
VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 59TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GBEHO (Ghana)

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 58 and 59 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: I invite the attention of the Committee to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/37/L.77, under agenda item 58, entitled "Development and strengthening of good-neighbourliness between States". This draft resolution has 28 sponsors and was introduced by the representative of Romania at the 54th meeting of the First Committee on 6 December 1982. I shall now call on the Secretary of the Committee to read out the list of sponsors.

Mr. RATHIORE, Secretary of the Committee: The sponsors are: Bangladesh, Burundi, Colombia, Congo, France, Guinea, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Turkey, United Republic of Cameroon, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall begin the voting procedure with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.77. The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed their wish that the draft resolution be adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Since no representatives wish to explain their vote before we take a decision, and if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to adopt draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.77 without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.77 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position in connection with the decision just taken.

Mr. ESCUDERO (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation has associated itself with the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.77 referring to the development and strengthening of good-neighbourliness among States, a subject to which my Government attaches particular importance. Our views on it can be found in document A/36/376 of 25 September 1981.

Ecuador from the outset supported the Romanian initiative for the inclusion of this item, which reflects the desire of all peoples to live in peace as good neighbours, regardless of the social and political system of States or the nature of their foreign policy.

Nevertheless, my delegation wishes to state for the record that it would have preferred the draft resolution to refer clearly and explicitly to the close and unequivocal relationship between good-neighbourliness and the non-use or threat of use of force and its logical corollary, the obligation of States to settle their international disputes exclusively by peaceful means.

My Government holds that the peaceful settlement of disputes between nations, particularly between neighbouring States, is the best way to ensure that countries, as the Charter says, may be able:

"to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours".

Mr. CRAIGHEAD (United States of America): The United States welcomes the opportunity to join the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.77 on good-neighbourliness. This draft resolution calls upon States to develop and strengthen good neighbourly relations. The United States regards this effort to clarify essential components of good-neighbourliness as both timely and useful. Accordingly, my country submitted its views on good-neighbourliness to the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. In our response to the Secretary-General, we noted that all nations pay lip service to the concept of good-neighbourliness.

(Mr. Craighead, United States)

The pertinent question is not, however, whether a nation supports good-neighbourliness; in principle all nations do. The question rather is whether a nation adheres to good-neighbourliness in practice. Regrettably, many nations do not. In his first inaugural address in 1933, President Roosevelt dedicated our nation to the policy of the good neighbour.

We are fortunate to have excellent relations with our neighbours on the northern and the southern borders. Of course, we have our squabbles as all neighbours do, but we discuss them openly and amicably. We do not resort to force or the threat of force. We share 5,000 miles of open and unguarded borders. No troops are garrisoned along our borders. Military installations do not scar our landscape. Weapons are not poised to protect our territories. Walls do not imprison our peoples.

The countries sharing the North American continent, then, are truly blessed. Good neighbours, however, are a precious and all too rare commodity.

Is it good-neighbourly, for example, that a powerful State carries out a massive military occupation of a neighbouring developing nation to attempt by harsh coercion to bend an Asian people to its arbitrary will? Is it good-neighbourly to force by undisguised intimidation a neighbouring proud people to live in a straitjacket of an alien social and economic system? Is it good-neighbourly to create a so-called defensive alliance and then use the troops of that alliance against members of the alliance? Is it good-neighbourly to build a grim grey monument to repression around the borders of one's freedom?

(Mr. Craighead, United States)

As the ancient Greek poet Hesiod once said: "A bad neighbour is a great plague, as a good one is a blessing." A truly good neighbour does not claim a monopoly on wisdom. He keeps his door open to neighbours and their ideas. He does not raise barriers to the exchange and discussion of views which are not his own. He does not require the rigid obedience of his neighbours, and he certainly does not resort to force or the threat of force to impose his will.

We are, therefore, particularly sympathetic to the desire of the sponsors of the draft resolution to see the principles of good-neighbourliness translated into practice. However, there is clearly a great deal more to being a good neighbour than pledging it on a piece of paper. In this regard, we note that operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution before us rightly reaffirms that

"...good-neighbourliness conforms with the purposes of the United Nations and is founded upon the strict observance of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations" (A/C.1/37/L.77)

as well as other established international documents.

One is thus compelled to ask whether the world community needs yet another codification of international rules of behaviour, whether such a drafting exercise would simply involve repetition in a new form of the familiar range of problems with which we have all grown too accustomed, or whether such a document could curb the less than neighbourly behaviour of some States.

The United States fervently hopes that the practice of good-neighbourliness among nations will flourish and that it will enjoy increasing acceptance and respect. There is a longing in this world, a longing which my country shares, for the blossoming of peaceful constructive relations between States. Such a blessing would enable us all to devote our undivided attention to the challenges we face, neighbours all, on this small and fragile planet.

Miss ABOUL HACA (Egypt): The delegation of Egypt has joined in the consensus on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/37/L.77 on the development and strengthening of good-neighbourliness between States. We have done so because of the particular importance we attach to the concept of developing and strengthening good-neighbourly relations between States.

We do consider good-neighbourliness not only as an integral part of the broader concept of the maintenance of peace and security, but also as a reliable guarantee and an essential element in achieving such a goal.

However, we should have liked the close link and the interrelationship between the development and strengthening of good-neighbourly relations between States, on the one hand, and the peaceful settlement of disputes, one of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, on the other, to have been emphasized in the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/37/L.77.

In the draft resolution just adopted, no reference was made to the most recent declaration adopted by the General Assembly by consensus, which is indeed most relevant to the subject matter. I am referring to the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes, which was adopted on 15 November last.

We consider that the development and strengthening of good-neighbourly relations between States is an essential component of the efforts to strengthen the process of the peaceful settlement of disputes through the progressive development and codification of international law in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Specific reference is made in the last paragraph of the Manila Declaration to that particular issue.

It is, indeed, in the light of this interrelationship that we interpret operative paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4. Having said that, we should like to reiterate once more our support for the Romanian initiative. We believe it is a step in the right direction.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 58.

I now call on the Secretary of the Committee to make an announcement.

Mr. RATHORE (Secretary of the Committee): I have been requested by the representative of Nicaragua to indicate that Nicaragua has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.73/Rev.2.

I have also been asked to inform the Committee that the Disarmament Commission will hold an organizational session on 13, 14 and 15 December 1982 in this conference room to consider matters relevant to the work of the Commission, particularly the election of new officers of the Commission for the 1983 session.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now turn its attention to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/37/L.78 under agenda item 59, entitled Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

This draft resolution has 22 sponsors and was introduced by the representative of Yugoslavia at the 55th meeting of the First Committee on 7 December 1982.

I now call on the Secretary of the Committee to read out the list of sponsors.

Mr. RATHORE (Secretary of the Committee): The sponsors are: Algeria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Benin, Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mali, Malta, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Romania, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Togo, Yugoslavia and Zambia.

Mr. SILOVIC (Yugoslavia): I just wanted to announce a few minor changes which I should like to introduce on behalf of the sponsors as the result of the consultations that have been held since the introduction of this draft resolution.

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

The first change is in the third preambular paragraph, sixth line, where the word "bloc" should be deleted, so that the line begins: "the policy of rivalry, confrontation..." and so on.

In the fifth preambular paragraph, third line, the word "rivalry" should be replaced with the word "confrontation" so that the line reads: "which are conceived within the context of big-Power confrontation..." and so on.

There are no more changes to be made, but I should like to point out a typographical error of quite substantive importance in operative paragraph 8. In the penultimate line of that paragraph, the word "prevent" should read "present". We certainly do not want to prevent the Council's conclusions, but we should like it to present them.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78, as orally amended. I call on the representative of Italy, who wishes to explain his vote before the vote.

Mr. ECONOMIDES (Italy): Italy remains committed to the implementation of the Declaration contained in General Assembly resolution 2734 (XXV), which provides an agreed political framework within which the objectives of the strengthening of international security can be pursued. Indeed, for our part, we seek to contribute and will continue to contribute to the strengthening of international security at both the international and regional levels.

Draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78 contains a number of useful elements and in some instances marks an improvement in the text as compared with last year's resolution. However, we cannot but make clear a number of specific reservations.

First of all, we have serious doubts about the requirement that the First Committee continue to debate year after year the implementation of the 1970 Declaration. Our concern is that to offer a selective presentation of certain aspects of the Declaration, as appears to be the tendency during its annual debate, would risk seriously weakening the importance of the 1970 text and disturbing the general understanding upon which it was based. As has been stressed in the past by the Presidency of the European Community, we are far from convinced that in these circumstances the practice of continuing to debate this matter serves any useful purpose. Instead, in the view of my delegation, a number of additional meetings should be allocated by the Committee to the consideration of and consultation on disarmament items, which are increasing each year in number and importance.

Let me now turn to two specific ideas contained in draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78 which, inter alia, create some difficulty for my delegation.

As far as operative paragraph 13 is concerned, I should like to recall that Italy abstained on the 1970 resolution on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. Therefore, we cannot associate ourselves with the reiteration of support for that Declaration.

(Mr. Economides, Italy)

As for operative paragraphs 15 and 17, I should like to stress that, as a country situated in the Mediterranean area, Italy endeavours by every means to strengthen the bonds of friendship and co-operation in all fields with the Mediterranean countries of Europe, Africa and Asia. Italy has consistently sought to do so in tangible ways. Thus, not only has it made an active contribution in all efforts to promote co-operation in the fields of economic relations, science, culture and ecology, particularly within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, but, above all, it has also become directly involved in undertakings aimed at strengthening security and peace in the Mediterranean. The Italian-Maltese agreements on the neutrality of Malta and Italy's participation in the multinational peace-keeping forces in the Sinai and in Lebanon are indisputable proof of the action it has taken to strengthen security and develop co-operation in the region of the Mediterranean.

It must be recognized that it would not be in keeping with the complex realities of the region to seek to deal with questions relating to security in the region of the Mediterranean independently of a consideration of problems relating to security on the European continent as a whole. Indeed, the region of the Mediterranean is not a homogeneous one in which solutions relating to security can be applied which do not take into account political and military balances and conditions within the framework of existing security agreements.

Bearing in mind the distinctive characteristics of the area, the unavoidable interrelationships with other political and security conditions and the need to avoid duplication, Italy considers that the questions relating to the region of the Mediterranean, including various security matters, could be considered in an expanded regional context on the basis inter alia of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

From that perspective, it is useful to recall that the Helsinki Final Act contains a section on questions of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean. Those questions are, moreover, to be considered within the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe which, in the view of the Italian Government, is the forum most likely to achieve progress in this area.

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(Mr. Economides, Italy)

Consequently, and in the light of all the considerations I have adduced in my statement, the Italian delegation will abstain on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution in document A/C.1/37/L.78, as orally amended. A roll-call vote has been requested.

A vote was taken by roll call.

Qatar, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia

Against: None

Abstaining: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan,

Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain,
Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern
Ireland, United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78 was adopted by 90 votes to none, with
18 abstentions.*

* Subsequently the delegations of Guyana, Sierra Leone and Yemen advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on representatives who wish to explain their vote after the vote.

Mr. CRAIGHEAD (United States of America): I should like to make a brief exposition of some of the reasons that caused my delegation to abstain on resolution A/C.1/37/L.78.

I should first note that the draft resolution does include many high-minded provisions dealing with fundamental tenets of international behaviour.

No one would deny that there have been and there continue to be disappointing developments in the process of disarmament negotiations. We all know that these matters do not lend themselves to simple and swift solutions. But for that very reason it is fitting to take note of progress when progress has been achieved, even if the progress is short of what one would wish. Paragraph 6 (b) of A/C.1/37/L.78 urges all States, and in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, to start serious, meaningful and effective negotiations. Are the intermediate nuclear forces negotiations not serious? Are the strategic arms reduction talks not meaningful? And the mutual and balanced force reduction?

We are somewhat troubled to see, in paragraph 10, that fundamental human freedoms have been treated in an interdependent manner with the strengthening of international peace and security. My country considers human rights to be of surpassing importance, not subject to arbitrary constraints. We also have difficulties with the reference to the New International Economic Order which is an ill-defined concept in paragraph 6 (c). As to paragraph 13, we have expressed on repeated occasions our difficulties with the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. Passing to paragraph 15, we consider that the balance of the resolution is injured by the singling out of the Mediterranean region when so many other areas of tension exist in the world. Nor is it clear that that region should be the subject of a new agenda item in the General Assembly, given the many

(Mr. Craighead, United States)

existing headings under which the situation in the area can be discussed as it is. Still with regard to paragraph 15, the call for respect for sovereignty over natural resources seems to us incomplete without mention of compliance with international law. And in speaking of omissions, it is in our view regrettable that a resolution on strengthening international security does not contain reference to the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The language of A/C.1/37/L.78 is addressed in preponderant measure to the major military powers and the States members of military alliances. There is no question that those States bear important responsibilities in terms of international security. However, States outside those categories bear responsibilities as well. We would have preferred that the concept of shared responsibility be explicitly dealt with in the resolution before us.

Mr. LACLAUSTRA (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Spain abstained from voting on draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security because there are certain approaches and measures in that draft with which we do not agree. Specifically as regards the Mediterranean, my delegation would like to say that Spain wants peace in that area, but for the time being, my country does not believe that effective measures are being taken to build this peace.

Mr. OCAK (Turkey): We welcome the general thrust of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/37/L.78 which has just been adopted by this Committee. Moreover, the text makes it apparent that efforts have been made to satisfy to the best possible extent the widely varying concerns of different countries on the security situation as it prevails today.

However, it remains to be shown that in reviewing the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security in general by virtue of this resolution, the Mediterranean region has been expressly referred to in various preambular and operative paragraphs.

(Mr. Ocak, Turkey)

Without prejudice to our consciousness of the relative substantiality of the security situation in the Mediterranean which certainly would justify objective, balanced and properly oriented efforts aimed at enhancing it - my delegation remains sceptical about a probable distortion of the realistic assessment of security concerns in this region in the face of some serious situations currently prevailing elsewhere in the world.

Furthermore, the Mediterranean happens to be an integral and indivisible part of the geographical area that has been placed under close scrutiny in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe process with a view to formulating the terms of reference for a disarmament conference on the entire European continent. Proper militarily significant confidence-building and security measures to be adopted by the participants in the Madrid meetings will undoubtedly contribute effectively to the enhancement of the continent's security, and hence that of the Mediterranean as one of its integral parts.

Therefore, the Turkish Government believes that the item proposed in operative paragraph 17 of the draft text for inclusion in the provisional agenda of the thirty-eighth General Assembly invites close attention to the proper placement of Mediterranean security in its broader global context.

In spite of our strong concurrence with the general thrust and the universal elements of this draft, we have abstained in the vote on A/C.1/37/L.78, with due regard to the considerations that I have tried to outline.

Mr. HIMANEN (Finland): The delegation of Finland just voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78. In doing so, we note that the general thrust of the resolution is consonant with the original 1970 Declaration of 1970 on the Strengthening of International Security, to which we continue to attach great importance.

We cast a positive vote on the present resolution in spite of some reservations, among others, the regional arrangements referred to in the text. In our view such arrangements can only be arrived at freely among States of the region concerned and with undiminished security for all. Further, we wish to emphasize strict compliance with the provisions of the Charter concerning the respective powers of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. LEHNE (Austria): In view of its situation in the most highly aread region of the world between the two major military alliance systems, Austria's security is intimately linked to the stability of international relations. We are vitally interested in all measures conducive to the strengthening of international security and the promotion of peaceful co-operation between States. We have from the outset supported the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security and remain committed to its full implementation.

We wish to thank the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78 for having prepared a text which is comprehensive, balanced, and in keeping with the spirit and substance of the Declaration. In view of our agreement with its general thrust, the Austrian delegation supports the draft resolution. We feel, however, obliged to state that there are provisions in the text with regard to which we have reservations. I refer in particular to operative paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, which do not take fully into account the delimitation of the functions of the different organs of the United Nations. We also have doubts about the proposed inclusion of an item concerning the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region in the agenda of the thirty-eighth session.

Mr. de LA GORCE (France)(interpretation from French): Last year the French delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution on the strengthening of international security. We did so, in spite of certain reservations, because we felt that it was desirable and right for the international community to express its concerns and views on this fundamental issue.

The text on which this Committee has just voted was distributed very late, and we regret that there was not enough time for consultations which might, perhaps, have made it possible to overcome certain difficulties. None the less, the draft resolution contains many provisions to which we can subscribe. Others, however, give rise to reservations on our part.

In particular, the French delegation does not consider paragraph 17 to be appropriate; that paragraph concerns the inclusion on the agenda of the next session of the General Assembly of a specific item entitled "Strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region". We do not believe that the situation in the Mediterranean should be considered in a separate debate unrelated to the settlement of problems concerning adjacent areas. We also fail to see what the conclusions of the General Assembly could add to the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act which deal with co-operation and security in the Mediterranean region.

Very much to its regret, the French delegation was thus obliged to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution in question.

Mr. O'CONNOR (Ireland): Ireland voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78 because we are in agreement with the general thrust of the draft resolution. Nevertheless, we have reservations regarding some of its provisions, in particular those which touch on the respective competences of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. MEGALOKONOMOS (Greece): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78 because we approve of its general thrust and of the ideas contained in it. If, however, paragraph 5 had been put to a separate vote, my delegation would have been obliged to abstain, since in our view that paragraph could present some ambiguities concerning interpretation.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I spoke on this subject a few days ago, and I pointed out the essence of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security and that implementation of that Declaration requires, in the first place, keeping to its essence. We recognized that, in order to secure unanimity, we might have to make compromises as long as these did not affect the essential purport and thrust of the Declaration.

For instance, the main thrust of the Declaration is its recommendation:

"that the Security Council take steps to facilitate the conclusion of the agreements envisaged in Article 43 of the Charter in order fully to develop its capacity for enforcement action as provided for under Chapter VII of the Charter". (resolution 2734 (XXV), para. 9)

Now, this is reflected to a certain extent in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution. We have noticed that of the representatives who expressed reservations about the draft resolution none referred to paragraph 4, because it comes within the essential part of the Declaration. The objections made concerned matters unrelated to the Declaration inasmuch as they are not contained in it.

My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution - and we would always vote in favour of any measure aimed at the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security - but we would have liked to see the draft resolution more in keeping with the Declaration and with previous resolutions, which, in three or four instances, referred specifically to paragraph 9 of the Declaration regarding the recommendation that the Security Council proceed to take the measures for international security in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter.

We hope that in the future we may avoid efforts at compromises touching on the substance of the Declaration. They do not produce positive results. We had a number of abstentions, caused particularly by matters extraneous to the Declaration. If we stick to the Declaration, we shall in any case have the satisfaction of having done our duty by keeping to the Declaration in its essential part, particularly as the Declaration was adopted by a nearly-unanimous vote and without any abstentions.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

We are certain that the drafters of this draft resolution directed their efforts in a very sincere way towards obtaining more votes, and this is also important. Therefore, as I said in my statement here the other day, we would be ready to accept certain compromises that would make it possible to secure a unanimous vote. We can see no point in compromises if they do not lead to a unanimous vote. By lessening the stress of the Declaration on the one hand, and by adding extraneous matters, on the other, we reduce the main thrust and effect of the Declaration. These matters are important and should be advanced but they are separate subjects and should be treated as such, allowing the Declaration to be simply, essentially, and in effect, itself.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has thus completed its consideration of and action upon draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.78, as orally amended.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. RATHORE (Secretary of the Committee): I have been informed that Liberia wishes to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/37/L.77.

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of Ethiopia wishes to exercise the right of reply. Subject to our usual conditions, I now call upon him.

Mr. MAKONNEN (Ethiopia): Yesterday, in explaining my delegation's vote on the draft resolution relating to the report of the Group of Experts on the alleged use of chemical weapons. I stressed that the conscience and practice of Ethiopia have always been and continue to be bound by the letter and spirit of the provisions of the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating poisonous or other gases and bacteriological methods of warfare.

Today I wish to add that Ethiopia neither produces nor in any way possesses such weapons. Yet the representative of the United States has chosen to level a totally unfounded allegation against my country. One can perhaps pardon the enthusiasm for scoring a cheap propaganda point at any cost, at any level.

The policy of telling a lie big enough and long enough and often enough in the hope that people will believe it or at least that it will create confusion has now reached this level of moral degradation. The concerted and orchestrated propaganda campaign is, as would be expected, also reflected in today's issue of The New York Times.

The sinister allegation levelled against Ethiopia is, to say the least, baseless and perfidious. My delegation therefore categorically rejects this outrageous and provocative slander.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has concluded consideration of item 59 of its agenda.

CONCLUSION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus concluded the consideration of all the items on the agenda of the First Committee.

With the conclusion of the consideration of the agenda items relating to the strengthening of international peace and security the substantive deliberations of the First Committee of the General Assembly at the thirty-seventh session have been completed with considerable accomplishment.

It is my belief that with your full co-operation and hard work the First Committee has been able to complete the very important tasks assigned to it in a very satisfactory and co-operative manner.

The issues that the Committee has discussed - disarmament, development and the strengthening of good-neighbourliness between States, review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of international peace and security and implementation of the collective security provisions of the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security are all crucial problems of our time which influence the state of international relations and are of utmost importance to every nation.

Some weeks ago we embarked on yet another phase of the long and arduous road of disarmament deliberations. As in the past few years, the sky above us was filled with the dark clouds of international tension and the air was heavy with the after-effects of the impasse reached at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Today we are emerging, so to speak, from under the dark and ominous clouds. We are perhaps also noticing that some of the heavy air is beginning to dissipate. This is an optimistic note, but I am guarded in my optimism because I am the first to realize that we can consider our deliberations a success only if they give rise to concrete action. I am thus speaking essentially for myself when I state that personally I see a glimmer of hope on the horizon. In the past months public and individual attitudes and perceptions on the implications of nuclear war have undergone some important changes. The change in the public mood will, I hope, have some positive impact on the disarmament process. Already we have started

(The Chairman)

to witness some encouraging signs. The option of non-first-use has been discussed at various forums and levels. Useful as such an understanding can be, it does not go far enough towards the attainment of our immediate goal of the prevention of nuclear war. But nevertheless it is a signal that should not be ignored.

The essential fact that should not escape us in our common endeavour is that for the process of disarmament negotiations and deliberations to continue, security perceptions of States big and small will have to be exchanged and discussed continuously in a universal forum. The United Nations provides such a forum. The central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations in the sphere of disarmament is a well established fact as these were enshrined in the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament. The very fact that the process of multilateral disarmament negotiations and deliberations at the United Nations continued at a time when bilateral negotiations were either interrupted or producing no tangible progress is not only an eloquent testimony to the central role of our Organization but also a reminder of the resilience of the multilateral disarmament process and the keen commitment of Member States to general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Yet it is important that we not become complacent with the continuation of the multilateral disarmament negotiations. It is our duty and responsibility as Member States to reinvigorate the disarmament process in all its aspects. In this connection the major Powers have an undoubted special responsibility.

The First Committee considered 23 disarmament items at 45 meetings and adopted a total of 58 draft resolutions, of which 12 have been adopted without a vote, and recommended them all to the General Assembly for its approval. This year the Committee has adopted 10 draft resolutions more than last year. It is my earnest hope that this does not constitute a trend. But that depends on the progress in disarmament. In this regard I should like to recall the proposal made by several delegations that our programme of work be rationalized. In addition I think that our objective should always be the adoption of resolutions that lend themselves to implementation.

(The Chairman)

Inevitably, when disarmament negotiations, whether bilateral or multilateral, are locked in an impasse, resolutions by the General Assembly are bound to proliferate. Simple logic would dictate that when delegations are unable to see the fruits of their negotiation efforts, they will be prone to put on record their national or group positions. The exponential growth in the number of resolutions is, therefore, a symptom rather than the malaise of the disarmament process. Let us all hope therefore that there will be an easing of international tension which would, in turn, facilitate the work of the Committee.

Of the many issues we have discussed this session, one has emerged as the most prominent, namely, the prevention of nuclear war. Numerous proposals have been made in this regard, particularly on the non-first-use and a convention on the total prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Immediate measures were also proposed, as a first step towards the prevention of nuclear war, such as a nuclear arms freeze which embraces a comprehensive test ban on nuclear weapons and on their delivery vehicles. This focus is as it should be, because the prevention of nuclear war remains our most urgent and immediate task, yet possibly our most difficult. With rapid technological developments accidental nuclear war is no longer only a hypothetical probability. In addition, technology is being used to lower the threshold of nuclear war. Every effort must thus be deployed towards the avoidance of nuclear war. No avenue should be unexplored, no stone left unturned.

Technology has undoubtedly played an important and crucial role in the escalation of the arms race, both through its effect on strategic thinking and on the actual production of weapon systems. The important study on the economic and social consequences of the arms race was successful in pointing out this relationship between technology and the arms race, and thus may be seen as a precursor of the draft resolution we have adopted, commissioning a study on the effect of research and development on the arms race. It is my hope that the study will provide an important insight into the dynamics of the arms race and in so doing may offer an avenue to further the process of disarmament.

(The Chairman)

Two other issues have also emerged as salient: first, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Outer space, designated by the 1967 outer space Treaty as the common heritage of mankind, is being exploited as a new arena for extending the arms race. This may prove to be the single most important development in military history since the first nuclear explosion. This is an ominous development which is the subject of universal concern. In recognition of this fact, the First Committee, for the second year, has called upon the Committee on Disarmament to take concrete action in this regard. Also, the space Powers have been called upon to assume their responsibilities and take immediate measures to prevent the arms race from spreading into outer space.

The second issue that has captured the attention of the Committee is that of the disarmament machinery itself. For the first time since the first special session devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, a thorough review of the disarmament machinery has taken place at this session. The Committee on Disarmament has been requested to consider designating itself a Conference, without prejudice to paragraph 120 of the Final Document, and to conduct a review of its membership. The Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies has been revived and entrusted with numerous important tasks. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, established at the first special session on disarmament, has been designated an autonomous institution. Finally, the Secretary-General has been requested to transform the Centre for Disarmament into a Department for Disarmament Affairs. It is my hope that these new institutional arrangements will further facilitate the disarmament process.

I have tried to underline some of the major aspects of the work of the First Committee on disarmament items. I have highlighted the most important issues we have discussed, and in so doing I have added a personal assessment of the direction in which the disarmament process is heading.

(The Chairman)

The First Committee considered at 11 meetings agenda items 58, ⁵⁹ and 137 relating to the strengthening of international peace and security and adopted three draft resolutions. There was active and valuable participation in the general debate which was very useful in the formulation of draft resolutions. Our deliberation process has been long but also productive, and I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate all delegations on their industry.

In my view - and I hope that you all share my opinion - the issues of disarmament and the strengthening of international peace and security complement each other within the context of the main objectives of this Organization, that is, the maintenance of international peace and security.

It has been repeatedly underlined by many delegations during the debates that the issues of disarmament cannot be separated from those related to peace and security, as they are intimately intertwined and influence each other. Many representatives have stressed - and I fully share their view - that there can be no disarmament without reinforcing international peace and security, as there can be no peace and security in our present-day world without concrete steps towards disarmament.

In connection with the item on development and the strengthening of good-neighbourliness between States, there was a consensus that in the present unsatisfactory world situation, the promotion of good-neighbourly relations could constitute a significant advance in the maintenance of international peace and security. It has been emphasized that good-neighbourliness is in consonance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and that the development of good-neighbourly relations between all States, regardless of their political and social system or geographical situation, contributes in no small measure to the maintenance of world peace and security. Many States have announced with pride their commitment to the development of good-neighbourly relations with those around them and to the support of all United Nations efforts to enhance and strengthen good-neighbourliness. I was particularly struck by the suggestion by one representative that we should even consider the future designation of a "good-neighbourliness week".

(The Chairman)

I am hopeful that, in line with the operative provision of the draft resolution which the Committee has adopted on this item, further clarification of the elements of good-neighbourliness will lead to the elaboration of a suitable international document at an appropriate time.

In reviewing the item on the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, we found that the question of transforming the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and co-operation proved to be the main point of focus in many statements. Consequently, the proposal that this subject be considered as a separate item at the next session of the General Assembly demonstrated the particular importance which States attach to this issue. We have noted that many representatives expressed the deep concern of their countries over the negative phenomena on the international scene which are helping to undermine peace and security and the determination of their peoples to live in an environment in which strict respect for the rule of law prevails. In the opinion of several delegations, the strengthening of world peace and security would have a direct and positive bearing on the climate of détente, co-operation and mutual trust among all nations. I should like to recall also that many delegations strongly endorsed the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security as an important United Nations instrument for easing world tension and pronounced in favour of its speedy implementation in all its aspects.

Finally, it emerged that delegations which took part in debates have supported the proposal regarding the implementation of the collective security provisions of the United Nations Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. In considering this subject, many representatives noted with concern the inability of the United Nations to maintain peace and security throughout the world and called upon all States, in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, to take immediate steps aimed at promoting the system of collective security as envisaged in the Charter.

(The Chairman)

In concluding my remarks, I am glad to say that our deliberations have been carried out with the annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization in the background. I am sure that members will agree that this document has been the reference point for new ideas and suggestions which have been proposed for consideration by this Committee. It was also obvious that many delegations found the views expressed in the report timely.

As we are about to conclude our work in the Committee, I should like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to each and every member who made it possible for the officers of the Committee and for me personally to discharge the responsibilities given to us by the General Assembly. We were happy to serve the Committee and we hope that the trust and confidence reposed in us have not been abused.

My thanks and those of my colleagues, the officers of the First Committee, go to all members of this body for their courtesy and unfailing assistance and the help and co-operation we have received in the course of the Committee session. The understanding and kindness of members have been a daily source of strength. Without mentioning names, I should like to state that I have benefited immensely from those members who have felt a particular responsibility for bringing to this Committee initiatives, proposals and draft resolutions and also from the advice of senior members of the Committee, whose guiding hands have kept us strictly within our mandate.

I address my special and sincere expression of gratitude and appreciation to the two Vice-Chairman, Mr. Julio Cesar Carasales of Argentina and Mr. Tom Eric Vraalsen of Norway, who were both always ready to stand in for me and extend their invaluable co-operation to me. I am equally grateful to the Rapporteur, Mr. Luvsangiin Erdenechuluun of Mongolia, the indefatigable and pleasant officer of the Committee whose succinct reports testify to his abilities and co-operation.

(The Chairman)

I should like to extend on behalf of the members of the Committee and on my own behalf our appreciation to all the officers of the Secretariat, so ably led by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Viacheslav Ustinov; my thanks and appreciation also go in equal measure to the Assistant Secretary-General for the Centre for Disarmament, Mr. Jan Hartenson, and to the Secretary of the Committee on Disarmament and personal representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Rikhi Jaipal, who, unfortunately, could not be here with us this morning. I doubt whether I can thank enough the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Naem Rathore, not only for his co-operation and valuable assistance, but also for his mature advice and friendship, which I will endeavour to retain beyond the conclusion of this Committee's work. My thanks and respect go also to all his colleagues behind me, especially Mr. Sattar and Miss Patil for their invaluable support.

I thank the interpreters, translators, verbatim and Department of Public Information reporters, conference officers and document officers, as well as all the technical staff, for their hard work and proper understanding of their duties. Although most of them are not seen at all on the floor, we could have hardly worked without them and I am greatly indebted to them.

I should like to conclude my statement by saying that whatever the First Committee of the General Assembly has achieved at the current session of the General Assembly is a product of a collective effort for which the officers of the Committee and I take undue credit and for which the Committee and I should be most grateful. We have not achieved all our objectives, but we have created the atmosphere and agreed on parameters within which the continuous and dynamic search for disarmament and international peace and security can continue.

Finally, I wish to extend to all members my sincere season's greetings. To those who are travelling back to their homes and stations outside New York and the United States, I wish bon voyage. I wish members much personal success in their future endeavours and, on behalf of my friends, my family and my Mission, I wish them a happy new year and I look forward to seeing all of them again next year.

Mr. KRISHNAN (India): Mr. Chairman, as the First Committee is concluding its work today, I have the privilege of extending to you, on behalf of all the Member States belonging to the Group of Asian States, our warm and sincere congratulations on the unqualified success you have made of your assignment as Chairman of this extremely important Committee during the current session of the General Assembly. It is a tribute to your well-known diplomatic skills and qualities of leadership that the First Committee has been able to conclude its work in a smooth and most efficient manner, despite the unusually large number draft resolutions it has had to consider. Notwithstanding the great demands that have been made on your time, energy and patience, you have always acted with wisdom, exemplary impartiality and unfailing good humour. One could not ask for more from any Chairman. We are particularly gratified that a dear friend and esteemed colleague should have discharged such a difficult and onerous responsibility with such distinction.

Let me also take this opportunity to express our gratitude and sincere appreciation to Ambassador Carasales of Argentina and Ambassador Vraalsen of Norway, who, as Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, carried out their onerous duties with dedication. The Asian Group also notes with pride and satisfaction that a representative of a friendly Asian country, Mongolia, Mr. Erdenechuluun, has carried out the difficult and delicate duties of Rapporteur of this Committee with comendable skill and thoroughness. He deserves our sincere gratitude and warm congratulations.

On behalf of the Asian Group, I should like also to put on record our appreciation of the very efficient manner in which all the members of the Secretariat have assisted in the work of this Committee. We should like in particular to extend our thanks to Mr. Rathore, Secretary of the Committee, and also to his colleagues, Mr. Sattar and Miss Patil, for the unstinted support and co-operation they have given to all delegations represented in this Committee.

(Mr. Krishnan, India)

This session of the First Committee has perhaps achieved only modest results. However, it is our hope that the continuing dialogue among nations, which in this age of nuclear weapons is an indispensable element for human survival, will lay the basis for meaningful and practical measures in the field of disarmament and international security. You have every reason to be satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that under your skilful guidance this Committee was able to continue a fruitful debate this year on matters of vital interest to all the peoples of the world and adopt several draft resolutions - in particular, some significant draft resolutions dealing with the question of the prevention of nuclear war - which could lead to constructive action in the future.

Mr. TREIKI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)(interoretation from Arabic):

Mr. Chairman, as we are about to conclude our work for this session, I should like, on behalf of the Group of African States, of which I have the honour to be Chairman, to extend to you our warm congratulations on the excellent manner in which you have conducted the proceedings of this Committee. As Africans we are very proud that you, a son of Africa, represented Africa in the best possible manner. The fact that this Committee under your leadership has been able to conduct its business successfully is due to your skill and abilities. Your co-operation with the members of the Committee has contributed largely to the adoption during this session of many new draft resolutions which reflect our concern over the possibility of a catastrophe that might annihilate mankind. Those draft resolutions also express our hopes and aspirations for general and complete disarmament and for a world of peace and prosperity.

Africa, which is the only part of the world in addition to the Middle East that has parts of its territory under foreign domination, feels more than any other continent the need for peace and security and for disarmament. As we discuss the strengthening of international security, we know that parts of our continent are exposed to aggression, as in the case of Lesotho. The other day the armed forces of South Africa committed direct aggression against the Kingdom of Lesotho, which is a member of the United Nations and also of

(Mr. Treiki, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

the Organization of African Unity. This aggression led to the killing of hundreds of innocent civilians. On behalf of the African Group, we condemn that barbaric and savage action and we wish to express our full support for and solidarity with Lesotho. We also wish to express our condolences to the families of those who were killed during that aggression.

We can say that the accomplishments of this Committee represent a good start for a more serious and sustained effort in the future to strengthen international peace and security, to achieve disarmament and to avert a catastrophe resulting from a nuclear war which could lead to the end of human civilization.

Mr. Chairman, allow me once again to express the thanks and appreciation of the African Group to you, to the two Vice-Chairmen, to the Rapporteur and also to the members of the Secretariat, who have made every possible effort to ensure the success of the work of this Committee. I wish you all good health and success. Once again I wish to express our thanks to you and to your colleagues.

Mr. LUNDAVIK (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Group of Western European And Other States it is my pleasure to express our gratitude and admiration for the skill and patience with which you have led the deliberations of the First Committee this autumn. Without your approach to its tasks - firm and flexible at the same time - we should have accomplished much less than we actually did. You have been very ably assisted by the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Carasales and Ambassador Vraalsen, by the Rapporteur, Mr. Erdenechuluun, and by the Secretariat staff, all of whom I should like to thank for their untiring efforts.

The success of the officers of the Committee is all the more commendable as the Committee has had an unusually large amount of work to do. I have in mind the considerable number of draft resolutions on which we have had to take action. Many factors have no doubt contributed to the outcome of our

deliberations on that score, but you, Mr. Chairman, were the principal instrument - an expression which I am sure you, as a professional, do not mind - in carrying our discussions to useful conclusions. We have dealt with about 60 draft resolutions - as I have indicated, an unusually high number. No doubt many of us would have wanted more unanimity in our views on the drafts, but I think I can safely say that what we did achieve by consensus or by votes, showing as a general rule large majorities, has helped the cause of disarmament to advance a little further.

We all know that disarmament is a seemingly intractable subject - but only seemingly. We are all firmly in favour of peace. We also know that an important means of preserving peace is disarmament.

(Mr. Lundvik, Sweden)

It would be unwise to overrate what we have done in this Committee, but our achievements are pointers in two respects. They show that we are all concerned, and they confirm our will to continue along our difficult road. Disarmament is not a mirage; it belongs to the sphere of reality, and reality can sometimes be difficult to cope with. What is important is that we not lose faith, commitment and perseverance.

Once again, let me express my thanks at having been given this opportunity to speak and to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your efforts on behalf of the First Committee.

Mr. ALEXANDROV (Bulgaria): In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States for the current month, it is my honour and, indeed, my privilege, to extend to you, Mr. Chairman, our heartfelt congratulations upon the successful completion of the work of the First Committee at this thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. I would like to note in particular your contribution to the attainment of this objection. As Chairman of this important Committee and as a representative of Ghana, a non-aligned African State, you have won appreciation for your impressive work. Your skilful guidance and your unremitting endeavours to maintain the constructive and business-like spirit of the proceedings have contributed to the timely and effective winding up of the programme of work before us. Our success is all the more important in view of the momentous and responsible tasks facing the Committee in the aftermath of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

I should like also to congratulate the two Vice-Chairmen of our Committee, Ambassador Julio Cesar Carasales of Argentina and Ambassador Tom Eric Vraalsen of Norway, as well as the Rapporteur, Comrade Luvsangiin Erdenechuluun of Mongolia, and to express to them our gratitude for their valuable work.

(Mr. Alexandrov, Bulgaria)

The discussion in the Committee has principally revealed an increased attention to those items on the agenda with a direct bearing on the most vital problems of the present day, namely, the averting of nuclear war, the cessation and reversal of the arms race and, above all, of the nuclear arms race, as well as the strengthening of world peace and security, the relaxation of international tensions and the continuation of the process of détente and co-operation among States. The discussion has eloquently reflected the growing concern of the vast majority of States over the continuing stockpiling and qualitative improvement of nuclear arms and over the plans and doctrines being worked out for waging a nuclear war, which would be a catastrophe for the entire human race.

That is why we resolutely call for the adoption of urgent, effective and practical measures for halting the arms race and for disarmament, above all in the field of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. Our satisfaction at the work of the Committee stems from the fact that the majority of the draft resolutions adopted are aimed at intensifying the negotiations on the substance of disarmament issues with a view to reaching concrete and practical results in such negotiations.

The socialist States, for their part, have made every effort to contribute to the reaffirmation of this necessity by the work of the Committee. They have reiterated their readiness to reach agreement on the reduction or complete prohibition of all types of weapons, whether nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction, or conventional weapons, accompanied by unswerving observance of the principles of equality and equal security.

The socialist countries put forward a number of constructive proposals which have found due reflection in the positive outcome of our work. They have also supported all constructive proposals submitted by the non-aligned and other countries. In our view, the primary task facing us is the implementation of all positive decisions adopted by the Committee which would be conducive to increased

(Mr. Alexandrov, Bulgaria)

efforts in the field of disarmament, to making headway in the limitation and reduction of armaments and to the strengthening of peace and security in the world.

In conclusion, I should also like to express our gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Ustinov, Mr. Martenson and Mr. Jaipal, as well as to the Secretary of our Committee, Mr. Rathore, and to all the other Secretariat officials who have contributed to the successful completion of our work.

Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas): As Omar Khayyam once said,
"The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."
(The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, Stanza 71)

In other words, Mr. Chairman, whether or not you agree, you are now someone who has served and would be listed among the eminent Chairmen of the First Committee, and your performance compared for time immemorial. I realize that this could be a bitter-sweet moment for you. One part wants to hold on to the gavel to make your presence felt, yet the other is anxious to run away from the obligations and time-consuming hours that a Chairman must devote to the procedural aspects of keeping order and the administrative task of completing the work on time.

There are two types of speakers that I would like to eliminate: those who never stop to think and those who never think to stop. I certainly do not want to be in either category. So I trust that you, Sir, will not take umbrage at the brevity of my remarks. Furthermore, in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Latin American States, I am speaking on behalf of a diverse group of Member States with which I have not been able to consult regarding the accolades that I am pleased to bestow on you today.

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, I congratulate you most warmly for the way in which you have performed your duty. You were firm yet fair, as a Chairman should be, you were gentle yet tough, as a Chairman should be; you showed patience and a willingness to accept all sides of any argument, but made the final decision, as a Chairman should and, lastly, you made your words soft and sweet in case you had to eat them, as a Chairman should.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege for me to work under your benign leadership, and I trust that you cherished each moment of power since, according to the system, you could never have another chance to build on your fine record or to do some of the things differently. You were fortunate to have as officers well-experienced and dedicated individuals who complemented your efforts in upholding the high standards and dignity of the work of the Committee. I am sure that you would agree with me that the success you have achieved is due in part to their co-operation and skill.

We as representatives in the First Committee sometimes tend to overlook another cadre of personnel on which the success or failure of the Chairman depends. I speak of the Secretariat and the Centre for Disarmament. I am impressed by their calm and diligence in juggling times and slots for speakers or arranging for meetings, and preparing reports and not losing their tempers in the process. Under the able guidance of the Secretary of the First Committee, Mr. Rathore, and his assistants Mr. Sattar and Miss Patil, you have likewise been able to avoid major setbacks and, consequently, your task has been made less painful.

It would be remiss of me not to thank the staff of the Conference and Documents sections who calmly met the needs of delegations who called often for the same documents in seven different languages. It proves that they also serve who only stand and wait. And, finally, I am always appreciative of the yeoman service given by the interpreters, but particularly at this session, when there were so many long statements made in the debate and impromptu remarks made on the numerous draft resolutions which emanated from the items on the agenda.

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

Having said that, however, I cannot refrain from pointing out that in this Committee we have advice to tender and warnings to make. The problem is that our warnings are like those of fog-horns. They call attention to the fog without doing anything to lift it. This should - and I trust will - be one of our main objectives for future deliberations.

Once again, on behalf of the Latin American Group, I would express to you, Mr. Chairman, thanks and appreciation for your devotion to excellence and the trust that you would give some serious consideration to my 75-power draft proposal, which was not orally introduced, given the time constraints, and leave for the next Chairman the recommendation that a no-smoking zone be established within the First Committee. As you hit the gavel for the last time, Sir, please bear in mind these words of Scriptural origin:

'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' (Psalms, 30:5)
Your morning, Mr. Chairman, is come.

Mr. MUFAREH (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the Arab members of the First Committee and on my own behalf, I should like to express to you, Mr. Chairman, to the Vice-Chairmen, the Rapporteur and the Secretary of the Committee, our sincere thanks and appreciation for the great efforts you have made during this current session. You have discharged your duty with vigour and enthusiasm. We know that the task entrusted to you was difficult and complex, in view of the complexity and sensitivity of the items dealt with in this Committee under difficult and complicated international circumstances, while world public opinion was expecting results that would prevent any threat to mankind which would be likely to affect the independence and existence of peoples. We are confident that you have made the utmost efforts to produce results by way of resolutions, but we recognize at the same time that there are other parties, as some members of the Committee have pointed out in their various statements, upon whose actions the future of mankind depends. With good will and good intentions all obstacles which obstruct your efforts and your perseverance in order to save mankind from catastrophe, and to achieve détente, can be overcome, so that the peoples who reject war and aspire to live in peace may do so. You will never be blamed for any failure or disappointment for the non-fulfilment of these aspirations.

We are confident that you have performed your duty in the best possible way and that you have volunteered to shoulder the responsibilities of this Committee willingly, hoping that you would be able to create a better world based on love, understanding and amity. Other States, especially those which possess nuclear weapons, have to heed the appeals of the peoples and Governments of the world in order to avoid annihilation and destruction.

Once again I should like to express my heartfelt congratulations for your courage and patience during the work of this session. I should also like to congratulate your country, which has produced such an eminent personality as yourself, and I wish you all the best for success and good health.

Mr. MUSSAOUI (Algeria) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I am sure you can understand that the delegation of Algeria is somewhat reluctant to speak because the delegation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Chairman of the African Group, and the representative of Yemen, the Chairman of the Arab group, have already extended to you the warm congratulations and sincere thanks of those two groups of States to which Algeria belongs. So quite naturally my delegation wishes to associate itself with the sentiments that both these delegations have already conveyed to you, but even at this late hour, I am sure you will appreciate the fact that because of the special quality of your chairmanship, to which a unanimous tribute has been paid today, and because of our close ties, we wish to speak.

We would like to say how much we have admired the work you have done as Chairman of the First Committee and we would like to express to you our gratitude for your most exemplary dedication. Certainly you can take credit for much of the work done by our Committee. You have had the delicate mission of conducting our proceedings in this international situation marked by the failure of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The delegation of Algeria, like many others, is very proud of your success, because above and beyond your country, we, ourselves, Africans and non-aligned countries, have been represented by you with real feeling and wisdom. Our congratulations go to the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Carasales of Argentina, Ambassador Vraalsen of Norway, and to the Rapporteur, Mr. Erdenechuluun of Mongolia, all three of whom have assisted you so ably in your tasks. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Secretariat staff, to the Conference Services which has made a great contribution, often anonymously, to our work.

Mr. GAYAMA (Congo) (interpretation from French): After the eloquent and admirable remarks of the representative of Libya, on behalf of the African group, my delegation would crave the indulgence of the Committee in order to allow it to add these few words. At the time the Congolese delegation spoke in the debate on disarmament it pointed out that it considered your accession to the Chairmanship as an honour not just for you personally but also for your country, Ghana, and beyond Ghana for Africa as a whole, and we knew we were not wrong about that, because we are completing our work in circumstances which not only confirm the high opinion we had of you but also with new admiration for your wisdom and skills.

You were also brilliantly aided by the officers of the Committee, who were as responsible as they were effective, and a Secretariat with eclectic and varied skills. These merits deserve to be pointed out particularly since the period of history in which we have been meeting could hardly be described as benign. Far from it. It was essential for all the peoples represented here to work hard to try to single out the proper ways and means to remove as far as possible and for as long as possible the spectre of nuclear war, which makes mankind now seem like a group of hikers who persistently lose their way and camp at the edge of a precipice.

Real dangers face the people of the various regions because of the danger of conventional weapons, which are still of very great concern in the Middle East and southern Africa, for example. There are many peoples who are obliged to live outside of their homeland because of injustice and imperialism and the collective indifference of our current system leaves them in a state of despair, which cannot fail to have consequences for the future of our world, which is more interdependent than the selfishness and arrogance of some, who are to blame for much of the present tensions, would have us believe.

(Mr. Cayama, Congo)

We must lay stress on that reality, if only for purposes of information and policy-making in our own States. We are quite certain that a Ghanaian of your calibre, Mr. Chairman, would be able to bring about an atmosphere conducive to solutions of these important problems of the day. In these troubled times we cannot forget the prime role your country played in spreading and making the world more aware of certain ideas, such as the liberation of colonial countries and peoples, in every sense of the term. We recall this at this critical juncture, when the clash of weapons tends more and more to prevail over the reassuring and optimistic climate of negotiations, negotiations which, it becomes more evident than ever before, are the only valid way to resolve disputes.

You have respected the tradition of Ghana and of Africa throughout your work as Chairman by appealing for international understanding and for peace and security for all. We congratulate you on that, Sir, and once again express our great admiration for you, admiration which is most highly deserved.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Ambassador Rossides, the Permanent Representative of Cyprus, and senior member - and a leader - of the Committee.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I associate myself with what was said by the Chairman of the Asian Group, to which we belong, but I too would like to say a few words, drawing on my long experience in the United Nations over many years, concerning the fact that you, Mr. Chairman, have presided over the work of this Committee at a very critical time in world history, coming as it does after the apparent failure of the second special Assembly session on disarmament and after the recent events where the decisions of the Security Council were ignored, resulting in the tragedy we have witnessed. A situation has arisen which caused the Secretary-General to issue his report regarding the need to arrive at international security through the effective implementation of Security Council decisions.

Mr. Chairman, we were happy to have at the head of this Committee during this crucial session a man of your vision and of your steadfast devotion to the cause of peace through the achievement of the objectives enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In my long experience in the United Nations we have hardly ever had

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

a Chairman of your excellent ability, and of your tact and efficiency in dealing with problems in a very smooth, and at the same time a very effective, way.

I cannot but say that a man of your calibre, so richly endowed with the highest qualifications of character and wisdom, was the proper person to preside over this Committee at this session. I lay stress on the question of character, because what we need in our world today is integrity of character and respect for ethical values and ethical standards. We have reached a time in history at which ethical standards have become more important than any practical approach to problems. I read the other day that in the nuclear age we have come to realize that the "ethical high road is more practical than the practical low road". You, Mr. Chairman, have been guiding us along the ethical high road towards harmonizing relations among nations in all the problems that have arisen. In a very quiet, smooth way you have done a tremendous task in achieving draft resolutions which are very significant in many ways. There has been such a conflict of ideas, such a conflict of opposing opinions, but your guidance has led the way to a better world, a world of better understanding. For you have grasped the vital significance of international security in relation to disarmament: the two have to go in parallel. In particular, disarmament cannot be achieved without the system of international security, and that realization has guided the way in which you have dealt with the problems before this Committee.

I wish to conclude by congratulating the excellent Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Rathore, who has made a tremendous contribution to the work of this Committee, and also the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur as well as the Assistant Secretary-General and staff of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament, who helped the Committee in many ways concerning all aspects of the problems of disarmament and international security.

Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation is delighted to associate itself with the expressions of satisfaction at the conclusion of the work of the First Committee at the current session of the General Assembly. The tenor and content of the relevant debates on questions of disarmament and international security which the Committee has just concluded presented aspects of déjà vu in the positions of many delegations. Indeed, we may be said to have witnessed a polarization of attitudes, in which, to use a proverbial locution, the pot continued to call the kettle black in an attempt to provide a basic motivation or rationale for the positions adopted by each side in the debate.

The continuation of the apparent gulf between the sides in the "military divide" has demonstrated that the game of disarmament is far from over. For the rest of humanity, that game is not only untenable, but must be seen as unacceptable.

In your endeavour to restore order, purpose and consistency to the debate, Mr. Chairman, against the groundswell of mounting sensitivities and complexities to which disarmament and related questions often give rise, you have managed to leave an imprint of efficiency, knowledge, skill and discipline, which does credit both to you personally and to your country, Ghana.

In declaring the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade, the General Assembly continued to hope that the objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control would not be an illusory one. It seems to us, therefore, that in addition to the requisite political will of States in the field of disarmament, the chemistry of the human element in the processes leading to that goal must not only be right but must be sensitive to the moods and anxieties of the world community, which seeks to ensure its survival, both for itself and for the benefit of succeeding generations.

The arms race continues inexorably and draws strength from a technology which is not only vibrant and dynamic but extremely pervasive. It pulls into its wake virtually every State, because of national perceptions of defence which are based primarily on military capability. The alternative to such a striving by States for weapons acquisition as an instrument of defence is the establishment of a collective system of international security based on the rule of law, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter.

It is our view that the disarmament process will benefit from a renewal of efforts and of commitment on the part of all States, particularly the two super-Powers, and from the enhancement and reorientation of the structures of the support services provided by the United Nations system.

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

Finally, we hope that the interconnection between disarmament, development and international security will find form and content in our collective endeavour to construct the peace process and establish a new world order that will move away from the current economic structure of imbalance among States and seek a goal which will be based on justice, equity and equal opportunity.

Mrs. OSODE (Liberia): Mr. Chairman, I am most delighted at this final stage to address my congratulations to you.

My delegation is glad to have been afforded this opportunity to thank you upon the completion of the First Committee's work. It is with sincerity that my delegation states that your performance has been most outstanding and has left an imprint in this Committee.

My delegation was most pleased by your election, not only because we admire your personal qualities but also because we had no doubt about your vivid imagination, your penetrating intellect and negotiating skills and your impartiality in decision-making, which you have so often demonstrated in United Nations forums.

The African Group, which you had the opportunity to preside over with honour in a most professional and business-like manner, is not the only Group that has felt that behind your cool composure lies a firmness and behind it also lurk the anxieties of a restless and searching mind seeking the resolution of the host of problems confronting the United Nations and the further enhancement of what has so far been achieved.

Though there have been divergent views, my delegation wishes to congratulate the other delegations for their valuable contributions, from which it has gained knowledge.

The results of the Committee's work, though not spectacular, have been meaningful, and the Committee's objectives will continue to be pursued. What is required now is a new set of commitments and dedication, not mere rhetoric.

My delegation is intensely and profoundly convinced that with the direction, new strength of purpose and fairness you have brought to this Committee during

(Mrs. Osode, Liberia)

your chairmanship, its endeavours will be realized to the satisfaction of all in the very near future.

Finally I should like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the two Vice Presidents and all the officers of the Committee for their valuable contributions. We should also like to express our gratitude to the translators, the interpreters and the conference officers for their efforts.

Mr. de LA GORCE (France) (interpretation from French):

Mr. Chairman, the representative of Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, has expressed our feelings towards you at the end of this session in very excellent terms. The French delegation would, however, like to express to you directly its hearty thanks and warm congratulations.

You have conducted our debates with remarkable effectiveness and extreme courtesy, and if the First Committee has been able to deal most commendably with a busier agenda than at any past session, you deserve a very large measure of credit for it.

This has been a particularly important session because it inherited the case-load of the second special session devoted to disarmament. The First Committee has discharged its tasks in this connection in a manner that one can consider to be very positive considering the circumstances.

At recent sessions of the General Assembly we have had a succession of remarkable Chairmen. We are pleased that a representative of Africa has acted with such distinction, and the credentials you have earned will be fondly remembered by us.

We would ask you, Sir, to extend our congratulations to the other officers of the Committee, to the members of the Secretariat and to all those who have helped us in our work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish you the very best for the coming year and hope that you have a good rest, which is well deserved, and that it will be as agreeable and as long as possible.

The CHAIRMAN: Let me once again most sincerely thank all those who have expressed such fine sentiments and congratulations to me personally, to my fellow officers of the Committee and to the Secretariat. We are grateful to you for the co-operation you have offered us, and I hope that the distinction of having concluded our work efficiently and on time can be shared by all of us. Your courtesy and kindness will forever be remembered by us.

That concludes the last meeting of the First Committee at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly and the Committee stands adjourned sine die.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.