament, in particular concerning the negotiations on nuclear disarmament, prohibition of the arms race in outer space, prevention of war, the urgent finalization of ongoing negotiations and the beginning of negotiations on the comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty.

It has been repeatedly stated at the current session of the General Assembly that the authority of the United Nations and the Organization's capacity to act have been seriously eroded. The Secretary-General has summed this up most eloquently in his annual report. We have to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Bearing that in mind, it would be most perilous to permit matters of disarmament to be

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

transferred further away from the most adequate mechanism, that is, outside the United Nations. If that trend continues, it will hardly be to the benefit of disarmament; rather, it will bring about new stalling and prevaricating - and there has been too much of that already.

As regards the priorities in the field of disarmament, we consider that the unanimously adopted positions of the first special session on that subject still have undiminished importance.

Recently there has been a trend towards a selective approach to the problem of nuclear disarmament. This selective approach limits the kinds of weapon on which negotiations are being conducted and reduces them to a bilateral framework. On the one hand, the greater responsibility of those possessing nuclear arms is thus being reaffirmed - and we have no quarrel with that; on the other hand, however, no tangible results can be seen, and the role of the rest of the international community, particularly of States without nuclear weapons, is reduced to that of passive observers. This runs contrary to the accepted principle that nuclear disarmament is the legitimate concern of all States.

We also attach the greatest importance to the prohibition or reduction of other weapons of mass destruction. In that context the resumption of effective negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament is very significant. Those negotiations should lead as soon as possible to the elaboration of a draft convention on the prohibition of development, production and stationing of chemical weapons, as well as on their destruction.

Parallel with the efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament it is indispensable to attach equal importance to the launching of the process of conventional disarmament. Of primary significance in that regard are the practical steps aimed at reducing the armed forces and armaments of nuclear-weapon States and other militarily important States, particularly in regions where there are large concentrations of troops and armaments.

Achievement of those goals would substantially contribute to the creation of an international climate of confidence which, inter alia, implies a considerable decrease in military activities, reducing large military

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

manoeuvres to the least possible extent and, in general, the reduction of military activities and presence beyond national borders and in foreign territories.

The number of military manoeuvres grows continually from year to year. New geographical areas are covered by this demonstration of force and military might. They represent an additional element of constantly growing tension in an increasing number of geographical regions. It is high time to reverse this trend, to remove the detrimental effects of military manoeuvres on the international situation, and to eliminate this growing threat of use of force against the independent, particularly non-bloc, non-aligned and developing States.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

The relationship between disarmament and development has frequently been stressed. Annual expenditures on armaments in the world are of approximately the same magnitude as the total debt of all developing countries taken together. We have had ample proof of the incompatibility of the arms race and economic development and we believe that in the course of this session we must pay full attention to this issue and define concrete actions.

As a European country, Yugoslavia attaches particular importance to the issues of peace and security in that region, which is the region of the greatest accumulation of armaments on the globe. We are calling again for all measures to be taken to reduce political and military tensions in Europe. At the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Yugoslavia, together with neutral, non-aligned and other like-minded countries of Europe, continues to support resolutely the convening of a European conference on disarmament which would lay down the foundations of the process of European disarmament.

Only resolute and joint action by the entire international community can contribute to progress in the field of disarmament. Simple declarations in favour of disarmament, irrespective of the level at which they are pronounced, will not be of great help. Certain statements can be welcomed and endorsed only if they find their true expression in real life, namely, if they are accompanied by practical measures. Today, as I have said, we all need the further strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and in the launching of substantial and genuine negotiations on disarmament at the broadest level.

Yugoslavia will continue to seek a greater effectiveness of all negotiations on disarmament and this time again Yugoslavia calls most resolutely for such negotiations to commence as soon as possible.

Mr. FISCHER (Austria): Mr. Chairman, I should like at the outset to express the Austrian delegation's great pleasure at seeing you presiding over the proceedings of the First Committee. We offer you and the other officers of the Committee our congratulations and our pledge of full co-operation under your experienced and able leadership.

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

I should also like to join previous speakers in expressing our profound satisfaction at the Nobel Committee's selection for the Nobel Peace Prize for 1982. In Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles and Mrs. Alva Myrdal two outstanding personalities are honoured who have demonstrated in many years of untiring efforts that representatives from neutral and non-aligned countries can, on the basis of skill and devotion, make a viable contribution to the cause of disarmament.

The beginning of the work of the First Committee provides an occasion for a review of developments in the field of disarmament and international security over the past year. In our view the record is mixed. The most important positive development was, without doubt, the resumption of the dialogue between the United States and the USSR on the limitation of their nuclear arsenals. As yet, neither of the two negotiations seems to have progressed far beyond the opening positions of the parties. Nevertheless, the mere fact of the resumption of these talks and the express commitment of the leadership of both super-Powers to reach agreements on nuclear disarmament are of enormous significance and offer great promise for the future. However, tensions between East and West remain high and threaten to disrupt or impede those negotiations. To conduct arms-control talks in the absence of détente has been compared to climbing a ladder which does not lean against a wall - a very hazardous undertaking. At the same time it is precisely the uncontrolled accumulation of armaments by both super-Powers which weighs heavily on their mutual relations and accelerates the vicious circle of mistrust and military build-up. Indeed, the interdependence between détente and disarmament and the urgency of the need for vigorous action in both areas have rarely been as clear as they are today.

During the past year we have followed with increasing concern the deterioration of the security situation in the third world. Long unresolved crises in the Middle East, South-East Asia, Afghanistan, Central America and various parts of Africa have deepened. The sudden eruption of the violent conflict over the Falkland Islands has demonstrated the fragility of the international system. Apart from tragic loss of life and human suffering, these crises have caused a sharp upward trend in military spending, which severely affects the prospects of economic development for the countries and regions concerned. The fact that in the age of interdependence a seemingly local

conflict can rapidly reach global proportions exacerbates the danger of this situation. Social and economic injustice, territorial disputes and the rivalry of the great Powers are but some of the factors contributing to the explosive state of affairs in the third world today. Just as there are no simple explanations for this situation, there are no simple remedies. Efforts to alleviate poverty and deprivation appear as essential as the improvement of procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes or measures in the field of disarmament. In the latter context, Austria has long held the opinion that regional security and disarmament arrangements constitute a particularly promising approach. Such arrangements can be tailored around the specific security requirements of a region and can provide an effective barrier against the interference of outside Powers. We believe that the present situation calls for intensive efforts to explore the potential of the regional approach to security.

A central responsibility for the management of international crises lies with the United Nations. The Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, Mr. Willibald Pahr, has emphasized in his statement to the plenary Assembly that Austria shares the deep concern expressed by the Secretary-General in his annual report about the erosion of the United Nations capacity to make and to keep the peace. Those who disregard United Nations organs or misuse them carry a heavy responsibility, since they weaken an instrument that is essential to bringing about a secure and peaceful future. We welcome and support the Secretary-General's proposals to rebuild the authority of the Organization and to enhance its effectiveness.

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

One particularly sad symptom of the crisis in the multilateral approach was the outcome of the second special session on disarmament last July. We should not hesitate to call the special session a failure. Certainly, a great deal of work was done, and some limited agreement could be achieved. But the central task - the comprehensive programme of disarmament - because a casualty of the international climate and its own enormous complexity. The meager results of the special session appear even more frustrating in view of the intense interest of the public in that conference. We now have to draw the necessary conclusions from the unsatisfactory outcome of the second special session on disarmament and do our best to strengthen the United Nations credibility in this crucial area of international relations.

I should now like to address more specifically some of the items on our agenda.

Let me turn, first of all, to the question of nuclear disarmament. I have already expressed Austria's satisfaction at the reconvening of the United States-Soviet talks on strategic nuclear weapons on 29 July 1982 in Geneva. We welcome the declared intention of both sides to respect the limitations of the SALT-II Treaty and we trust in their willingness to extend the Anti-Ballistic Missile Agreement of 1972. We have noted with great interest that both parties intend to work towards more comprehensive instruments providing for substantial cuts in their strategic arsenals. We sincerely hope that the process will indeed lead to significant reductions of the vast overkill capacities existing today. I should like to emphasize, however, that we consider the intensive research and development programmes in the field of nuclear-weapon technology as the most disturbing aspect of the arms race. It is in the weapons laboratories and on the testing sites where the nuclear arms race gets its momentum and where the ground is prepared for doctrines of limited nuclear warfare. The history of the last 37 years firmly establishes the futility of the quest for nuclear superiority. There have been no technological advances that were not eventually matched by the other side, resulting in a higher level of armaments, an enormous waste of resources and, most ominously, an erosion of the stability of deterrence.

The nuclear arms race cannot be stopped as long as the competition in weapons technology continues. We therefore sympathize with the worldwide call for an end to the development, production and deployment of nuclear-weapon systems and hope that the Geneva talks will give appropriate attention to the qualitative dimensions of the nuclear arms race.

Austria is deeply concerned about the lack of progress towards a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing. We consider this measure as the single most important step to halt the further sophistication of nuclear weapons and to prevent their spread to other States. Both super-Powers have in the Partial Test-Ban Treaty of 1963 and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) of 1968 committed themselves to achieving a comprehensive test ban (CTB), which has hence become the touchstone of their willingness to pursue real nuclear disarmament. The Austrian Government deplores the decision not to reopen the trilateral negotiations and appeals to the parties concerned to reconsider their positions. In the absence of these negotiations the work of the Committee on Disarmament on this issue assumes even greater importance.

Austria welcomes the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Nuclear Test Ban. We hope that substantive consideration of the verification aspects will prepare the ground for the opening of actual negotiations. We have to emphasize, however, that the technical aspects of the problem have been sufficiently explored by now. More than any other measure in the field of disarmament, the comprehensive test ban is a matter of political will. We urge the nuclear-weapon States to relinquish the dubious advantages of continued testing in the interest of nuclear disarmament, the stability of the non-proliferation régime and the international political climate.

Europe is the continent with the greatest concentration of nuclear weapons, the region where the risk of nuclear warfare has always been considered to be particularly high. In view of Austria's precarious situation between the two military blocs, any use of nuclear weapons in Europe would threaten our very existence. My country, therefore, is vitally interested in an early successful conclusion of the United States-Soviet negotiations in Geneva on the subject of intermediate-range nuclear forces. Those negotiations should seek to establish parity at the lowest level of forces and to eliminate or at least substantially reduce existing arsenals. We

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

also strongly support the proposals to include the vast stockpiles of tactical nuclear weapons in the arms control process. We share the widespread doubts that an escalation from the use of tactical weapons to all-out nuclear war can be prevented. The objective must be to avoid an erosion of the distinction between conventional and nuclear warfare, to raise the nuclear threshold and - in the longer term - to reduce the dependence on nuclear weapons in the defence postures of the military alliances. Austria, therefore, follows with interest the discussions about the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Europe and about the concept of "non-first-use". Of course, all these proposals have to be seen in the context of the overall balance of military forces in the region.

The danger of further horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons remains an issue of paramount importance. It is true that by and large the record of the past 30 years has been positive. But the fact that the number of nuclear-weapon States is lower today than was expected and feared in the fifties should not make us complacent. On the contrary, the obvious signs of strain and tension in the non-proliferation régime should cause us to renew our efforts to strengthen the barriers against the further spread of nuclear weapons. The risk of nuclear war rises exponentially with the number of nuclear-weapon States. The great majority of governments have decided that this risk outweighs the potential increment of power a nuclear-weapon capability would bring. In adhering to the Non-Proliferation Treaty they have made their renunciation of nuclear weapons permanent and legally binding. The fact that a number of States with significant nuclear activities, many of them in troubled regions of the globe, have so far chosen to remain outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty system constitutes its greatest weakness. Austria is convinced that intensive efforts are needed to achieve the universal acceptance of the NPT.

An important element of these efforts is the dialogue between supplier- and recipient -States in the Committee on Assurances of Supply. We hope that these endeavors will lead to a generally accepted code of conduct for trade and technology exchanges in the nuclear field. We further believe that arrangements for the internationalization of nuclear fuel facilities deserve serious consideration.

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

The extension and development of the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would also contribute greatly to the strengthening of the régime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). A realistic assessment of the overall record of the control system confirms that the safeguards have worked well in the past. We have full confidence in the IAEA's capacity to adjust them to the constantly growing demands. Austria supports the proposal that parties to the NPT should require, as a condition of all future nuclear supply commitments, the application of safeguards to the entire nuclear programme of the recipient country. The IAEA control system, as the first effective international verification arrangement, provides an important model for the control of disarmament agreements. It is for this reason in particular that Austria welcomes the recent decision by the Soviet Union to submit part of its peaceful nuclear programme to safeguards.

Indeed, the greatest and most urgent contribution to the strengthening of the non-proliferation régime would have to come from the nuclear-weapon States. I refer to the fulfilment of their obligations under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty concerning nuclear disarmament. Vertical and horizontal proliferation are ultimately two aspects of the same problem. Continuing failure with regard to one of them will ultimately destroy the fragile achievements with regard to the other.

The Austrian Government continues to attach considerable importance to the question of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use of nuclear weapons. Such measures, if they are binding and free of conditions and escape clauses, can to a certain extent alleviate the threat perceived by non-nuclear-weapon States and strengthen their commitment to non-proliferation. While we regard the new formulation of the French security assurance at the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament as a positive development, we regret once again the lack of progress in the Working Group of the Committee on Disarmament on this issue. What is clearly needed is a change of attitude. We are convinced that if the nuclear-weapon States would end their exclusive preoccupation with their own security concerns and focus instead on the interests of non-nuclear-weapon States agreement on a common approach could be reached.

(Mr. ~~Prisner~~^{Prisner}, Austria)

Military use of outer space dates back to the very beginning of space exploration. Today more than three quarters of the satellites in space are being used for military purposes, ranging from reconnaissance to communications, to meteorology and navigation. Not all of these activities are harmful. The essential role of satellites for the verification of arms control agreements has long been recognized. The early warning and surveillance systems based on satellites contribute to greater strategic stability and facilitate rational decision-making in international crises. It cannot be in the interest of the international community to curb these beneficial outer space activities. The objective should rather be to make their potential accessible to other countries besides the two leading space Powers. It is for these reasons that the Austrian Government continues to be interested in the idea of an international satellite monitoring agency and hopes that this project will remain under active consideration.

Unfortunately, the increasing dependence of the super-Powers' military establishments on the use of outer space has in recent years led to research and development programmes in the field of anti-satellite and anti-ballistic-missile technology which are clearly a destabilizing factor and could trigger an immensely wasteful and dangerous armaments competition in outer space. As none of these weapons programmes appears to be fully operational at the present time there is still hope of countering this trend. Austria therefore shares the interest expressed by the General Assembly and UNISPACE 1982 in the elaboration of further legislative measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We consider the first exchange of views on this matter in the Committee on Disarmament very useful and hope that in 1983 the Committee will continue its work within the framework of a working group.

By undertaking bilateral negotiations on the subject of anti-satellite systems in 1978 and 1979, the two leading space Powers recognized the necessity of limiting their activities in this area. The grave implications of an arms race in outer space are now if anything more evident than they were four years ago. Let us hope that the awareness of the enormous risks and costs involved, together with the appeals of the international community, will lead the two parties back to the negotiating table.

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

In conclusion I should like to turn to a subject which we consider of major significance for ending the arms race and promoting disarmament. I refer to measures to improve the reliability and objectivity of information in the military area.

Because of the inadequacy of reliable information, national assessments of the military strength and intentions of others are often incorrect. As these assessments are of vital importance for national security, there is a natural tendency to overestimate rather than underestimate an adversary's military capabilities. To minimize the risk of being taken by surprise, Governments frequently initiate arms programmes on the basis of "worst-case" estimates. The negative consequences of this syndrome of inadequacy of information, insecurity, mistrust and over-reaction on the side of one party are mirrored and multiplied by the same behaviour on the side of the adversary; thus those armament measures, which result from inaccurate assessments of an opponent's military strength, lead in an action-reaction pattern to the acceleration of the arms race and the exacerbation of international tensions. Furthermore, inadequate information is one of the main obstacles to efforts to end the arms race. Militarily significant agreements on the limitation or reduction of weapons and forces presuppose an understanding of the actual state of armament. In situations where little or no information is available, Governments are usually reluctant even to enter into disarmament negotiations. If they do, long and protracted negotiations with no tangible results have to be expected.

Austria therefore believes that efforts to increase the flow of information on military matters are a promising approach to improving the situation, but such efforts are not enough. Within the past year both military alliance systems have provided to the Western public an unprecedented amount of information on the opponents' military capabilities. Although this information naturally reflects the respective points of view, we welcome this as a positive development.

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

But the sharply **contradictory** threat-perceptions emerging from this information underline, in our view, the necessity of developing **objective** mechanisms for the assessment and evaluation of the actual balance of military power. Such evaluations, undertaken by independent international organs on the basis of the consent and **co-operation** of the States concerned, could contribute to reducing tensions and building confidence, and, thereby, **promoting peace**. We are well aware of the great difficulties involved in such an endeavour. Nevertheless, the benefits of more reliable and objective information justify further exploration of this **approach**. We believe that the United Nations, with its **experience** in fact-finding and with study groups, could play an important role in this context. We invite all delegations to **contribute** to the further elaboration of this idea. My delegation intends actively to proceed along these lines of thought.

In a second statement during the course of the general debate, the Austrian delegation intends to present its views on some other items on our agenda.

Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland): Sir, I should like first to associate myself and my delegation with the felicitations and good wishes expressed to you, the representative of Ghana, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. As one who himself has had the privilege of serving the Committee as its Chairman, I am well aware of the rigours and demands that go with the honour of that important office. I have no doubt in my mind that in the exercise of your mandate you will cope with these demands successfully, in the interests of the productive and effective work of the Committee. I should like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that my sentiments are accompanied by a firm pledge of constructive co-operation by the Polish delegation.

Our congratulations go also to the two Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, Ambassador Carasales of Argentina and Ambassador Vraalsen of Norway, as well as to its Rapporteur, Comrade Erdenechuluun of Mongolia.

I should like to take this opportunity to extend my delegation's, and my own personal, heartfelt congratulations to our colleague, Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles of Mexico, on the well-deserved award of the Nobel Peace Prize. We wish Ambassador Garcia Robles many further successes in his tireless efforts in the cause of disarmament.

Our sincere congratulations and good wishes are extended also to Mrs. Alva Myrdal of Sweden, with whom I had the honour to work for a number of years in this Committee, in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and in the **Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva.**

In my general statement today it is my intention to address certain broader issues of disarmament and international security as well as some specific questions referred to in the report of the Committee on Disarmament. It has been a matter of the gravest concern to public opinion in my country - and, I believe, in the world at large - that at the beginning of the 1980s we have seen a further, and dramatic, aggravation of the international situation. There has been no respite from the frantic arms race, especially in the field of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, where new, awesome, implements of war are being added to already oversaturated arsenals. Having become global, the arms competition is now on the verge of spilling over to yet another environment: outer space.

The fact that disarmament efforts, whether bilateral or multilateral, have been far from satisfactory while the world has continued to head at an accelerated pace towards nuclear catastrophe is, indeed, a sad commentary on the opening years of the Second Disarmament Decade. The debate at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament a few months ago, and the recently concluded general debate in the plenary meetings of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, have underscored the growing alarm of people everywhere at the dangerous collision-course that international relations seem to have taken. That grim assessment formed the basis for the appeals by an overwhelming majority of States for urgent, effective measures to avert the threat of nuclear conflict, to halt the nuclear arms race, to proceed to tangible disarmament, and to extinguish hotbeds of conflict in the world.

It found a positive and constructive expression in the two new proposals submitted to this session of the General Assembly by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Andrei Gromyko, in his statement of 1 October 1982.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

They concern, as is well known to this Committee, "Immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests" and "Intensification of efforts to remove the threat of nuclear war and ensure the safe development of nuclear energy", and are included on the agenda of the Committee as items 25 and 26 respectively. Poland welcomes and extends its full support to these important proposals. My delegation will address itself to those items in detail in a separate statement in the Committee's debate.

The principal root cause of the steady deterioration of the international climate today is the cold-war policy of confrontation with the socialist States pursued by certain circles in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In this regard, the leadership role is in the hands of the United States, whose present Administration is bent on gaining military superiority over the Soviet Union.

Addressing this question in his statement in the General Assembly on 27 September, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Polish People's Republic, Stefan Olszowski, said, inter alia, that:

"The dangerous quality of the international situation at the beginning of the 1980s is not, however, a result of factors beyond human control. More than two years ago, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty noted in their joint declaration that the main threat to peace and détente lies in the arms race, encouraged by cold-war quarters and military and industrial complexes, as well as in the attempts to revive a policy based on a position of strength. This appraisal is substantiated by the present policies of ruling circles of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization which are at variance with the basic requirements of international realities and are founded on an over-estimation of their own capabilities and an under-estimation of those of others". (A/37/PV.5, p. 66)

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

The mirage of superiority has evidently been approved of by the NATO alliance which, despite misgivings on the part of some of its members and strong objections by public opinion in many NATO countries, has embraced the forced acceleration of the arms race, both conventional and nuclear, in Europe as well. To complicate the grave and precarious situation still further, acting in total disregard of the grave risks and dangers, some of its members, in particular the United States, do not hesitate to attempt to use the disarmament negotiating process itself as a vehicle for that cherished objective. As a result, disarmament negotiations have been either turned into interminable technical discussions, brought to an impasse or otherwise frustrated by the open repudiation of the fundamental principles underlying every disarmament negotiation - equal and undiminished security, parity and balance at the lowest possible level of force.

Therefore, however gratified the Polish Government and people are by the continuation in Geneva of the Soviet-United States talks on the limitation and reduction of intermediate nuclear weapons in Europe and by the resumption by the two Powers of their bilateral talks on the strategic missile systems, we feel very strongly that the time has come for these negotiations - as, indeed, it has come for other negotiating forums - to yield concrete and ardently hoped for results. The Soviet Union has already given ample proof of its determination to achieve such results. The time has now come for its partner to do likewise.

The socialist States, Poland among them, are not alone in Europe or anywhere else in believing that a policy of security through nuclear arms and doctrines envisaging their actual use in war, whether "limited" or unlimited, is unacceptably dangerous both for that continent and for the world at large. As the General Assembly debate at the special session as well as at this session have demonstrated, neither in Europe nor on any other continent is public opinion prepared to endorse a policy which would not rule out unequivocally the possibility of pre-emptive first use of nuclear weapons with all its dire consequences for mankind.

An eloquent, sober and objective assessment of the threat posed by nuclear weapons as well as of the major obstacles preventing productive results of disarmament efforts has been recently formulated in a declaration of the Pugwash

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Movement issued at a conference held in Warsaw late in August 1982 on the occasion of that Movement's twenty-fifth anniversary. Endorsed by 97 Nobel laureates in natural sciences, the Declaration states, inter alia:

"... the dangers to human survival posed by the increased arms race and by the dangerous confrontation between the major antagonists have in recent years grown more ominous, Disarmament seems further away than ever. Indeed, weapons of mass destruction proliferate, and some national leaders seem to accept such dangerous and delusory concepts as 'limited' or even 'winnable' nuclear wars ...".

The declaration then goes on to stress:

"... disarmament is technically possible; all that is lacking is political will. Comprehensive nuclear disarmament and, eventually, disarmament of chemical, conventional and other weapons as well - must remain our major goal. In the meantime, however, pending the achievement of this aim, we must strive to build an effective barrier, universally adhered to, against any actual use of nuclear weapons".

Having traditionally identified its own security and that of its neighbours with the lowering of the level of military confrontation, the Polish People's Republic has consistently pursued an active and imaginative policy with regard to arms limitation and disarmament. Its fullest manifestation came in the well-known plans for a nuclear-weapon free zone and, subsequently, for a denuclearized and limited armaments zone in Central Europe. As will be recalled, almost exactly 25 years ago, on 2 October 1957, Poland first presented from the rostrum of the General Assembly a proposal which came to be known as the Rapacki Plan. Although politicians in the West were not at the time sufficiently far sighted to consider it seriously, it served a useful purpose by encouraging a world-wide debate on ways and means of strengthening international security in the nuclear age. The basic concepts underlying the proposal have been practically applied in the denuclearisation of Latin America. They have also led to the formulation of a number of similar proposals for atom-free zones, both in Europe and throughout the world.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

We are gratified by the remarkable revival of interest and confidence nowadays in the concepts which a quarter of a century ago offered so much promise for security and peaceful co-operation between States in our part of the world. We welcome and support the currently pursued initiatives for atom-free zones in Northern Europe, in the Balkans and elsewhere.

More recently, the active policy of security has led Poland to be involved actively in the Vienna talks on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe and then to submit, in consultation with its allies, at the Madrid Conference on Security and Co-operation (CSCE) follow-up meeting, an initiative to hold a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe.

Believing that international security is indivisible, Poland is not limiting its disarmament horizon to Europe alone. We attach importance to disarmament initiatives and to practical action aimed at lessening international tension in other parts of the world as well. Thus, we attach major significance to the implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and strive to make a valid contribution to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. We find it regrettable, indeed, that notwithstanding the efforts of the non-aligned and socialist countries, certain Powers continue to oppose the early convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean.

The Polish delegation shares the sense of disappointment and **frustration** expressed by many representatives at the regrettably limited results of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The tone of bitterness in some of these comments is certainly very understandable. My Government had attached major importance to that session because it carried a promise of stimulating disarmament efforts. In an extensive statement at the session, Poland's Foreign Minister set forth in considerable detail our consistent and constructive position on the pressing, high priority issues which the session had to address. It was our expectation that above all the second special session on disarmament would contribute to instituting effective curbs on the runaway arms race, especially in the most threatening nuclear field. We had fervently hoped that it would help to stop further waste of human and material resources for

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military purposes, that it would turn them instead - as it should have - to lifting from vast areas of the world the curse of hunger, disease, poverty and ignorance. At a time when every minute over one million dollars is spent on arms, it would come as an appropriate and timely reminder of the direct relationship between disarmament and development, a relationship which ought to make such funds available for economic assistance to the developing countries as well as for social and economic development in all States. We had also expected that the second special session would have mapped out a realistic route to these goals by finalizing a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Regrettably, these hopes have been dashed.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

Despite the disappointment, my delegation believes that it would be inaccurate to attempt to dismiss the session as one of missed opportunity. There are, in our view, several considerations which point to its significance and redeeming value. First, it was instrumental in dramatizing, for world public opinion, the gravity of the nuclear threat. Second, it helped to identify beyond doubt those Powers and circles which are responsible for the upward spiral of the arms race and for the lack of tangible progress in disarmament. Last but not least, the second special session on disarmament has again clearly demonstrated the determination of the socialist States and of many other Members of the United Nations, especially the non-aligned States, to spare no effort to prevent the nuclear catastrophe from materializing.

This determination of the Soviet Union and its allies has manifested itself, as we all know, in several important ways. The political will to seek effective and comprehensive disarmament was reaffirmed in the memorandum of the Soviet Government on the elaboration, adoption and a stage-by-stage realization of a programme of nuclear disarmament. This was reinforced by the unilateral pledge of the Soviet Union not to be the first State to use nuclear weapons. As has been rightly stressed, if reciprocated by other nuclear-weapon Powers - as it certainly should be - that far-sighted act would in itself be tantamount to a practical ban on the use of nuclear weapons and a major step towards productive nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Responding to the legitimate concerns of the non-aligned countries, especially India, and the international community at large, the Soviet Union and its allies have declared support for the concept of a mutual freeze of nuclear arsenals as a first step towards their reduction and ultimate elimination. The Soviet Union has also demonstrated a new flexibility which should add momentum to efforts directed to the elimination of chemical weapons. Now it is up to the other parties to transform that momentum into effective disarmament dialogue.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

The members of the First Committee will certainly agree that the spontaneous involvement of millions of people throughout the world in disarmament cannot be underestimated. The expressions of profound concern by the various antinuclear and peace movements about the dangers and material cost of the nuclear arms race must be seen as mankind's natural reflex, as a powerful manifestation of its instinct for self-preservation. These movements cannot be belittled or disregarded. They are our valuable ally in the effort to check and outlaw the nuclear genie.

We believe that the World Disarmament Campaign launched by the second special session and strongly supported by a vast majority of States, among them my country, should provide appropriate scope for the concerned public opinion to promote the objectives of disarmament, détente and co-operation between States.

Public opinion in Poland, including our civic organizations, above all the Polish Peace Committee, have followed the second special session and its proceedings with close attention, and will certainly want to make a valid contribution to the programme elaborated for that campaign.

At this juncture let me stress that in our opinion the second special session and its results have confirmed the urgent need for the convening of a World Disarmament Conference. Evidence to that effect is offered in the latest report of the Ad Hoc Committee on a World Disarmament Conference. It is indeed ironic that a negative stand on that proposal continues to be taken precisely by those Powers which bear responsibility for the lack of substantive results at the second special session.

Turning to the problems referred to in the report of the Committee on Disarmament, I want to point out that we assess the results of its work through the prism of specific progress made with regard to the top priority questions which, in our view, include: (a) effective measures to prevent the threat of nuclear war through concrete agreements on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; (b) elimination of chemical weapons; (c) preventing the arms race from spreading to outer space, and (d) prohibition of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, including neutron weapons.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

As its report shows, the Committee had a worthwhile session in 1982 only as far as the second of these issues is concerned. We derive considerable satisfaction from the fact that the Committee's Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, working under the chairmanship of a representative of my country, has been able to report steady progress, despite certain attempts to slow down its pace. A climate conducive to fruitful endeavours has been created by the submission of a flexible and constructive Soviet document entitled "Basic Provisions of a Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction."¹⁷

It would be in the interest of an early finalization of that agreement if a corresponding measure of flexibility were forthcoming on the part of the United States, and, in particular, if the suspended bilateral talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on chemical weapons were reopened at the earliest possible date.

It is my Government's firm view that to be effective and broadly acceptable, a multilateral agreement on the elimination of chemical weapons must unequivocally ban both binary and other multicomponent "C" weapons. Such a ban is especially crucial in view of the reported United States plans for the deployment of binary chemical weapons in Europe and the risk of the chemical weapons arms race leading to the development of still other chemical weapons.

The Polish delegation believes that an appropriate General Assembly resolution will state these concerns clearly, and that it will set a tentative early deadline for the finalization of the chemical weapons convention by the Committee on Disarmament.

Despite the universal alarm over the looming nuclear threat, the Committee has utterly failed to consider seriously any of its agenda items in that area. The Committee has little to report in that respect, and the blame for that must be directed where it belongs.

The effect of the Committee's decision to set up a working group on a comprehensive test ban was reduced virtually to nil the moment the United States administration flatly declared that it saw no useful purpose in seeking such a ban. Further blows to the Committee's efforts in that area have been dealt by two other nuclear-weapon Powers which, ignoring their responsibility, have chosen to disassociate themselves from its working group.

The report of the Committee indicates that even less successful this year have been its efforts to establish other working groups, to deal with such topical issues as the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, the prohibition of neutron weapons or the question of prevention of nuclear war, which was urged by India.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

In spite of increasing military encroachment on outer space and the implications of an arms race in an environment reserved for exclusively peaceful pursuits, the Committee on Disarmament has been prevented from heeding the relevant resolutions of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The Polish delegation hopes that the unsatisfactory outcome of disarmament efforts in 1982 will act as shock therapy and spur all States to shoulder their full share of responsibility for disarmament efforts.

For its part, the Polish People's Republic, as in the past, is determined to continue, together with its allies, making a constructive contribution with a view to averting the threat of nuclear war and halting the nuclear arms race. We shall not waver in our commitment to promote other concrete measures of disarmament and work actively towards strengthening international security, détente, mutual confidence and peaceful co-operation among States. Poland's dedication in pursuing these objectives stems from the invariable principles of foreign policy of our socialist State, as well as from our historical experience and national traditions. It is consistent with our national self-interest and, we firmly believe, in the best interests of all peace-loving nations.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.