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Chairman: Mr. CARSALES (Argentina)
(Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 39 to 57, 133, 136, 138 and 139 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt): Mr. Vice-Chairman, let me at the outset request you to convey to the Chairman of the Committee my heartfelt congratulations on his election to chair this Committee. I also wish to congratulate you personally, Ambassador Carasales, on your election as Vice-Chairman of the Committee. My congratulations also go to Ambassador Vraalsen of Norway, a Vice-Chairman, and to Mr. Erdenechuluun of Mongolia, the elected Rapporteur of this Committee.

I should like also to pay a tribute to Ambassador Golob of Yugoslavia for his excellent performance in conducting the work of the Committee during the thirty-sixth session. We wish him well in his new responsibilities as the permanent representative of Yugoslavia to the United Nations.

The delegation of Egypt intends to address the Committee on various disarmament items in greater detail in the current and coming weeks. We therefore thought we should confine ourselves in this first statement to some remarks of a general nature.

It seems to me that the First Committee meets at this session in an atmosphere of mixed feelings - feelings of frustration and disappointment at the failure of the second special session devoted to disarmament and yet, in the midst of such feelings, gratification as a result of the most rewarding news of the recognition awarded, indeed, to this Committee and the whole United Nations disarmament establishment in the persons of Mrs. Myrdal of Sweden and Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, who have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1982.

Such homage is indeed well deserved; both Mrs. Myrdal and Ambassador Garcia Robles have, through their convictions and determination, contributed towards the ultimate goal of disarmament. Both are stubborn combatants in the cause of disarmament. Their valuable contributions and untiring efforts towards promoting disarmament and peace were called "patient and meticulous" by the Nobel Prize

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Committee. This is a particularly timely reminder that we should all spare no effort in following in their footsteps so that real progress towards disarmament may be achieved. It is, equally, encouraging proof that their devotion and dedication were not fruitless.

There is no doubt, in the view of the Egyptian delegation, that the deliberations of this Committee during the present session have a special significance, since this is the first occasion for any serious and comprehensive deliberations in the field of disarmament to have taken place since the recent, most regrettable failure of the second special session - a failure that makes it incumbent upon us thoroughly to reflect upon and comprehensively to evaluate the alarming situation resulting therefrom.

As we all know, only a few months ago, when the second special session was convened, Governments and peoples were hoping that such an important and significant event would serve as a fresh impetus to the process of general and complete disarmament. We believe that the international community has missed an excellent opportunity to move forward in a constructive manner towards realizing the goals of disarmament.

Failure to adopt the comprehensive programme, which was envisioned as faithfully reflecting the objectives of the Final Document adopted by the first special session of 1978, was not due to a lack of expertise. The energy and devotion of Ambassador Garcia Robles and his colleagues in the Group of 21 of the Committee on Disarmament is a matter of record. They should have a clear conscience. This would beg the question as to who, then, or what is to blame for the failure.

Should that failure be attributed to an unpropitious international situation, or could it be said that the machinery we have at our disposal within the United Nations system is inadequate or, lastly, can one safely conclude that there was, first and foremost, a lack of political will throughout, on the part of those whose exercise of that political will would really matter?

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

True, the special session failed. But before looking to the future, let us for a moment look to the present. What went wrong? We cannot absolve the international situation. We cannot absolve the big Powers from responsibility. However, we too must all bear our share of responsibility for this failure.

We start our work every year with an overloaded agenda. This year, we have 23 items for consideration; three of them were inscribed during the present session. Many of these are broken up into several sub-items. Not only is our agenda overloaded, but we also believe that most of the resolutions are repetitious, redundant and overlapping.

During past regular sessions of the General Assembly, we have adopted a large number of resolutions. A newcomer to the subject of disarmament would be surprised at the sheer volume of resolutions, containing a variety of proposals and recommendations. The number of past disarmament resolutions adopted during the course of 35 years, for instance, is almost 500. And the measures and recommendations called for in all those resolutions are not the result of a co-ordinated plan, nor do they reflect an efficient concept.

Earlier in my statement, I mentioned that what is urgently needed is thorough reflection upon and substantive study and assessment of the situation confronting us. This delegation has already started that exercise; as an outcome of that reflection, we offer the following considerations.

First, the First Committee itself should rationalize its programme of work. This rationalization should be based on an understanding, a consensus among all of us, designed to avoid repetition, redundancy and duplication of items under consideration, in order to permit us to streamline the work that seems to have expanded and mushroomed without concrete results. What we need to do is to concentrate in our work on such concrete issues as the arsenals of nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons, nuclear-weapon-free zones, economic consequences of the arms race and the strengthening of international security. The Programme of Action contained in the Final Document of 1978 provides the guidelines for action needed on such issues according to the priorities set forth therein. We may not need to adopt the traditional resolutions on each and every item in each and every session. In such a way, we believe that the Committee will be able to render more effective service towards the ultimate goal of achieving general and complete disarmament.

Secondly, the Disarmament Commission should be entrusted with the analysis and evaluation of the situation. It should also examine the underlying causes of the failure of the second special session on disarmament. We believe that such an analysis falls squarely within the Disarmament Commission's mandate. It should also review the functions of the United Nations disarmament machinery. The results of such an assessment would subsequently be submitted for consideration to the First Committee.

Thirdly, the Committee on Disarmament, which plays a central role as the only United Nations negotiating forum, should be enabled to discharge its negotiating functions in this regard. We believe that the consensus rule should not be invoked too often to the detriment of the necessary flexibility that would enable a successful outcome of negotiations, for it is our opinion that working groups provide the best mechanism to carry out concrete disarmament negotiations. Therefore, it is our view that the consensus rule should not be applicable to the setting up of working groups.

Fourthly, the functions of the Centre for Disarmament, which constitutes the umbrella for all the United Nations disarmament activities, have been impeded by too many restrictions. Therefore, we hold the view that the Centre should enjoy the necessary autonomy in order to be able effectively to discharge its mandate.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Fifthly, in the matter of bilateral negotiations, while we recognize the rights of States concerned not to reveal the confidential aspects of their ongoing negotiations, we believe that the General Assembly should be kept informed on a regular and institutional basis of the status of such negotiations;

Sixthly, we believe that the International Atomic Energy Agency has an important and key role to play in future arms control and disarmament agreements.

The successful and constructive role it has displayed under the Non-Proliferation Treaty reflects the great potential of the Agency in arms control and disarmament.

We will further elaborate on this issue in a future statement.

To sum up, we believe that the deliberative organs of the United Nations should be guided by the principles and recommendations contained in the Final Document of the first special session and that they should engage in deliberations that reflect and correspond to the real meaning of disarmament in order to pave the way for genuine progress in this field. We should establish the closest possible links between disarmament deliberations and negotiations since the results of multilateral negotiations have fallen far short of the goals agreed upon during disarmament deliberations. The failure of the second special session on disarmament is but one significant proof.

Disarmament is a political objective. It is also a negotiating process. Over the years we have witnessed a deviation from the genuine objective of disarmament. The world, in particular its developing part, has been torn between east and west in a cold war between the two super-Powers. We third world and non-aligned countries do not see eye to eye with certain approaches to disarmament. We do not want to apportion blame or responsibility but we simply cannot accept propagandistic attitudes which serve neither disarmament nor the general atmosphere of peace and security. We are interested only in a peaceful world, one where we can pursue our development process and ensure a better life for our peoples and future generations.

We are not prepared, and here I speak for Egypt, to take part in an exercise which is designed to serve the propaganda purposes of one bloc vis-à-vis the other, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization versus Warsaw, or vice versa.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

We all agreed, during the first special session devoted to disarmament, that nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind, to the survival of civilization, and that it is therefore essential to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race in all its aspects in order to avert the danger of nuclear war. Deriving from that fact, nuclear disarmament was accorded the highest priority in disarmament negotiations.

In Europe, where the situation is fraught with the danger of nuclear confrontation, we are witnessing the escalating race between the two super-Powers in accumulating nuclear armaments. We recognize the seriousness of the situation and welcome the solemn declaration by the Soviet Union not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. However, we believe that the concept of non-first use should be looked at in the framework of the broader principle of non-use of force in international relations.

We, of course, share the concern about the growing tension in Europe and the fears of confrontation between the two blocs. Nevertheless, we believe it is equally important to look at the situation in different regions from a different angle. We in the developing world face a situation of a dissimilar nature. All the wars we have been confronted with, or had imposed upon us, have been conventional where huge amounts of sophisticated conventional weapons were used. Therefore, together with according nuclear disarmament the highest priority, we attach particular importance to conventional disarmament in the framework of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Again, we attach particular importance to the security of Europe, but we believe that it cannot prevail without ensuring the security of the Middle East - an adjacent region - within the context of a just, comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the problem in the Middle East. In this connection, creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East not only would be a major element in lessening tensions and eliminating instability in that area but would undoubtedly enhance security in Europe and in the world. We intend to elaborate further on this question in due course.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

I said a while ago that disarmament was a political objective; it is definitely linked to international security and the whole international political system. There is no doubt that meaningful progress in disarmament would certainly lead to lessening international tension and consequently enhance international security. General and complete disarmament under effective international control would create confidence among States. The most urgent need to strengthen international security and activate the collective security system provided for in the Charter was eloquently highlighted by the Secretary-General in his important report to the thirty-seventh session. My delegation has been raising this issue since the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. The delegation of Sierra Leone has rightly proposed item 137, entitled "The implementation of the collective security provisions of the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security."

The delegation of Egypt will take up the matter in greater detail at the appropriate time when the Committee considers the international security items.

It is clear that the international situation, because of the conflicts with which it is plagued or because of wars actually being waged, demonstrates that no partial approach, dealing with a single problem in isolation from the others - be it disarmament, the New International Economic Order or collective security - will provide an effective remedy for the problems connected with the international political system. I cannot, therefore, conclude without returning to the triangular relationship between disarmament, international security and development. In our view, any effort aiming at disarmament cannot be effective unless it is taken within the context of this triangular relationship. Any disarmament effort should therefore be complemented by equally determined efforts to strengthen international peace and security and enhance the development of developing countries. It is high time that we proceed without interruption towards these objectives, strictly observing the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the respect for the rights of peoples to genuine self-determination and non-recourse to the use or threat of use of force in settling disputes and the restructuring of the New International Economic Order, based on justice and equality.

Mr. YONDON (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): At the outset, I should like sincerely to congratulate Mr. James Gbeho on his election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I wish him every success in his difficult task. I should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee and say that the Mongolian delegation is ready to co-operate fully with you.

The Mongolian delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate most sincerely the Mexican Ambassador, Mr. Garcia Robles, and I would also request the delegation of Sweden to transmit to Mrs. Alva Myrdal our sincere congratulations in connection with the award to them of the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of their major contribution to the struggle to halt the arms race and to achieve the goal of disarmament.

The current session of the United Nations General Assembly is taking place at a difficult time in international affairs, at a moment crucial to the future of the human race. We are today witnessing a very dangerous intensification of the tension in the world and a growing threat of nuclear war. Actions by the United States of America and its allies have raised to a new and even more dangerous level the uncurbed arms race. Their policy of carrying out plans for new nuclear, chemical, outer space and conventional weapons, their so-called programmes for strategic over-arming and tactical rearming, this whole policy is designed as an adventuristic approach to achieving unilateral military superiority.

This total preparation for war, the development of the militaristic doctrines of limited or protracted nuclear wars, rejection of agreements earlier entered into and rejection of negotiations, all of this seriously destabilizes inter-State relations and undermines our hopes of making progress and achieving practical results in the area of halting the arms race and achieving disarmament.

A completely different policy is followed by the countries of socialism. They have consistently advocated, and they now advocate, many constructive initiatives and proposals to prevent nuclear war, to ease tension, to lessen military confrontations and to limit and reduce arms. right up to the complete elimination of arms.

(Mr. Yondon, Mongolia)

An act of good will and an endeavour to bring talks and nuclear disarmament on to practical ground was provided by the undertaking entered into by the Soviet Union at the second special session, not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. This undertaking is one that we consider an important step of historic significance. We consider it a timely response to the Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe adopted last year by the United Nations General Assembly, which declared first use of nuclear weapons as a very grave crime against mankind.

At the current session of the General Assembly, the Soviet Union has introduced new important proposals to curb the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, and to remove the danger of nuclear war. The Government of the Mongolian People's Republic fully supports these initiatives as extremely important and timely. It is our conviction that the proposal entitled "Immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests" has the extremely important practical goal of speeding up the talks which have slowed down so much on a complete and comprehensive nuclear-weapon test ban. Indeed, the question of the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests by all States in all environments on a permanent basis has been on the agenda of the United Nations and of various international forums, and has been the subject of trilateral and other negotiations for two decades now.

(Mr. Yondon, Mongolia)

Considerable efforts have been made to halt the qualitative nuclear arms race in order to protect us from the emergence of even more sophisticated new nuclear weapons and systems thereof. A number of important agreements have been achieved; in particular, there was the 1963 Moscow Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water and the 1974 and 1976 Soviet-American agreements on limiting underground nuclear-weapon tests and underground peaceful nuclear explosions. The trilateral Soviet-American-British talks were begun and it seemed that a treaty on a full and comprehensive ban of nuclear-weapon tests was not too far off. However, because of the obstructionist policy of certain nuclear States, primarily the United States of America, the agreements that had been reached were not ratified or the negotiations under way were interrupted, as a result of which nuclear-weapon tests continue even today.

Under these circumstances, the proposal by the Soviet Union on the immediate drafting and conclusion of an international treaty on a full and comprehensive ban on nuclear weapon tests was designed to overcome the present deadlock in the negotiations. An important element that could help to establish favourable conditions for drafting such a treaty would be - and this is something that has been proposed by the Soviet Union - the commitment by all nuclear-weapon States not to undertake, beginning from an agreed date and right up to the conclusion of the treaty, any nuclear explosions at all.

The Mongolian delegation considers it essential to draw attention to the Soviet Union's willingness at any time to ratify, on a mutual basis, the agreements concluded with the United States of America on limiting underground nuclear weapon tests and underground peaceful nuclear explosions, as well as immediately to resume the trilateral talks with the United States of America and Britain. These proposals reflect the political will and readiness of the Soviet Union seriously and responsibly to enter into talks and continue those talks until a successful outcome is arrived at.

In our view, the document introduced by the Soviet Union for consideration, which is entitled "Basic provisions for a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests", is a good basis for a swift drafting and conclusion of such a treaty. It is based on many years of experience in

(Mr. Yondon, Mongolia)

considering this problem in various international forums, constructively takes account of the views and opinions of many States and, lastly, contains specific ways of resolving individual questions, particularly those relating to monitoring and compliance with the provisions of the treaty.

The Mongolian delegation feels that there is an urgent need to intensify international efforts for the adoption of forceful measures to prohibit all nuclear-weapon tests without exception and swiftly to arrive at the corresponding treaties and agreements.

In this connection the Mongolian delegation supports the draft resolution introduced by the Soviet Union relating to an "Immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests", which contains an appeal for practical talks to be started urgently within the context of the Committee on Disarmament.

Another major initiative of the Soviet Union worth serious consideration is designed to reduce the nuclear threat. This is the proposal on the "Intensification of efforts to remove the threat of nuclear war and ensure the safe development of nuclear energy". The Government of the Mongolian People's Republic regards this initiative as having primary significance and offering a reliable barrier to a nuclear catastrophe and closing any new opening that could lead to a nuclear catastrophe. The danger involved in, and the likelihood of, such a catastrophe are evident in that attacks on peaceful nuclear installations and devices could in their consequences be virtually tantamount to the use of nuclear weapons.

Our delegation considers that the General Assembly, in the spirit of its Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe, should undertake the necessary efforts to prevent the deliberate destruction of nuclear installations and ensure the security of the development of nuclear energy. Our delegation supports the Soviet Union's draft resolution, which contains an appeal to all nuclear-weapon States as a first step to curb and in the final analysis to eliminate their nuclear arsenals and agree on a simultaneous halt in the production and development of nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles and also in the production of fissionable materials for building various kinds of nuclear weapons.

Those are the views of the Mongolian delegation on the new proposals of the Soviet Union relating to these most important aspects of the problem of how to halt the nuclear arms race. Our delegation will express its views on other items on the agenda in later statements.

Mr. SUJA (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): I should like first sincerely to congratulate our Chairman and the other officers of the Committee on their election to their important positions. We wish the Chairman every success in his difficult task. On behalf of the Czechoslovak delegation, I assure him of our full support and co-operation in our work here together.

It is a great pleasure for us to offer our warmest congratulations to the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico, Mr. Alfonso Garcia Robles, an excellent statesman and outstanding diplomat, who has earned great prestige and wide international recognition, on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Similarly, we congratulate Mrs. Alva Myrdal of Sweden. We regard the awards as a due tribute to these outstanding people, who are contributing to the maintenance of peace, the curbing of the arms race and the achievement of disarmament. They have been working intensively to that end for many years in many forums, including the United Nations.

At this session there are on the agenda of the General Assembly, and of our Committee, a number of extremely important, major items requiring immediate solutions, concerning the avoidance of nuclear war, limitation of the continuing arms race and the achievement of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. There is an urgent need to make real progress in this direction, a need that was reflected at the recent second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. This is also being increasingly reflected in international public opinion, which is rightly demanding a solution to the most serious issue of the world today: how to ensure peace and eliminate the threat of nuclear catastrophe which is looming over the human race. This question is naturally the key item on our agenda. A solution to the problem will determine how international events develop.

Meanwhile, the arms race has reached a scale that threatens the material basis of man's existence. The endless conveyor belts of the military-industrial complex of imperialism, the constant flow of new, different kinds of the most lethal nuclear military technologies and the intensive research into, and development of ever new kinds of weapons of mass destruction - primarily nuclear weapons, but also chemical weapons and the so-called conventional weapons - are all closely linked with the cynical doctrines justifying in one way or another the waging of a future nuclear war, even a general nuclear war.

(Mr. Suja, Czechoslovakia)

The consequences of such a policy are well known to all of us: an increase in political and military tension in Europe and other parts of the world, a deadlock in negotiations on the substance of disarmament issues and an exacerbation of crises, which sometimes even turn into open military conflicts. There are also the unprecedented increases in nuclear expenditures and the related critical state of the world economy, reflected in statements by delegations at the current session of the General Assembly. But the main consequence is the increased threat of nuclear war.

In such circumstances we, together with the overwhelming majority of members of the United Nations, attached tremendous significance to the Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe, adopted by the General Assembly last year, in resolution 36/100, on the initiative of the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union's formal undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, an undertaking that it entered into during the second special session devoted to disarmament. We again emphasize our view that if other nuclear Powers acted similarly that would be tantamount to prohibiting nuclear weapons in general, and the danger of the eruption of a nuclear conflict would in practice be reduced to zero.

In this connection, it is worth recalling another important initiative taken by members of the Warsaw Treaty, in the form of an appeal, addressed to all States participating in the all-European meeting, to reach agreement on the non-first use of nuclear or conventional weapons against one another. This is the general line of the well-known proposal by the Socialist countries on the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. All these proposals offer us a concrete, clear and constructive answer to the question of how and by what means we can prevent mankind's slipping down the abyss to nuclear war.

Naturally, the most reliable guarantee of the peaceful future of the peoples of the world would be the full, permanent elimination of nuclear weapons, their unconditional prohibition, and the destruction to stockpiles of such weapons. Proceeding from this premise, we firmly advocate, first, the immediate elimination of the conditions in which few forms and systems of nuclear weapons might be built up and distributed to parts of the world - including Europe - where they do not exist now. As the Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia said in the General Assembly on 7 October this year:

(Mr. Suja, Czechoslovakia)

"to eliminate the causes and thus to eliminate in time the risk of destabilizing the strategic situation means in practical terms to do away in the first place with the testing of nuclear weapons."

(A/37/PV.21, p. 57)

We believe that this is the general direction of the important new proposal by the Soviet Union on the immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear weapons tests, a question included in the agenda of our Committee. We fully support that proposal.

(Mr. Suja, Czechoslovakia)

A study of this proposal would show, first of all, that it is comprehensive in nature. Account is taken of differences in approach on the part of States to various aspects of the problem, particularly with regard to questions of monitoring and verification, and use is also made of the wide international experience gained from many years of negotiations on such questions in the United Nations, in the Geneva Committee on Disarmament and in consultations between States in general. In other words, the Soviet Union's proposal and the draft of basic provisions for a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests submitted to us for our consideration have a firm and solid foundation. The experience gained in the elaboration of the 1963 Moscow Treaty banning nuclear-weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, which was drawn up with the participation of the three nuclear Powers, and in reaching the agreements concluded in 1974 and 1976 between the USSR and the United States of America on limiting underground nuclear-weapon tests and underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes is applied here. In this connection, we can only express regret at the unilateral decision by the United States as a result of which the trilateral negotiations between the three nuclear Powers parties to the Moscow Treaty were suspended and interrupted in 1980, just as they were beginning to move towards the final stages of drafting a new treaty on a complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. We were also disenchanted and disappointed by other steps that were then taken, in open contradiction to what had already been agreed by the United States in respect of international obligations to achieve a complete halt in nuclear-weapon tests.

However, the search for a solution to this problem is still extremely relevant and is supported by the overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations. Under the circumstances, the proposal of the USSR is a practical and extremely constructive solution and provides a way out of the situation that has been created, provided, of course, that the necessary political will to achieve progress in subsequent negotiations is demonstrated by Members of the

(Mr. Suja, Czechoslovakia)

United Nations, and in particular by the other nuclear Powers. We wish to express our conviction that this important proposal will enjoy unanimous support in our Committee, and we trust that fruitful negotiations will be held in the Committee on Disarmament on this basis, taking into account those views and considerations expressed by Member States. As a member of the Geneva Committee, Czechoslovakia intends to participate most actively in further efforts to draft the final text of the treaty.

One of the items to which States and international public opinion give great attention is the question of ensuring the safe development of nuclear energy and of strengthening guarantees concerning its use exclusively for peaceful purposes. This was recently stated by the Foreign Minister of the USSR, Andrei Andreivich Gromyko. The attention devoted to this issue is quite natural, particularly in view of the close relationship that exists between it and efforts to eradicate the threat of nuclear war. Indeed, life itself and the conditions under which nuclear energy is being developed furnish convincing proof that it is simply not possible to resolve such problems separately, isolated one from the other.

Today nuclear energy is becoming an increasingly important element in the economy of a growing number of States in nearly every part of the world, and this process will inevitably accelerate as alternative energy sources are exhausted. In our country, for example, the increased output of electricity in the 1980s must necessarily be met by an increase in the output of nuclear-power stations. A similar situation can be seen in many other countries, including developing countries.

At the same time, there is a growing danger of the deliberate destruction of peaceful nuclear installations with their high concentration of radioactive material. A clear example of such an action was the well-known incursion by the Israeli air force into the air space of Iraq and the ensuing destruction of the nuclear research facility - Osirak - on 7 June of last year. There is no doubt that if a high-capacity nuclear-power station were to be destroyed in a similar

(Mr. Suja, Czechoslovakia)

manner, the consequences would be even more serious, not to mention the catastrophic consequences attendant upon the possible destruction of peaceful nuclear facilities as a result of the use of a nuclear weapon.

Bearing in mind those facts, we appreciate the initiative taken by the Soviet Union to include the subject of the intensification of efforts to remove the threat of nuclear war and ensure the safe development of nuclear energy as an important item on our agenda, and we fully support the measures proposed in connection with that item in the Soviet draft resolution.

In particular, we note the major significance of the statement contained in that draft that intentional destruction of peaceful nuclear installations, even through the use of conventional weapons, would be tantamount to an attack using nuclear weapons. In other words, it would be an action that the United Nations has already described as a grave crime against mankind. We also fully share the view that limitation and cessation of the nuclear arms race, which was recognized by the General Assembly of the United Nations as being a matter of top priority in disarmament talks at both of the special sessions devoted to disarmament, would inevitably lead to the establishment of more favourable conditions for the development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Czechoslovakia has always held the view that the question of halting the production of fissionable materials for the manufacture of various kinds of nuclear weapons could be successfully resolved only within the context of and organically linked with practical measures to reduce and, in the final analysis, eliminate nuclear arsenals.

(Mr. Suja, Czechoslovakia)

A practical measure of this kind, broadly supported by international public opinion, would be, for example, the halting or freezing of production and development of nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles as a first step towards their subsequent elimination. An appeal to nuclear-weapon States to be guided by such an approach - as contained in the draft resolution - should, in our view, enjoy the full support of all Members of the United Nations. We believe that consideration in our Committee of the item on the intensification of efforts to remove the threat of nuclear war and ensure the safe development of nuclear energy will lead to fruitful and constructive results which will serve the cause of strengthening peace, international security and development.

In conclusion, I should like to assure the Committee of our willingness to make every effort to ensure fruitful and constructive consideration of the broad range of items relating to disarmament on the agenda of this Committee. My delegation will state its views on other agenda items relating to disarmament at a later time.

Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary): Mr. Chairman, first of all I should like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Committee. It is a great pleasure for me to see you, an old colleague and friend from Geneva, guiding our deliberations. I wish you every success in your responsible work, in which I offer you the full support and co-operation of the Hungarian delegation.

I should like also to take this opportunity to congratulate our distinguished colleague, Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In this Committee, where all of us have the privilege of knowing his personality, it is unnecessary to enumerate all his merits and the valuable work he has done in recent decades to promote disarmament. My congratulations also go to Mrs. Myrdal of Sweden, with whom I had the privilege of working together in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. I express the hope that this recognition of their work will inspire all of us as well as others to do even more for the cause of disarmament.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

As has been pointed out by representatives who have spoken before me, the international environment in which the First Committee is considering disarmament matters is characterized by growing tensions and dangers. We have had to witness an aggravation of the already dangerous situation in the Middle East by the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, the emergence of new hotbeds of tension and the persistence of others. All this has been coupled with the intensification of the arms race and of the policies of economic sanctions and discrimination against a large group of countries.

Against this background, despite the special disarmament character of the year due to the second special session on disarmament, nobody could realistically expect tangible results from the disarmament negotiations in general and from the work of the Geneva Committee on Disarmament in particular. The ongoing Soviet-American negotiations on strategic arms limitation and reduction and on the limitation of nuclear weapons in Europe have not yet made any progress; the Vienna negotiations now in their ninth year have not yet produced any result; the outcome of the second special session on disarmament is well known to everyone; and, last but not least, this was the fourth consecutive year in the activities of the Committee on Disarmament with no disarmament measure elaborated and adopted. Such a state of affairs is alarming; it not only requires an analysis of the causes but also calls for specific actions aimed at reversing the present trend. In the opinion of my delegation, our Committee has an appropriate role to play in that respect.

In my statement today I should like to deal only with some questions of a general character related to disarmament, in connection with the work of the second special session on disarmament and of the Committee on Disarmament.

The second special session on disarmament took place in particularly difficult and disquieting circumstances, in a period which had been regarded as, and also proved to be, unfavourable to efforts aimed at curbing the arms race and promoting general disarmament. Nevertheless, the Hungarian

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

delegation, like those of the great majority of the Member States, attended the special session fully determined to do everything possible to contribute to the removal of the threat of a nuclear holocaust, to the halting of the arms race, especially in its nuclear aspects, and to the promotion of concrete measures of disarmament.

It was against that background that the delegation of Hungary, together with those of the overwhelming majority of Member States, approached the fundamental issues of the special session. It was against that background that the representatives of non-governmental organizations gave unprecedented support to the efforts of those delegations. It was against that background that they all welcomed the solemn commitment of the Soviet Union concerning the non-first-use of nuclear weapons and urged the other nuclear-weapon States to assume similar obligations, namely, to live up to the special responsibility they bear for the future of mankind.

The special session, though unable to arrive at specific conclusions and recommendations, clearly expressed "its profound preoccupation over the danger of war, in particular nuclear war" (A/S-12/32, para. 62) and declared unambiguously that the prevention of a nuclear disaster "remains the most acute and urgent task of the present day" (ibid.). Last but not least, the special session reaffirmed the validity of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, which continues to provide a sound basis for disarmament negotiations.

Now I turn to some general aspects of the activities of the Committee on Disarmament, which, as I have already mentioned, during its four years of existence has been unable to work out and adopt a single draft treaty or convention on disarmament.

Despite the failure of the special session, the vast majority of the delegations in the Committee on Disarmament wanted to make progress. Numerous new proposals were submitted with the aim of solving long-outstanding problems, and proposals were also made for the creation of the necessary organizational framework. However, the

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

opposition of the United States and some other countries prevented the Committee from establishing working groups on nuclear disarmament, on the prevention of a nuclear war or on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to mention only these three questions. Moreover, for the first time in the history of the Committee on Disarmament the existing working groups, namely, those on the comprehensive programme of disarmament, on negative security assurances and on radiological weapons, failed to function during the summer session because of the lack of any prospect of progress. To be more precise, the Working Group on Radiological Weapons held only three meetings in that period. Also for the first time in the history of the Geneva Committee, two countries developed a kind of selective approach to a highly important and urgent disarmament issue. Two nuclear-weapon Powers decided not to take part in the work of the working group on a nuclear-test ban. I suppose that representatives will agree with me when I say that the work of the Working Group on a nuclear-test ban, with a very limited mandate, and the activities of the Working Group on Chemical Weapons, which has made some progress, cannot change the gloomy picture presented by the Committee on Disarmament this year.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

The situation in the Committee on Disarmament that I have just outlined, reflects the growing erosion of the Committee's authority and the diminution of its negotiating character. In analysing the situation, one has to come to the sad conclusion, as stated at the second special session on disarmament, that the Committee on Disarmament is not accomplishing its task.

In connection with the complete lack of results in the work of the Geneva Committee, many things have been said in an effort to find the main causes of this state of affairs or to find an excuse for the existing situation, which is more than unsatisfactory.

The United States and some Western countries consider that the so-called Soviet threat and military superiority prevent successful disarmament negotiations. The same countries have often expressed the opinion that the present unfavourable international situation, which is not propitious for disarmament, prevents the Committee from reaching tangible results. Others, while admitting that the existing international situation is not conducive to disarmament efforts, add that the present organization and structure of the Committee hinder speedier progress in disarmament negotiations.

The allegations that the so-called Soviet military threat and military superiority, the unfavourable international political situation or the inadequate organization or structure of the Committee on Disarmament are the main cause of the lack of progress in disarmament negotiations should be looked at more closely, in order to avoid any misunderstanding.

Concerning the so-called Soviet military threat, incontestable facts show that since the end of the Second World War the United States has always been the first to introduce various new weapons and systems of weapons, thus starting new stages of the arms race, and the Soviet Union was forced to respond. I do not want to deal at length with the so-called Soviet military superiority. More than one American expert or politician has clearly admitted the existence of a military balance between the two leading Powers.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

Turning to the other point, nobody could contest that the international situation in general and relations between the Soviet Union and the United States in particular were not ideal during the Viet Nam war. Despite that very fact some disarmament agreements had been worked out and adopted by the predecessors of the Committee on Disarmament, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968, the sea-bed Treaty of 1971 and the Convention on bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons of 1972. As far as the present organization and structure of the Committee on Disarmament are concerned, I have more than ample reason not to overemphasize the importance of organizational and structural questions in connection with disarmament negotiations. The predecessors of the Committee on Disarmament, the Eighteen Nations Committee on Disarmament and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, were able to draw up disarmament agreements without the present structure, organization and rules of procedure of the Committee on Disarmament, not to mention the working groups now existing in the Committee on Disarmament.

This short consideration of the arguments aimed at trying to find extraneous causes for the lack of progress in disarmament negotiations shows clearly that those arguments cannot stand up to examination. The crux of the problem lies in the very fact that the United States is striving to eliminate the existing approximate strategic-military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union, and between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Treaty, in order to reach strategic-military superiority. That is the main cause of the lack of progress in disarmament negotiations in various forums, that is the main cause of the continuing and increasing arms race, that is the main cause of the growing dangers facing mankind.

This state of affairs sounds an alarm call for renewed efforts on the part of all States, big and small, nuclear and non-nuclear, members of the Committee on Disarmament or not, to reverse this dangerous trend, and to contribute to the creation of more propitious conditions for disarmament negotiations, for tangible results in the field of disarmament and for arms limitation.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

The situation calls for the intensification of all forms of disarmament negotiations, be they bilateral, regional or multilateral. It requires concrete results from the bilateral Soviet-American negotiations, which should include the convening of a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe. It requires tangible results from the Committee on Disarmament.

I should like now to express some views of the Hungarian delegation in connection with the work of the First Committee, which has a duty and responsibility to contribute to disarmament efforts and to pave the way for tangible results.

In the opinion of the Hungarian delegation, our Committee has to give high priority and special attention to questions related to nuclear disarmament. Among the nuclear disarmament issues, the non-first use, the prevention of a nuclear war and the comprehensive banning of nuclear weapons tests require special consideration. In this connection the Hungarian delegation welcomes the new Soviet initiatives and considers them an extremely important and timely contribution to nuclear disarmament; we shall elaborate on this later. At this point, I should like to express the hope that the resolutions to be adopted on nuclear disarmament will give new impetus to the work of the Committee on Disarmament next year and will induce other negotiations on the reduction and limitation of nuclear weapons as well.

The First Committee should give due attention to the question of other weapons of mass destruction. In this connection it is very timely and important to speed up the preparation in the Committee on Disarmament of a draft convention banning chemical weapons. The other question I should mention in this respect concerns the contribution our Committee should make to the elimination of the danger of the appearance of new weapons and systems of mass destruction based on new scientific discoveries and technological development. Due attention should be given by the First Committee to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including the establishment of the necessary organizational framework in order to deal with this important question in an appropriate manner.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

The Hungarian delegation would like to express the hope that our deliberations here and the results of our work, will enable the Committee on Disarmament to reactivate the working groups dealing with radiological weapons, negative security assurances and a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

In conclusion, I should like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the Hungarian delegation will do everything possible in order to contribute to the successful work of our Committee. I should like to reserve the right of my delegation to take the floor again in the general debate.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The statement by the representative of Hungary brings us to the end of the list of speakers for this afternoon's meeting. One representative has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I should like to remind him, in accordance with past practice, that a decision on procedure states that

"The number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two per item". (34/401 F para. 9) and that:

"The first intervention ... should be limited to 10 minutes".
(ibid. para. 10)

After this clarification which is, as I have said, customary in this Committee, I call on the representative of the United States to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. LODGE (United States of America): The United States would like to address a number of statements made in this Committee ...

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I interrupt the representative of the United States because the representative of the Byelorussian SSR has asked to speak on a point of order.

Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): We are having a normal, tranquil discussion here, according to the rules of procedure. If we asked the Secretary, he could read us the rules of procedure, specifically rule 73. I do not want to quote it, but the idea is that the Chairman may call on representatives in exercise of the right of reply after the list of speakers is closed. I think that we will be closing the list of speakers on 29 October.

Now, if the Chairman feels that there are grounds for exercising the right of reply, he may call on representatives to do so. It is not a big secret, after 36 years of work in the United Nations, that this rule has been disregarded in the past. There may be circumstances that would make it difficult to have a debate as a debate and to apply the rule in this specific case. There might be a cooling-off period after statements are made, and then the right of reply could be exercised. One can think about this. And one might then discover that there is no justification for replying. One could also consider what contribution that a reply could make to the objectives before us.

I thus leave it to the Chairman to take a decision on this matter.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The Chairman has followed the usual practice in this Committee with regard to the exercise of the right of reply. I should like to read out from the provisions contained in paragraph F of General Assembly resolution 34/401 on Rationalization of the procedures and organization of the General Assembly. Since what I have before me is the English text, I shall read this in English:

(The Chairman)

(spoke in English)

"Delegations should exercise their right of reply at the end of the day whenever two meetings have been scheduled for that day, and whenever such meetings are devoted to the consideration of the same item.

"The number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two per item.

"The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes." (General Assembly resolution 34/401, part I, para. F, sub-paras. 8-10)

(continued in Spanish)

In accordance with these rules, I call on the representative of the United States.

Mr. LODGE (United States of America): The United States would today like to address a number of statements made in this Committee by Ambassador Jaroszek of Poland. He spoke, rather irresponsibly I fear, of a cold-war policy pursued by the allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) under the leadership of the United States and charged that the present United States Administration is bent on achieving military superiority. He knows well - or should know well, if he were searching for the truth - that comparative levels for military spending show Soviet defence expenditures today to be 50 per cent higher than those of the United States; that the United States spent 5.5 per cent of its gross national product on defence during the fiscal year 1981, compared to 11-13 per cent for the Soviet Union; and finally, that the Soviet Union has at least twice as many people under arms as does the United States.

(Mr. Lodge, United States)

The Polish representative also refers in glowing terms to the recent Pugwash Conference. That Conference, held last month in Warsaw, has been cynically exploited by the Jaruzelski régime to legitimize the military junta. Scheduled Years ago, that Conference was unconscionably held in Warsaw at a time when giant fire hoses were quite literally mowing down those brave Polish demonstrators not previously overtaken by tear gas. Much to their credit, the American Pugwash group refused to be used in this way and did not participate. Many individual scientists from Europe boycotted the Conference as well.

Some of those who did attend, wearing their Conference badges in the streets, were spat upon by passersby. Even worse than the cringing acquiescence by the divided Conference leadership in silence on the fate of Poland was the complete suppression of an open letter to the Conference from Russian Nobel-winning physicist Andrei Sakharov. Smuggled from exile at Gorki, the Sakharov letter appealed to international scientists to speak up on behalf of their imprisoned colleagues in the Soviet Union.

In regard to the arms race, Sakharov stated clearly that:

"In the last decade there has been a very substantial increase in the Soviet army, navy, missile, arsenal and air force while the countries of the West, Europe especially, have weakened their defence efforts. The SS-20 missiles have changed the strategic equilibrium in Europe, although those who take part in pacifist demonstrations seem not to notice this fact."

In conclusion, Sakharov urged that:

"There must be international efforts, efforts made by all honest people to defend human rights, to overcome the closed nature of the USSR and other socialist countries."

It would be irresponsible for those of us in the United Nations to do anything but heed Sakharov's plea.

(Mr. Lodge, United States)

Yesterday, the Polish Ambassador spoke about expressions by peace movements which must be seen as mankind's natural instinct for survival. What is this talk of peace movements from a representative of the Polish military junta? What outpourings for disarmament have taken place in the repressive environment of General Jaruzelski's Warsaw? None: the people of Poland are occupied with day-to-day survival against Government repression. The Jaruzelski clique knows that any gathering would be against the members of that clique. Accordingly, the puppet Government, doubtless with Moscow's blessing, prohibits disarmament as well as other groups to speak and to march freely.

The Polish Ambassador finally had the audacity yesterday to speak of Polish public opinion. It is true that the Jaruzelski régime, obedient to its Soviet masters, has tried and failed to snuff out the flame of freedom and free thought, so long a hallmark of the Polish people. Yet is it not a paradox for an official of that Government, reconciled since the Second World War to the occupying presence of two full Soviet divisions in its homeland, to speak on behalf of Polish public opinion? Why do those Russian divisions remain in Poland? Precisely to trample upon public opinion, to eliminate its very expression, so that officials such as these - such as the Polish Ambassador in the First Committee - can without challenge purport to speak on behalf of the Polish people, whom they are ruthlessly subjugating.

Yet there has been a challenge. Polish public opinion has spoken in the form of more than 10 million members of Solidarity and untold numbers of its supporters throughout the country. This is the real peace movement in Poland - the movement of Poles to speak for justice in Poland, for themselves, for their aspirations to a better life and for the freedoms that elsewhere many take for granted.

I do not need to dwell in this forum on how last 13 December, under strong pressure from the Kremlin, the Warsaw Government declared martial law, crushing the fledgling Polish movement towards openness and democracy. In so doing, the Polish régime openly violated the internationally recognized rights of the Polish people as agreed upon by the Polish Government in the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Accords and a host of other treaties and international documents.

(Mr. Lodge, United States)

On the first anniversary of Solidarity last August 31, seven demonstrators were killed by the police and over one thousand injured. More than four thousand people were arrested in those demonstrations, bringing to seven thousand the number now held in Polish prisons.

Today the Jaruzelski régime, with strong Soviet backing, continues its inhumane policy of repression. Lech Walesa remains interned and isolated, Pope John Paul II has, in effect, been prevented from returning to his native country this year and deep-seated political and economic problems in Poland remain unsolved.

As we sit here today the Polish people and Polish public opinion, for which Ambassador Jaroszek purports to speak, are inflamed by the 8 October decision of their Government to ban Solidarity and abolish all existing labor organizations, replacing them with so-called new unions, like those which are merely arms of the Governments of Eastern Europe. These actions have been squarely opposed by the Catholic Primate and Holy Episcopate of the Polish church. They have led to a new round of unrest, including the strike at Gdansk and, only last week, the three-day demonstration by steel workers at Nowa Huta.

As President Reagan stated on 9 October:

"There can only be one path out of the current morass in Poland, and that is for the military régime to stand up to its own statements of principle, even in the face of severe outside pressure from the Soviet Union, to lift martial law, release Lech Walesa and his colleagues now languishing in prison, and begin again the search for social peace through the arduous but real process of dialogue and reconciliation with the church and Solidarity."

The people of Poland have been martyred for many years. They are enduring martyrdom now at the hands of the Russians and their Polish quizlings. I say "endure" because I am confident that the brave Polish people will eventually emerge victorious over the totalitarian forces of evil which now hold sway in that tormented land. I have faith that with the help of the forces of freedom in our distraught world the people of Poland, who now languish in obscene hell-holes of oppression, will throw off the cruel red fascist yoke which now binds them and emerge into the sunlight of a secure freedom.

Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland): This is not the first time that the representative of the United States Government has abused the forum of the United Nations for slanderous propaganda against other countries including my own. His statement is typical of the attitude of the United States imperialists towards smaller countries, especially those whose social and political system is not to the liking of the latter-day crusaders from Washington.

We reject that statement and those slanders as an inadmissible interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign country, the Polish People's Republic, a member of the United Nations. Apparently, the United States representative has forgotten that Poland is not a federal State or a province of the United States, nor is it a banana republic in relation to which United States officials may consider themselves empowered to dictate American laws and American points of view.

I think it is worth reminding the United States representative also that Poland is not a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization but a party to the defensive alliance of the Warsaw Treaty.

We consider that the type of statement just made by the United States representative is a pretext to divert the attention of this Committee from the substantive discussion on disarmament items which the United States would apparently like to avoid. As far as we are concerned, Poland will not be deterred from its dedicated action in favour of disarmament, détente, international security and peaceful co-operation among States by any such attempts.

The United States and some NATO circles are using all sorts of measures, including political pressures, economic blackmail and propagandistic aggression, in order to weaken and thus destabilize our countries. They are attempting to interfere in the sovereign decisions of our legislative and parliamentary authorities and in the decisions of our Governments. In so doing they flout diplomatic custom and the Charter of the United Nations. They also offend the national feelings of Poles. I can only repeat that we condemn and reject such attempts.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.