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FINAL RECORD OF THE THIRD MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 25 January 1979, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman

Mr. R. Boudjakdji

(Algeria)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. R. BOUDJAKDJI  
Mr. A. FASLA  
Mr. A. BENSMAIL  
Mr. N. KERROUH

Argentina:

Mr. D.C. ORTIZ DE ROZAS  
Mr. F. JIMENEZ DAVILA  
Mr. A.F. MOLteni

Australia:

Mr. L.D. THOMSON  
Mr. A.J. BEHM  
Ms. H.S. WICKES.

Belgium:

Mr. Henri SIMONET  
Mr. J.A. RAOUL SCHOUAAKER  
Mr. G. SOKAY  
Mr. P. NOTERDAEME  
Mr. P. BERG  
Mr. G. VAN DUYSE

Brazil:

Mr. G.A. MACIEL  
Mr. L.P. LINDENBERG SETTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. P. VCUTOV  
Mr. I. PETROV  
Mr. I. SOTIROV

Burma:

U SAV HLAING  
U THEIN AUNG  
U THAUNG HTUN

Canada:

Mr. G.A.H. PEARSON  
Mr. R. HARRY JAY  
Mr. J.T. SIMARD

Cuba:

Mr. P. TORRAS  
Mr. L. SOLA VILLA  
Mr. F. ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ  
Mrs. V. BROWDOSKY JACKIEWICH  
Mr. C. PAZOS BECEIRO  
Mr. R. VALIENTE  
Mr. R. LOPEZ GARCIA

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. V. TYLMER

Egypt:

Mr. O. EL-SHAFEI  
Mr. F. EL-IBRAHIM  
Mr. M. EL-BARADEI

Ethiopia:

Mr. G. ALULA

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. G. HERDER  
Mr. S. KAHN  
Mr. M. GRACZYNSKI

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. G. PFEIFTER  
Mr. H. SCHNEPPEN  
Mr. J. POHLMANN  
Mr. H. MULLER

Hungary:

Mr. M. DOMOKOS  
Mr. A. LAKATOS

France:

Mr. F. DE LA GORCE  
Mr. F. BEAUCHATAUD  
Mr. J. FEVRE  
Mr. J-C. PARAVY

India:

Mr. C.R. GHAREKHIAN  
Mr. S.T. DEVARE

Indonesia:

Mr. A. SANI  
Mr. A. KAMIL

Iran:

Mr. M. FARTASH

Mr. D. CHILATY

Mr. D. AMERI

Italy:

Mr. L. RADI

Mr. N. DI BERNARDO

Mr. F. FERRETTI

Mr. M. ALESSI

Mr. M. MORENO

Mr. A. VINCI GIACCHI

Mr. C. FRATESCHI

Mr. G. VALDEVIT

Mr. F. DE LUCA

Japan:

Mr. M. OGISO

Mr. T. NONOYAMA

Mr. Y. KIKUCHI

Mr. T. IWANAMI

Mr. Y. NAKAMURA

Kenya:

Mr. K. MWAMZANDI

Mr. C. GATERE MAINA

Mr. G.N. MUNIU

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES

Miss A. CABRERA

Miss L.M. GARCIA

Mongolia:

Mr. L. BAYART

Morocco:

Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands:

Mr. R. PEIN

Mr. A.J. MEERBURG

Nigeria:

Mr. O. ADENIJI

Mr. K. AHMED

Mr. T.O. OLUMOKO

Mr. R.A. FATUNASE

Pakistan:

Mr. J.K.A. MARKER  
Mr. I.A. AKHUND  
Mr. H. AKILM

Peru:

Mr. J. AURICH MONTERO

Poland:

Mr. B. SUJKA  
Mr. H. PAC  
Mr. S. KUCHER  
Mr. M. KRUCZYK

Romania:

Mr. I. RADULESCU  
Mr. C. ENE  
Mr. V. TUDOR

Sri Lanka:

Mr. A.C.S. HAMEED  
Miss M.L. NAGANATHAN

Sveden:

Mrs. I. THORSSON  
Mr. C. LIDGARD  
Mr. L. NORBERG  
Mr. J. PRAWITZ  
Mr. J. LUNDIN

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN  
Mr. Yu. K. NAZARKIN  
Mr. A.M. VAVILOV  
Mr. E.D. ZAITSEV  
Mr. V.A. VERTOGRADOV  
Mr. Yu. V. KOSTENKO  
Mr. M.G. ANTIUKHIN

United Kingdom:

Mr. N.H. MARSHALL  
Mr. C.L.G. MALLABY  
Mr. C.K. CURWEN  
Mr. P.M.W. FRANCIS

United States of America:

Mr. A. FISHER  
Mr. C. FLOWEREE  
Mr. A. AKALOVSKY  
Mr. R. HAGENGRUBER  
Ms. B. MURRAY  
Mr. M.L. SANCHES  
Mr. A. YARMOLINSKY

Venezuela:

Mr. R.C. CASTILLO  
Mr. A.R. TAYLHARDAT  
Mr. H. ARTEAGA  
Miss D. SZOKOLCZI  
Mrs. R. LISBOA DE NEGER

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. PESIC  
Mr. M. VRHUNEC  
Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC  
Mr. D. DJOKIC

Zaire:

Mr. B. BUKAYI  
Mr. M. ESUK

Director-General of the  
United Nations Office at Geneva:

Mr. L. COTRACAVI

Assistant Secretary-General  
for Disarmament

Mr. R. BJORNERSTEDT

Mr. PESIC (Yugoslavia) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, allow me to greet this assembly on behalf of the Government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and to express its satisfaction at the participation in the work of the new Committee on Disarmament of the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Cuba, France, Indonesia, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Venezuela. The establishment of such a Committee represents, in our opinion, a concrete expression of certain important results emerging from the tenth special session, devoted to disarmament. One of the objectives of that session was to enable all the nuclear Powers and all other States to contribute to the solution of the problems of disarmament, and to be included among the factors making for the building of new international relations, through the reorganization and stimulation of the existing machinery of negotiation or the establishment of new bodies. We are convinced that the process of democratization which we began at the special session, and the increase in the number of countries directly engaged in the disarmament negotiations, pave the way to the opening of the disarmament process and the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in this area of vital importance for the whole world.

We attach particular importance to the decision taken by the French Government to join in the efforts of other nuclear Powers in seeking solutions to one of the gravest and most complex problems facing the international community, that is, disarmament. We believe that a similar decision by the Government of the People's Republic of China, should that Government decide to take it, would meet with the widest approval from the international community.

We have always supported every initiative aimed at starting and accelerating the process of disarmament and in this context, at enlisting the efforts of every country and the various bodies concerned with that problem. That is one of the reasons why we attach great importance to the opening of the work of the Committee on Disarmament. This is also an occasion for us to set forth some of our views on disarmament problems in the light of the special session on disarmament which Mr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations, justly described as the most important event of 1978, and in the light also of the thirty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The special session on disarmament gave a new impulse and outlined bases for the action to be taken by the whole international community to inaugurate a new phase in the efforts to start a genuine process of disarmament. The discussions at the special session showed that we are living in an era of dynamic change in the world, where no one can any longer stay resigned to the existing state of affairs. More specifically, it was the occasion for an increasingly clear manifestation of

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aspirations to the establishment of democratic international relations, based on equality of rights, and to a situation of genuine and equal security for every country, in which massive efforts, organized to the maximum, are made, especially by the non-aligned countries, to ensure world-wide détente, to establish the new international economic order and to eliminate the policy and relationships of domination. The States Members of the United Nations are agreed in considering that the existence of nuclear weapons and the pursuit of the breakneck arms race threaten the survival of mankind. They have also found that lasting international peace and security cannot be built on the basis of a piling up of armaments and the strengthening of military blocs, or maintained from a precarious balance of means of dissuasion or from doctrines of strategic superiority, but demand a rapid and substantial reduction in armaments and armed forces and the adoption of effective measures to eliminate tensions and settle conflict by peaceful means. The special session also expressed in its Final Document the conclusion that there is a close relation between spending on armaments and economic and social development. It also affirmed that there is a melancholy and spectacular contrast between the hundreds of billions of dollars devoted every year to the manufacture or improvement of weapons and the deprivation and poverty in which two-thirds of the world's population live. The session further observed that the armaments race has extremely harmful economic and social consequences, and that its pursuit is clearly incompatible with the establishment of the new international economic order based on justice, equity and co-operation. The checking of the armaments race and a genuine process of disarmament were declared to be essential tasks of the highest urgency.

These processes should unfold in a balanced way through the assumption, and observance, of mutually acceptable reciprocal engagements between the nuclear Powers themselves and between those Powers and the non-nuclear-weapon countries.

It was also considered that to take up this historic challenge would be in the political and economic interests of all the countries and peoples of the world.

Where do we now stand in these matters, and what lessons may be drawn, after the relatively short space of time which has elapsed since the special session? The fruitful discussions on disarmament which took place at the thirty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly have given us some indications in this regard. To us it seems that those discussions have a two-fold aspect: they have shown on the one hand that the concern caused by the intensification of armaments and the stagnation of negotiations on their limitation has in no way diminished, and that meanwhile Member countries attach increasing importance to efforts to implement the decisions taken by the special session. That interest also appears from the



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continuing support for a series of initiatives introduced at the special session, the introduction of further initiatives, and from the preparations for various activities in the field of disarmament to be undertaken this year and next. Unfortunately, all this confirms at the same time that the process of negotiation is lagging far behind the armaments race, which is spiralling upwards at an ever more dangerous rate and spreading to more and more countries. All this also confirms that the process of disarmament will be held back and put off until the countries which have the greatest responsibility for the armaments race show greater political will and determination.

The Committee on Disarmament is beginning its work at the very moment when negative trends suggest that the armaments race is not only continuing but receiving further impetus. The military blocs and the great Powers are its protagonists. Contrary to the recommendations of the tenth special session, the two blocs have unfortunately made plans for further armament programmes entailing a steep increase in military expenditure. The military arsenal is thus increasing rapidly both qualitatively and quantitatively. Such a development, which we can observe all the time, has negative implications for international relations and faces humanity with further dangers to peace.

Despite the statements on the approaching conclusion of SALT II, not the slightest progress has been achieved for a long time past in the disarmament negotiations. The real interests of peace and security in the world, and international public opinion in its broadest dimension, demand that this situation should be changed without delay.

We have, rightly, agreed to give priority to nuclear disarmament. Though we do not wish to underestimate the efforts made up to now in that field, the result has clearly been the establishment of a nuclear equilibrium rather than nuclear disarmament. Freedom to develop and accumulate such weapons has remained intact, while a nuclear disaster has become an even more serious threat to mankind. In this context, Yugoslavia and the other non-aligned countries feel that it would be in the general interest to conclude SALT II as soon as possible and to embark without delay, in conformity with the General Assembly's recommendation, on the negotiations for SALT III, and to reach agreement on a drastic reduction of the nuclear arsenal.

I would like also to stress the great importance we attach to the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting nuclear-weapon tests (CTBT), to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and to the provision of unconditional guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon countries against nuclear attack. We consider that such

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agreements would create a climate of confidence, with the necessary conditions for an effective reduction in nuclear armaments, while on the other hand, failure to adopt such measures, or their postponement, would have unfavourable effects on the process of disarmament as a whole and reduce the value of the results obtained. Our opinion is that the non-proliferation Treaty will not achieve its full purpose or its full value until genuine progress is made in nuclear disarmament.

The race in conventional armaments and the reinforcement of conventional armies is accelerating at a frenzied tempo. There is no doubt that this affects the economically less-developed countries most seriously, in general the non-aligned ones, which are constantly exposed to the risk of aggression, neo-colonial pressures, overbidding by the blocs and different forms of domination. The decisive elimination of such elements in international relations would establish the necessary conditions for the adoption of satisfactory measures in the case of conventional disarmament also.

It is against this background that we consider the question of dismantling military bases and the withdrawal of armed forces from foreign territories, and the question of measures of confidence. The non-aligned countries defined their joint position on this most important subject at the tenth special session, and in our view due attention must be given to the approaching disarmament negotiations. There can be no doubt that the first steps towards conventional disarmament should be taken by the countries which are the most powerful, from the military standpoint, in the world, and first of all by the military blocs and their principal members.

We attach great importance to the efforts to begin serious discussions and reach an agreement on the prohibition of new types of weapons of mass destruction, since such weapons are similar in their effects to nuclear weapons and may even surpass them. The prohibition should apply to all weapons of mass destruction, for the principle must be to put an end to the qualitative proliferation of armaments. Every new weapon of this kind clearly begins a new cycle in the armaments race and constitutes yet a further threat to international peace and security.

I would like also to stress on this occasion that we attach particular importance to the reduction of the armed forces and armaments of the military blocs. The special session rightly devoted a special paragraph to Europe, which is the region with the highest concentration of armed forces in the world, and pointed out the need to reduce such forces to a military balance at a lower level, while fully respecting the interests of States not members of any bloc, as regards their security and independence. On the basis of this recommendation by the special session,

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we must express our concern at the fact that the discussions which have been taking place in Vienna for several years on the regional reduction of armed forces and armaments have not yet produced any results and have not gone beyond the stage of identification of the subject of the discussions. In this light, we consider that our attention and support should be given to some recent initiatives on regional disarmament measures aimed at putting into practice the recommendations concerning Europe in the Final Document of the special session, and to the consequent action which should be taken to follow up the relevant decisions of CSCE. In so urging, we have in mind that such measures would supplement the efforts directed towards bilateral, regional and global disarmament. We also think that all necessary steps should be taken to make the Mediterranean a zone of international peace, security and international co-operation.

The present situation in the sphere of disarmament is unsatisfactory, and we all know it. Although the efforts so far made have not been without result, the results are insufficient, as was generally agreed at the General Assembly's special session on disarmament. We must all of us, and the great nuclear Powers in particular, continue to make the effort to speed up, in the various ways and through the machinery established by the special session, the negotiating process there begun.

The special session and the General Assembly have assigned important tasks to the Committee on Disarmament. It will have from the very beginning of its activities to concern itself with various questions of organization, including the preparation of its rules of procedure, for this is essential to the smooth progress of its work. The question of procedure is of fundamental importance, since the day-to-day performance and character of the Committee's work will largely depend on those rules. Procedure is also important on account of the close relationship which exists, according to the Final Document of the special session, between the Committee on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee of the United Nations on the one hand, and the General Assembly on the other, the Assembly having a central role and bearing the chief responsibility for disarmament, in accordance with the Charter.

We believe that the Committee on Disarmament should become a negotiating body in the real meaning of the words. It must participate directly and on a basis of equality, and democratically, in all the phases of negotiation concerning the disarmament matters with which it is to deal. Only so can the Committee win the confidence of the international community and become an effective negotiating body in the field of disarmament.

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The Committee on Disarmament has inherited several important unsolved disarmament problems from the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD), such as the prohibition of chemical weapons, and the consideration of the prohibition of new types of weapons of mass destruction and systems of such weapons. Some of those problems have been under consideration for many years, and we would like to think that the agreements on the total prohibition of chemical weapons and their testing will soon be a reality. The tenth special session added to those urgent tasks an important new one, the preparation of a global disarmament programme, and to that task also we should harness ourselves as soon as possible.

Since this is the beginning of the work of the Committee on Disarmament, we would like in particular to stress the need for preserving the dynamic approach achieved at the special session of the General Assembly by ensuring the continuity of the negotiating process and speeding-up its tempo; for maintaining the closest links with the United Nations and for strengthening its role in the disarmament process; for ensuring observance of the priorities upon which agreement was reached at the special session and in the General Assembly; and for ensuring the participation in the negotiating process of all the interested Member countries of the United Nations.

The world expects that decisive steps will be taken following the tenth special session for the implementation of its decisions. There can be no doubt that the first steps towards effective disarmament, and any new agreement, could not but have a vital effect in bringing about a positive transformation of international political relations, and that the settlement of international key problems and crises would greatly contribute to disarmament. We therefore consider it essential to maintain, without a break, parallel efforts towards the settlement of key problems in international relations and towards disarmament. Effective measures in either field could greatly contribute to strengthening détente, security and confidence. Disarmament has become an imperative need of our time and the most urgent task facing the international community. As we said in the Final Document of the special session, we are confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament, or face annihilation. In the absence of effective measures for disarmament, without effective measures to stop the arms race, all the concrete results obtained in international relations would be at risk. This Committee, too, can play an important role in this regard. Yugoslavia for its part will spare no effort to make its contribution towards that objective.

Mr. NADI (Italy) (translated from Italian): Over the past few years no problem has attracted so much international attention as that of disarmament.

From both the political and psychological angles, the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament was an unprecedented event whose implications and significance can escape nobody.

Through the responsible participation, at high level, of 149 States, including the five nuclear-weapon States, the special session solemnly reaffirmed the universal character of the desire for peace, stressing that despite attendant difficulties and moments of discouragement, the will of Governments is strong to meet this challenge through the achievement of effective agreements aimed at building a world freed from the threat of armaments and based on mutual understanding, justice and security.

In the nuclear era, with world society moving towards patterns of ever-increasing interdependence, the objective of reducing and eliminating armaments is a compulsory and irreversible choice of the international community. It must be brought about by gradual steps under effective international control, until the final goal of general and complete disarmament be attained, safeguarding, however, at each stage the strategic balance of forces on both the world-wide and regional level.

At the special session, the participants unanimously pointed out the political, economic and social risks that would result from an ever-spiralling uncontrolled arms race. They were equally unanimous in proclaiming that the strengthening of détente, the consolidation of peace, the conquest of more widespread and better balanced well-being largely depend on a progressive reduction of the stocks of lethal weapons, the burden of which has become intolerable. In particular, we should remember that substantial progress towards disarmament is the first prerequisite for seeking a solution of the problem of the harmonious development of all regions of our world. In our search for lasting peace, we would be deluding ourselves if we were to focus only on the balanced and progressive reduction of forces, without taking into proper account the legitimate demands for social and economic development of the peoples of less favoured countries. The absence of a timely solution of the problems of development threatens once more to create the illusion that one can seek to solve outstanding questions by the use of force.

(Mr. Radi, Italy)

Through deep discussion and profound thought on the whole range of disarmament issues, the proceedings in New York have succeeded in fixing the main lines of action along which the future negotiations should develop, with greater imagination and a more dynamic driving force. In this context, the special session was an example of responsibility and awareness, from which we must now draw the appropriate conclusions by taking responsible initiatives at the negotiating level.

Today the Committee on Disarmament starts its first session with a new membership and with new terms of reference emanating from the Members of the United Nations as a whole.

I would like first of all to take this opportunity of greeting the representatives of the countries which have shared with Italy the privilege of participating in the Geneva disarmament negotiations since the days of the Committee of Eighteen, and later, in the various stages of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. I would also recall in particular the two Co-Chairmen of the CCD -- the United States and the Soviet Union -- to whom the Italian delegation wishes to pay a tribute for the significant contribution they have given in that capacity to the Geneva Conference. Finally, I would like to welcome the representatives of the countries sitting at this negotiating table for the first time: France, who will assuredly give to our negotiations the contribution to be expected from her special responsibilities as a nuclear-weapon State; and then Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Cuba, Indonesia, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Venezuela, all countries with which Italy maintains relations of friendship, co-operation and confidence. We hope that China will soon occupy the seat which has been reserved to her among us, as a nuclear-weapon State.

The disarmament negotiations, because of their complexity and importance, require a forum particularly well qualified and imply the continuous and active participation of all militarily significant States, beginning with the nuclear-weapon States. The recommendations adopted by the special session on the membership of this Committee have the merit of reconciling this essential necessity with that of a more active and balanced participation in the negotiations of countries which demonstrated particular interest in them.

It is the hope of the Italian Government that prospects of more coherent and more fruitful work may, in future, result from this new and better balanced participation in the negotiation of western, eastern and non-aligned countries.

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Even more so since our Committee, thanks to its composition, appears to be the qualified forum to tackle globally the elaboration of specific measures universally acceptable.

The task awaiting us is an urgent one. It must be managed without delay and with firm determination.

In the Declaration and Programme of Action contained in its Final Document, the special session outlined the major options and priorities for our future work.

At its thirty-third session, recently concluded, the United Nations General Assembly further specified the objectives to be reached in the near future, adopting an unusually large number of resolutions, many of them -- most significantly -- by consensus.

It is now incumbent on the Committee on Disarmament, starting work with alacrity, to benefit from the recommendations and encouragement of the United Nations, by focusing its attention on specific measures to be given priority in keeping with the most anxious expectations.

In opening this new round of negotiations, the Committee on Disarmament should not overlook the legacy of lessons and experiences bequeathed by the CCD, thanks to which the most important multilateral agreements on armaments limitations were worked out, beginning with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

In pursuing its immediate goals, the Committee on Disarmament should not, however, abandon or neglect the wider and longer-term aim of complete and general disarmament, which the United Nations has expressly set as the ultimate goal of our efforts.

For many years Italy has been maintaining that progress in specific sectors of disarmament should form part of an organic framework, as constituent elements of a coherent and articulated whole to be achieved in successive and gradual stages. We have therefore noted with satisfaction that the special session recommended the Disarmament Commission to consider the elements of a comprehensive programme for disarmament to be submitted as recommendations to the General Assembly, and through it to the Committee on Disarmament. On this subject the Italian delegation has presented a detailed working paper, which we trust will be attentively studied along with contributions and suggestions from other delegations.

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Passing to immediate tasks, I would like to stress here the highest priority that the international community continues to assign to the complete ban of nuclear tests.

This is an issue which the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has been debating, in its political, scientific and technical aspects, for years; it is essential that a responsible decision on this problem should be taken as soon as possible.

In the view of the Italian Government, the total banning of nuclear tests constitutes the indispensable and no-longer postponable complement to the Treaty on non-proliferation, which provides for reciprocal and interdependent rights and obligations for both non-nuclear- and nuclear-weapon States.

Italy is attentively following the development of the tripartite negotiations between the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union which have recently made noteworthy progress. To succeed in overcoming the existing difficulties and to reach an early agreement, further resolute steps on the part of the negotiators are required.

The elements of the agreement which will result from the tripartite talks -- and which must inter alia take into account the need for adequate verification procedures -- will have to be submitted, at an appropriate stage, to the careful consideration of the Committee on Disarmament, where the final text of a widely acceptable treaty will have to be drafted.

My Government continues to pay particular attention to the problem of the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons as well as of their destruction. The great urgency of this problem has once again been reaffirmed in a resolution of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly, introduced by a large number of countries -- including Italy -- and adopted by consensus.

Today's tendency to see the dangers of armed conflict mainly in terms of a nuclear holocaust leads us sometimes to forget that the chemical weapon also is a weapon of mass destruction and among the most deadly.

It is frequently not realized that chemical weapons, too, have benefited from notable technological development, which has enormously enhanced their destructive potential, the possibilities of their employment and their danger.



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Nor can we ignore that some States hold at present massive stocks of these weapons, already extensively tested; and many other States also possess the basic agents and the necessary technical know-how to equip themselves, in the short term, with substantial stocks of chemical weapons.

The problem of chemical warfare has been debated at length in its different aspects -- including the particularly delicate one of verification -- both in the United Nations and in the CCD, to which various draft conventions have been submitted.

Already in 1974, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to consider a joint initiative at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament "with respect to the conclusion, as a first step, of an international convention dealing with the most dangerous, lethal means of chemical warfare". The Italian Government is aware of the difficulties of the search for effective agreement acceptable to all. It is confidently following the bilateral discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union, and hopes that through them the desired solutions may be reached without delay.

These bilateral negotiations do not, however, exonerate the Committee on Disarmament from pursuing a tenacious and imaginative exploration of all the possibilities of reaching the total and verified elimination of all chemical weapons. Indeed, we all share the objective of, and responsibility for, chemical disarmament; it is in this direction that the Italian delegation will continue to operate in a spirit of co-operation and constructive purpose.

In recent years, science has made extraordinary conquests which, according to how and why they are utilized, can become instruments for economic, social and civil improvement or vehicles of death and destruction.

In addition to what we could call "the sword of Damocles of nuclear war" there looms on the horizon the menacing advent of new types of weapons equally and perhaps even more deadly.

Though preserving the necessity for scientific and technological progress, the task of all lovers of peace and security is to make every effort so that consequences beyond all imagination and measureless risks do not originate from achievements of the human intellect.

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Faced with this danger, the Committee on Disarmament has a double duty to fulfil: firstly, to prevent the emergence of new generations of weapons of mass destruction based on new scientific principles, by keeping the problem under constant review and by the acquisition of all the data as far as possible; secondly, to draw up the legal instruments for banning particular types of new weapons as soon as they may be identified.

With these criteria in mind, and within the Committee on Disarmament, Italy is, from this moment, definitely in favour of considering the issue of the ban on radiological weapons which are currently the subject of bilateral consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Such a ban would undoubtedly represent a first realistic step which could be followed by others, as the need arises.

It is evident that the path to disarmament is still long and paved with many obstacles. However, from the start, it must be followed with firm intentions and having a global and precise evaluation of all the interests at stake.

In this respect we cannot avoid being worried by the increasing and ever more menacing magnitude of the accumulation and transfer of conventional weapons, especially in regions of the world where dangerous situations of tension exist.

The uncontrolled conventional-arms race, often involving expensive and highly sophisticated devices far exceeding comprehensible defence needs, not only contributes to the worsening of alarming situations of suspicion and confrontation, but also deprives particularly needy countries of precious resources, resources which could be used in more profitable directions, ranging from economic development to the strengthening of infrastructures, the war against hunger and endemic diseases and the elimination of illiteracy and of other social evils.

As for conventional weapons, public opinion expects timely and far-sighted decisions which must proceed parallel to the initiatives to be taken in the field of nuclear-weapons reduction.

Italy desires to confirm her readiness to co-operate with all interested countries -- suppliers as well as recipients -- in the search, on both regional and global levels, for solutions which would contribute to the erection of a barrier against the escalation of conventional weapons, while safeguarding the imperatives of security needs. On this subject I would like to recall the proposal for regional control of the transfer of conventional weapons presented by Italy already

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in 1970 and at the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. This proposal is listed in the Final Document approved by the special session.

In our judgement, the subject of the control of the transfer of conventional weapons cannot remain outside the concern of the Committee on Disarmament, if this Committee wishes to fully attain its proper objectives.

In my statement I have sought to concentrate my main attention on the major topics most closely related to our Committee's agenda.

Moreover, we hope that rapid progress, also in other negotiations which Italy is following with particular interest, will accompany the renewal of the Geneva negotiations.

I am referring to the Soviet-American strategic arms limitation talks, which the Italian Government considers essential for the general cause of stability and peace. In the hope that the remaining difficulties standing in the way of a positive and rapid conclusion of SALT II may be soon overcome, Italy is already looking forward, with great interest, to the task with which SALT III could be entrusted, with the prospect of safeguarding security at ever-diminishing levels of armaments.

Italy's particular geopolitical position makes us, at the same time, especially attentive to developments in the MBFR negotiations in Vienna. We expect from them a valid contribution to the advent of a more stable balance in our continent. We are continuing to contribute to their positive outcome, within the limits of our position as a "special-status participant".

Extremely knotty issues are to be dealt with by the Vienna negotiations. They call for a frank appraisal of the objectives to be attained and for fully motivated decisions.

The great turning-point in the race for armaments, for which the nations of the whole world are longing, cannot be achieved all of a sudden, because it cannot be isolated from consideration of the international situation.

As is only too well-known, mistrust, suspicion and lack of mutual understanding are among the main causes of the armaments race. It is therefore necessary for disarmament measures to be seconded, preceded or accompanied, as appropriate, by parallel initiatives aimed at widening the area of dialogue, nourishing trust, promoting détente, anticipating and removing causes of friction. Only thus will every initiative in the field of disarmament become credible and fruitful.

(Mr. Radi, Italy)

However, the problem of disarmament cannot be isolated from that of verification. Indeed it would be neither correct nor realistic to promulgate disarmament measures without adequate, precise and formal guarantees that these measures will be universally implemented.

Italy is well aware of the difficulties -- technical, economic and political -- inherent in the verification of the disarmament agreements. Though the methods of control may vary according to the kind of measures to be controlled, it is evident by now that in most cases the national verification techniques need to be accompanied by forms of international co-operation, designed to ensure rapid, technically reliable and politically effective verification procedures.

It is in this spirit that, on various previous occasions, Italy has favoured the initiation of a study on the setting up of an international verification organ, designed to offer coherent and adequate solutions to this crucial problem from a technical as well as from a legal angle. In the same spirit, Italy has supported the French Government's initiative for the establishment of an International Satellite Agency, and is ready to co-operate in studies to be undertaken to this end.

Furthermore, it would be desirable for international verification to be accompanied by national controls exercised by public opinion in the different countries over the respective Governments, so that in practice, the latter will act in accordance with the engagements entered into.

The convening of the Committee on Disarmament opens a new phase in the history of the proceedings of the Geneva negotiating forum.

Our hope is that the new Committee will tackle this new phase resolutely and openmindedly, benefiting from the ideas and proposals of new participants, as well as from the lessons and experiences of the past. In this context it would be useful to examine, inter alia, at the proper time, the procedures and working methods followed in the past, so as to make the Committee's action more incisive and more adequate to its new tasks and to the needs of the moment.

Today, the thoughts and hopes of mankind are concentrated on our activities. From our work they expect rapid and effective progress on the road of disarmament and of a secure peace.

For her part, Italy will do everything in her power not to betray those expectations and to contribute to the common efforts within the Committee on Disarmament. She will act with the spirit of dedication, the sense of responsibility and the feeling of confidence demanded from all of us by the crucial and urgent nature of the tasks assigned to us.

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, it is indeed a pleasure for the Pakistan delegation, and for me personally, to congratulate you on assuming the chairmanship of this important Committee. As a distinguished representative of a brotherly country which has made a unique and unprecedented contribution to the cause of the peoples of the Third World for national liberation and economic independence, you are admirably suited to guide the deliberations of this Committee. For here we represent the interests and preoccupations of the majority of the United Nations Member States, which, like Algeria and Pakistan, fervently desire a halt to the arms race and the achievement of a stable structure of world peace and security.

Mr. Chairman, your opening address to this Committee has conveyed not only the sombre feelings with which the majority of nations today view the threat from the global armaments race, but also their urgent desire to halt and reverse this destructive process. The message from Secretary-General Waldheim, which has also sounded a timely warning about the dangers inherent in the ever escalating arms race, has, in addition, indicated the opportunities open to this Committee to achieve genuine progress towards the goal of general and complete disarmament.

The decision of the tenth special session of the General Assembly to create the Committee on Disarmament was an important milestone in the history of disarmament negotiations, and Pakistan considers it an honour to attend this inaugural session of the Committee. It is our fervent hope that its more representative character and democratic procedures will enable this Committee to make significant and tangible contributions towards the realization of the hitherto elusive goal of disarmament.

However, as was acknowledged at the special session, the prospects of disarmament are in large measure determined by the conditions of world peace and security, both at the global and regional levels. It is, therefore, with deep concern that we must note the increase in international tensions in many parts of the world. Instead of reducing armaments, most States, particularly the two most powerful nations, continue the acquisition and development of larger and more sophisticated military arsenals, so that, since the special session, the arms race has not been reversed, but has further escalated. Resort to the use

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

of force, to shape the course of international relations, has increased. External intervention and aggression against small and weak States has occurred with alarming frequency. Despite our declarations and resolutions, the Charter's vision of a system of universal collective security is today more elusive than ever. And the priority of eradicating poverty and pestilence, of creating a new, equitable, world economic order, has been relegated to the background.

The Final Document of the special session on disarmament declared itself against any attempts to create spheres of influence. The concept is a deplorable one, whether such spheres of influence are created through bilateral or multilateral military alliances or through the promotion of certain States as "regional influentials" or "predominant" Powers. Global stability cannot be maintained by a balance of mutual deterrence in strategic armaments alone; this must be matched by a corresponding equilibrium in various sensitive regions of the world. The climate for disarmament must be created not only at the global level but also in those areas where tensions and conflicts presently endanger the fabric of peace. The prospects for the success of the negotiations to be conducted within this Committee depend on the outcome of this process.

The tenth special session of the General Assembly was the first occasion on which the international community approved an integrated set of measures relating to various facets of disarmament. The prospects for the work of this Committee have been enhanced by the unanimous adoption at the special session of specific objectives, principles and priorities for disarmament negotiations, and a concrete programme of measures to be implemented in the near future. We share the hope expressed here yesterday that the impetus provided by the special session to the process of disarmament will be maintained and accelerated through the deliberations of this Committee.

Of all the decisions of the special session relating to the machinery for disarmament, the creation of the Committee on Disarmament is undoubtedly the most important. The function of this Committee is to negotiate specific disarmament measures--agreements, conventions or treaties--in various areas of disarmament. This negotiating role of the Committee on Disarmament sets it apart from all other international fora on disarmament. Whatever the procedures of work we adopt, every effort must be made to preserve and enlarge this negotiating role of the Committee.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

While the role of the Committee on Disarmament is precise, the scope of its responsibilities is quite extensive. Under the provisions of the Final Document, and of the resolutions adopted at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly, the Committee has been called upon, inter alia, to fulfil the following tasks:

- To elaborate a comprehensive programme on disarmament;
- To achieve a nuclear-test-ban treaty;
- To formulate a convention prohibiting chemical weapons;
- To conclude effective arrangements, including consideration of an international convention, to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;
- To reach agreement on the banning of new weapons of mass destruction;
- To consider measures for the cessation of the production of fissionable materials.

Apart from these responsibilities, specifically assigned to the Committee, it is clear from the relevant provisions of the Final Document that the Committee on Disarmament is expected to associate itself with negotiations envisaged for nuclear disarmament, as well as for the limitation and reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons.

Our ultimate goal, remains the achievement of general and complete disarmament. We do not, of course, expect to attain this immediately, but the Committee must maintain a steady step-by-step process, and should at least aim to fulfil the majority of the tasks entrusted to the Committee in time for the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Since the Committee cannot expect to simultaneously address all the issues before it, my delegation would suggest that we first take up for consideration those questions which have been outstanding for some time, or where early progress appears possible. In this context, the adoption at this session of an agenda and programme of work for the Committee assumes special importance. My delegation believes that while all the responsibilities of the Committee that I have mentioned should be recognized as forming part of its mandate, during the current year the Committee should concentrate on the three items which the General Assembly has asked it to consider.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The first among these is the nuclear-test-ban treaty. This was to be completed in time for the special session last June. It is most unfortunate that the CCD was prevented from considering this priority issue due to the separate talks being conducted by three nuclear Powers. The international community desires urgent action on the nuclear-test-ban treaty. The General Assembly has asked this Committee in two separate resolutions to take up consideration of this treaty. The question is: when should the Committee begin examination of this subject? Should it await the outcome of the negotiations between the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom, or take this up irrespective of these talks?

My delegation would suggest that the three Powers concerned be urged to transmit the draft CTB treaty to the Committee within the next two months. If they cannot reach agreement on the text even at the end of this period, we hope that they will at least inform this Committee of the status of the negotiations and the areas of agreement and disagreement. Thereafter, the responsibility for negotiating the test-ban treaty should be assumed directly by our Committee. In these negotiations, the drafts and proposals submitted by any State should receive full consideration on a basis of parity with the text which may be fully or partially evolved by the three nuclear Powers. My delegation would welcome the finalization of the CTB treaty in this Committee during the current year. Pakistan would support a text which effectively prevents the further sophistication and testing of nuclear weapons, in whatever guise or form.

The second subject on which this Committee has been requested to undertake negotiations "at the beginning of its 1979 session" is an agreement for "the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and for their destruction ....." It is most unfortunate that the joint initiative promised by the two super-Powers on this subject almost three years ago has not materialized. In the time that has elapsed, the potential for the development of chemical weapons has become more extensive. My delegation hopes, therefore, that in response to the recommendations of the General Assembly, the United States and the Soviet Union will submit their joint initiative to the Committee as soon as possible. We are aware that important problems are involved in a chemical-weapons ban, particularly with regard to verification. In our opinion, however, these problems are not insuperable, provided the political will exists among the major military and industrial Powers to give up this terrible option of warfare.



(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

Although the General Assembly has urged the submission of the joint initiative by the two major Powers, the absence of this should not prevent the Committee from opening the negotiations on a chemical-weapons-ban treaty. These could begin on the basis of the drafts presented to the CCD earlier, or any new proposal which may be submitted by a member State in this Committee. My delegation is prepared to actively contribute to the process of evolving a draft treaty on chemical weapons during the current year.

The third subject to which consideration is to be given this year is the conclusion of effective arrangements, including an international convention, to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Apart from the recommendation in paragraph 59 of the special session's Final Document, the General Assembly, at its thirty-third session, adopted two resolutions on the subject addressed to the Committee on Disarmament. Both these resolutions-- one sponsored by the Soviet Union and the other by Pakistan -- call on the Committee to evolve "effective" measures or arrangements to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, including consideration of an international convention. The Committee is to take up examination of the draft conventions presented by Pakistan and the Soviet Union, and the views expressed on this subject, as soon as possible, and to submit "a progress report" to the next session of the United Nations General Assembly. Without going into the priority to be accorded to various items, this topic has the advantage of having concrete texts available on which negotiations could be initiated forthwith.

As you have mentioned, Mr. Chairman, agreement on this question would enhance the climate of world peace and security. Such security assurances are of special significance to the non-nuclear States of the Third World. They are entirely helpless in the face of the nuclear threat which is posed not only by the nuclear Powers but also some other States, such as South Africa and Israel, which may be in the process of acquiring -- or have perhaps already acquired -- a nuclear weapons capability. Action must be taken to prevent this possibility, and Pakistan has taken several initiatives, including one for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, for this purpose. We shall persevere in

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

our efforts to evolve arrangements for the denuclearization of South Asia. Pakistan shares the hope expressed in the Secretary-General's message to this Committee that the precedent of the treaty of Tlatelolco "will be followed by further concerted action toward the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones". But, in the meantime, the world can avert a nuclear free-for-all only by constructing effective political and legal barriers against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. This will provide the time needed to succeed in halting and reversing the nuclear-arms race and prohibiting completely the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Some of the nuclear-weapon States remain reluctant to commit themselves to an international convention to assure the non-nuclear States against the nuclear threat. Various reasons have been cited to justify this reluctance, but the two advanced most often are: first, that assurances against the use of nuclear weapons have already been extended to the non-nuclear-weapon States; and, second, that it is not possible to evolve a formula for a uniform obligation by all the nuclear-weapon States. Let me say, with all deference to the Governments concerned, that neither of these presumptions is quite valid.

There is general agreement that the assurances provided by three nuclear Powers under resolution 255 of the Security Council are restrictive and lacking in credibility. Nor do the unilateral declarations made by the major nuclear Powers at the special session on disarmament provide an effective assurance to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use, or threat of use, of nuclear weapons. Apart from the fact that these declarations are different from each other in form and content, their credibility is further diminished -- in some cases entirely eroded -- by the conditions and qualifications attached to them.

A unilateral declaration, unless sanctified in a legal instrument, does not create binding or irrevocable commitments. It is bound to provoke a sense of reservation, because it is merely a statement of governmental policy, and policies, like Governments, are apt to change. Those very States which argue that the declaration of their Head of State regarding non-use of nuclear weapons is as binding as a treaty, have themselves taken the view that declarations made by Heads of State or Government of other nations regarding non-proliferation do not constitute a legal commitment and, therefore, urge acceptance of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

We are told that no uniform formulation can be evolved for security assurances because of the different security perceptions of the nuclear- and non-nuclear- weapon States. Unilateral declarations were made by the major nuclear Powers at the special session, but the conditions and qualifications in the declaration of one nuclear Power were negated by the conditions and qualifications in the declarations of the other. The net result is that these qualified unilateral declarations provide little practical assurance to the non-nuclear States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. A "common formula" is, therefore, indispensable to evolve credible security guarantees.

The debate which took place on this subject at the last session of the General Assembly has clarified the issues involved in formulating such a "formula". The fundamental difficulty in reaching a common formula is the existence of the military strategies of the rival political blocs, both of which envisage the use of nuclear weapons against the nuclear and non-nuclear members of the opposing bloc. Pakistan continues to believe that the formulation for "negative" security assurances approved by the General Assembly in resolution 31/189 C, and reaffirmed at its thirty-second session, provides the most viable basis for evolving a "uniform obligation" to be undertaken by the nuclear Powers. This formula is not only supported by nearly 100 Member States, it also equitably reflects the preoccupations of all countries. The Pakistan delegation would suggest that after a preliminary exchange of views on the draft convention submitted by my country on this subject, the Committee should set up an ad hoc working group to take up detailed examination of the various issues involved.

My delegation hopes that this Committee will proceed to discharge its responsibilities with determination and despatch. These responsibilities are unique; but it is necessary to bear in mind that the Committee on Disarmament is part of the larger structure of United Nations machinery on disarmament. Its work must take account not merely of bilateral and trilateral negotiations outside the United Nations but specially of the discussions and decisions of the Disarmament Commission and, of course, the General Assembly.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The procedures of this body must also reflect its character as a United Nations organ. The Committee should naturally work by consensus; but consensus should not be interpreted as providing one, two or three members, however important they may be, with the power of veto in this Committee. Also, unlike the CCD, the negotiations within the Committee should proceed in a systematic manner with separate sessions or meetings assigned for the consideration of specific topics. It might be worth-while to consider the establishment of ad hoc working groups or negotiating parties to take up the consideration of particular items or parts of such items. The Committee may also wish to set deadlines for the conclusion of negotiations and discussions on specific points.

The States represented on this Committee reflect a balance of interests between the nuclear and non-nuclear States, between aligned and unaligned countries, between large and small Powers, developed and developing countries. This is not to say that all national interests are reflected in the membership of this Committee. It is for this reason that the Pakistan delegation attaches importance to providing all interested States Members of the United Nations with the opportunity of participating in, and contributing to, the work of the Committee on Disarmament.

Pakistan's most fervent desire is to avoid involvement in an arms race, whether global or regional. This desire is testified to by the recent decision of the Government of Pakistan to unilaterally reduce its defence budget for 1979 by five per cent. We can but hope that this example will be followed by other States in the region.

The Super Powers, who are also the possessors of super military capabilities, have obtained possession of the ability to obliterate the world. It is the most onerous responsibility that has ever been known to mankind, and our common interest demands that it be shared. Disarmament is the vital concern of everybody, and especially that of our Committee. For these reasons, among many others, the Pakistan delegation will extend to the Committee on Disarmament its fullest attention and co-operation.

Mr. CARPIO CASTILLO (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): The delegation of Venezuela has significant reasons for feeling especially gratified at becoming a member of the Committee on Disarmament. It is certainly an honour for our country to assume the great responsibility entrusted to it on being appointed a member of this important body.

We come to the Committee on Disarmament with enthusiasm and resolve, eager to participate actively in its work and to help, together with the other distinguished delegations, in arriving at formulas for an understanding that will permit progress to be made in disarmament. We shall do so with the interest, spirit and diligence that have guided our earlier conduct in the various organs of the United Nations in which disarmament matters are discussed. This explains in part our presence in this multilateral negotiating forum, in which mankind places firm hopes for the promotion of international peace and security.

At the same time, we are conscious of the immense difficulties and complexities that have to be tackled here, of the formidable obstacles that have to be overcome in order to achieve the goals that have been mapped out, and of the magnitude and significance of our responsibility. Nevertheless, we are essentially optimistic. Above all things, we rely on flexibility and good sense, on open and peaceful dialogue, so as to act in keeping with the needs of an unprecedented crisis that seriously threatens the fate of mankind.

We are also encouraged by the course of steadfastness and perseverance pursued by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in one of the most pressing problems facing contemporary society. Under its auspices, agreement has been reached on a number of important measures which, together with others of similar or greater significance that might be agreed upon in future, would give powerful impetus to the cause of disarmament. For the Venezuelan delegation, this is an appropriate occasion to pay sincere homage to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament for the work carried out in so many years of intense activity, of unbending determination, in an area filled with pitfalls and vicissitudes.

In making an over-all review of the international outlook, it is easy to see that the efforts deployed in order to contain the arms build-up, despite the logic and the good sense that underlie them, have lagged behind the arms race, which is making quantitative and qualitative advances at an alarming pace.

(Mr. Carpio Castillo, Venezuela)

It is obvious that the problems caused by the overwhelming and unchecked build-up of arms, far from being resolved, are growing even more serious and are increasingly threatening the survival of the human race. Not only is the outlook in this irrational trend disturbing in strictly material terms --it also reveals a moral devastation, a crisis of ideals and lofty aims, which together represent an assault on the human condition. As Simón Alberto Consalvi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, has said, "the arms race, in itself, is a grave sign of an ethical crisis and of renouncement of all the other intelligent alternatives open to mankind".

Fortunately, this situation, which might be a source of discouragement and frustration, has not undermined the general determination to persevere, to redouble and intensify efforts, in an attempt to achieve tangible results in the sphere of disarmament. The holding of the special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament pointed to the start of a new stage in the crusade against the arms race and established the framework within which the negotiations on disarmament must continue. It bore eloquent witness to the unflinching attitude that guides the international community in the titanic struggle which has to be waged against the arms build-up.

In the course of the meetings of the special session of the General Assembly, it became apparent that it was necessary and desirable to treat the problem with greater vigour and dynamism, to undertake specific reforms and restructurings of the machinery for the discussion and negotiation of disarmament, so as to facilitate and favour a more appropriate consideration of matters of substance. The changes agreed upon by the Assembly were indispensable because of the increasingly urgent demands of disarmament-related questions, which have increased in number and complexity. Naturally, the basic problem is still the lack of a political decision by the military and nuclear Powers that makes it impossible to achieve major progress. In any event, the innovations in the machinery are intended to strengthen the instruments of negotiation and broaden their scope, to systematize and organize still more the joint efforts to secure more beneficial results. The inclusion of Venezuela and other countries in this multilateral negotiating body is completely in line with this attempt to revitalize and democratize the consideration of disarmament matters in the United Nations.

(Mr. Carpio Castillo, Venezuela)

Unquestionably, the democratic orientation with which the deliberations of the Committee are commencing is significant. Organizational and procedural democratization was clearly established in the Final Document of the special session of the Assembly, which specified, inter alia, that the chairmanship of the Committee should be rotated among all its members on a monthly basis; that interested States not members of the Committee should be permitted to submit proposals on disarmament measures and participate in the discussion of the subject-matter of such proposals; that non-member States should be invited to express their views when questions of particular concern to them were under discussion; and, what is more, that the plenary meetings of the Committee should be open to the public.

We attach singular importance to this last point, since it is connected with a matter that we have repeatedly raised. We have maintained that in order to give a new impetus to disarmament it is necessary to have all the peoples of the world participate in these efforts in the most active, consistent and organized fashion. After all, the adverse consequences of the arms race endanger the existence of peoples and impose economic and social sacrifices on them. Since the need has become apparent to mobilize international public opinion for repudiating and condemning the arms race, the peoples are entitled to receive the fullest and most accurate information on the risks and implications of this very serious contemporary phenomenon, so that they can duly play their role of moderation and persuasion.

The opening of the Committee's meetings to the public, where appropriate, is a step that can help to turn into reality the already widespread desire to inform and involve a non-specialized public; to guide leaders in all sectors of public and private life; to strengthen and foster the emergence of professional, political and religious movements of opinion. In short, this kind of initiative can help to forge a pacifist consciousness opposed to the arms race.

In recent years, the trade in arms has reached exceedingly high figures. Truly, no argument or pretext can justify the persistence of many developing countries in using disproportionate resources for the purchase of armaments, thus lessening their peoples' chances of achieving a proper standard of living. Nor are the people who, from other countries, promote the arms trade in different interests and without scruple free from blame or responsibility either. However, the

(Mr. Carpio Castillo, Venezuela)

growing seriousness of this problem can in no way obscure or diminish the attention called for by the proliferation of nuclear weapons, a vital question of maximum priority.

Although some 80 per cent of world-wide military expenditure is allocated to conventional arms and forces, the greatest threat to mankind lies in nuclear war. Some 15 years ago the nuclear arsenals were already enough to destroy our civilization. Today, as is known, the nuclear arsenals contain tens of thousands of highly sophisticated nuclear weapons with a total nuclear explosive power equivalent to one million times that possessed by the bomb which devastated Hiroshima. Moreover, the arms limitation agreements arrived at so far are easily outstripped by the changes that are taking place in other areas in the arms race. Advances of a qualitative kind in nuclear weapons are still being made with virtually no restrictions whatsoever, as is shown by the incessant nuclear tests, largely designed to perfect the efficiency of these weapons.

While action must be promoted to agree on measures to limit conventional weapons, at the bilateral, regional and world-wide level, the major efforts of the United Nations, through this Committee, must aim at removing from the horizon the spectre of a nuclear conflagration.

We have repeatedly expressed our concern that effective measures for nuclear disarmament and the prevention of a nuclear war are for us of the highest priority. Any measure for nuclear disarmament, and all of them are imperative, must therefore include a firm and voluntary commitment by the five nuclear Powers. Otherwise, the gaps in such agreements or measures would not only make them imperfect or deficient but would also open the door to unilateral action by a nuclear Power, and we do not even wish to picture the foreseeable consequences.

Hence, the special session of the Assembly placed great importance on the participation of all nuclear-weapon States in the Committee on Disarmament, and such participation was established in its membership.

We are exceedingly gratified that the distinguished delegation of France, representing a nuclear Power, has filled the place that lay vacant for a period of sixteen years. Similarly, we hope that the People's Republic of China will soon be taking part in the Committee's work.



(Mr. Carpio Castillo, Venezuela)

As can be seen from the special report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to the special session of the Assembly, a number of matters are under consideration, and some of them have been considered by the CCD for sixteen years without its having been possible to achieve concrete results.

One of the Committee's tasks at this first session will be to adopt its programme of work, in which connexion it will have to take account of the recommendations made by the General Assembly, including those of the thirty-third session, and proposals submitted by the members of the Committee.

Unquestionably, this task is not an easy one, since we are faced on the one hand with those matters under consideration which were left pending by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, and on the other, by the various resolutions conferring on the Committee mandates that are "a matter of priority", "of great priority" or "to be taken up urgently". Our opinion, which we have already expressed earlier, is that this Committee must negotiate, as a matter of the highest priority, effective measures for nuclear disarmament. In this respect, special attention must be given to the question of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, agreement on a treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, and the preparation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, the last-named topic in co-ordination with the Disarmament Commission, a deliberative body on which the special session of the Assembly conferred a specific mandate in this respect.

The other matters pending are still of an urgent character, such as the prohibition of chemical weapons and their total destruction, the prohibition of new weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, the prohibition of radiological weapons, the prohibition of neutron nuclear weapons and the elimination of the arms race on the sea-bed. In addition to these matters, resolutions of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly call for consideration of the preparation of an international convention on the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States, and the question of an adequately verified cessation and prohibition of production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes and other nuclear explosive devices.

In view of this extensive and heavy programme of work that awaits us, there is no doubt that the establishment of ad hoc working groups, where necessary, will help to speed up the work of the Committee and to negotiate more expeditiously, as the international community expects of us, the requisite effective measures for disarmament.

(Mr. Carpio Castillo, Venezuela)

There are many centres of anxiety, discord and distress that hinder the attainment of peace and well-being on our planet. In the times in which we are living, of increasing interdependence and complexity, it is impossible to disentangle or separate the common problems we are facing. The research carried out under the auspices of the United Nations has emphasized the close link that in fact exists between the two most important objectives of the international community: disarmament on the one hand, and development on the other. Development at an acceptable pace is difficult or impossible to reconcile with the continuation of the arms race, which consumes huge and diverse resources that could otherwise be used for the economic and social advancement of the peoples.

An outstanding feature of our times has been the joint and united action of the countries of the third world, aimed at laying the foundations of an international economic order of justice and equity. As a result of the struggles and the demands of the third world, the conviction has been formed that it is essential to secure substantial progress in the field of development in order to preserve international peace and security. In the final instance, neither peace nor security can be preserved in a world in which nations are separated by such great and growing economic disparities. Far from being achieved through the build-up of arms, genuine security can only be achieved through disarmament and co-operation in a world in which inequalities and inequities are tending to diminish.

The achievement of major advances in disarmament will be a decisive spur to endeavours in the area of development. Progress in disarmament, both in the wealthy and in the poor countries, would release internal material, financial and human resources that could be used for development purposes. If the atmosphere of fear, hostility and confrontation is reduced through progress towards disarmament, propitious conditions will emerge for eliminating some of the obstacles that hinder harmonious and just economic relations among all States.

Consequently, the responsibility of the Committee on Disarmament and the importance of its task are obvious. What can be achieved here will have an evident impact on other aspects of the international problems that also call for urgent solutions.

We firmly believe that the problems caused by the arms race, although difficult and complex, can and must be resolved with the firm will of all States. The future of all the peoples will largely depend on the results achieved, on

(Mr. Carpio Castillo, Venezuela)

the solutions found for these dilemmas and problems. In this undertaking, the United Nations, through this Committee, will continue to be the most appropriate forum to channel and concentrate efforts and actions and free mankind from the threat of its destruction.

In conclusion, we should like to state most emphatically that the delegation of Venezuela will lend its firmest support to all initiatives, measures and proposals making for a fruitful understanding to secure the important and vital objectives we have before us.

Mr. SIMONET (Belgium) (translated from French): May I first of all say how happy I am to be able to represent my country in this place on the occasion of the opening of the work of the new Committee on Disarmament. Belgium comes to it with the firm intention of acting dynamically to further the aims which are those of the world community in the field of disarmament.

We take this opportunity of welcoming the other member States of this negotiating body which is our Committee. We are particularly gratified to note the presence of States which have an important part to play in this Committee by reason of their nuclear power.

We hope to see China associate itself in turn and in the near future with our work, if we are to promote the achievement of our great objective, namely, general and complete disarmament.

The immensity and the complexity of this task are such that every willingness will be required to advance the cause of disarmament, the universality of which has been demonstrated by the Final Document of the tenth special session of the United Nations, devoted to disarmament.

Nevertheless, it appears to me, after the special session devoted to this problem last June, that the situation has hardly evolved in a favourable direction.

And yet the presence in New York of twenty-five Heads of State and fifty Ministers for Foreign Affairs for the work of the special session had given rise to the belief in an international political realization of the need for really tackling the thorny problem of disarmament.

I accept the importance of the consensus which was reached on the Final Document defining the aims to be attained and stating, in perhaps too general a fashion, the means of achieving them.

(Mr. Simonet, Belgium)

Despite the ~~undoubted~~ differences existing between the views of various countries, it may nevertheless be considered that there now exist, not an agreed model for general and complete disarmament, but at least recognized principles and a programme of action specifying priorities.

The contrast existing between the intentions proclaimed from the rostrum at international forums and the current practice of the right of the strongest is certainly a cause for discouragement, but it also gives us the measure of the immensity of the way still to be travelled. Progress along this long road will only be achieved if disarmament is viewed not merely as a whole, but also in its complexity.

This complexity is mainly due to the universally recognized link between security and disarmament. They cannot be dissociated without running the risk of destabilization, and this, though it might perhaps be regional at the outset, would affect the politico-strategic equilibrium of the world. Moreover, as security requirements vary greatly from one region to another, the paths leading to disarmament are therefore many and varied. For these reasons, Belgium has been defending the merits of a regional approach for a number of years. In our view, that should in no way exclude the global approach which has so far dominated thinking in matters of disarmament.

I should like to recall some principles which must, in the eyes of my country, guide the approach to negotiations in the field of disarmament. Global disarmament strategy, to which the document of the special session invites us, emphasizes the universality of disarmament. It must therefore be considered as part of the responsibility of all Powers, nuclear and non-nuclear alike.

On the other hand, there exists, as regards disarmament, a kind of interaction. While it is the concern of everyone, it implies by the nature of things the responsibility of each State, but it goes without saying that the circumstances vary from case to case. Because of this, nuclear States and countries not equipped with atomic weapons -- but which it has been agreed to call "militarily significant" -- obviously have special responsibility in their respective fields.

The very nature of the circumstances which I have just mentioned means that the security-disarmament link varies according to region. This leads to varying regional tensions and, consequently, to the possibility of a regional solution of which the States forming part of geographical entities that are homogeneous from the security and disarmament viewpoint must be aware.

(Mr. Simonet, Belgium)

Approaching the problem from another angle, we believe that there must be a parallelism between efforts for nuclear disarmament and efforts for conventional disarmament. Détente must have as a corollary at the military level a reduction in forces and equipment, whatever their nature.

If disarmament is one of the ways which should enable us in fine "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", as we are called upon to do in the initial lines of the Charter of the United Nations, to which all our States have subscribed, it requires an attitude which must wish to see the disappearance of all the types of arms to be found in the arsenals of the world.

Lastly, an essential element in any disarmament policy implies the existence of a climate of confidence and of the acceptance by States of a certain openness as regards their military resources. It is therefore not possible to escape from a system of verification, of effective controls making certain that the commitments entered into are respected. To deny such evidence is to run the risk of seeing disarmament agreements transformed into instruments rather of mistrust than of confidence, and to incur destabilization risks that are diametrically opposed to the desired results.

For historical and geographical reasons which are beyond its control, my country is situated in that part of the world where the fact of nuclear development is a determining element in the political equilibrium, but where, too, the concentration of nuclear warheads is the most impressive.

Being aware of this problem and wishing to indicate its desire not to increase nuclear risks, my country was one of the first to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty.

Nevertheless, whatever may be the undoubted value of the principle, non-proliferation will have a chance of succeeding only in so far as the necessary balance is observed between, on the one hand, the unilateral commitment of some to give up an attribute of sovereignty by self-limitation and, on the other, the necessity for others gradually to reduce their nuclear military arsenal. That is why my country fervently wishes that the current tripartite negotiations on the total banning of nuclear tests, as well as the bipartite SALT talks, may be concluded in the shortest possible time.

(Mr. Simonet, Belgium)

While the monopoly which the nuclear States possess imposes upon them the obligation to reduce their "vertical" proliferation, it is essential also to stress the question of "horizontal" non-proliferation, on which there is interaction between nuclear and non-nuclear States.

It seems obvious to us that States which voluntarily undertake to give up both producing and equipping themselves with nuclear weapons have the right in exchange to be preserved from any risk to which the temptation to take advantage of the relative weakness to which they have agreed might give rise. This implies that those in possession of nuclear weapons should undertake by suitable formulae not to make use of them vis-à-vis such States.

Similarly, it does not seem superfluous to repeat that the conclusion of a treaty on the cessation of all nuclear tests would substantially increase the chances of strengthening the application of the non-proliferation principle, to which my country remains firmly attached.

While attending to the essential tasks awaiting us in the nuclear field, it is necessary at the same time to consider the problems encountered in the field of conventional disarmament. The complexity of those problems is also undeniable, and for various reasons.

In the first place, conventional conflicts have become so much more numerous as to increase the danger facing mankind.

Moreover, as from a certain level, a parallel and balanced reduction of conventional forces and armaments would be necessary to ensure a parallel balance in the substantial reduction there would be in the nuclear field.

For any nuclear reduction which did not lead to reductions in conventional armaments, or served, on the contrary, as a pretext for increasing them, would ultimately have no other effect than to bring about a further disequilibrium giving cause for concern.

It is especially important to stress the part which conventional disarmament may play in areas not covered by what is called nuclear dissuasion. Conventional reductions in those areas may constitute one of the steps leading to the process of general and complete disarmament, provided that the States concerned are assured that disarmament does not involve the alienation of their security and independence.

(Mr. Simonet, Belgium)

As I have had occasion to say in the United Nations, experience has proved that "there is no subject more difficult than that of disarmament. Negotiations always get off to a hesitant start. Once they are under way, progress is slow because of a fundamental distrust which the protagonists cannot overcome, regardless of the sincerity of their determination".

But the difficulties of the task must not make us give up the pursuit of our objective. The favourable developments which have occurred since the sixties in negotiations on certain aspects of disarmament should, indeed, encourage the international community to redouble its efforts.

Détente has made possible an improvement in the climate of international relations. There is no acceptable alternative to détente. While aware of the fragmentary and fragile character of the results obtained, we must welcome them and consider that they represent the first necessary steps along the long road to be travelled by men of goodwill.

If we can get over the mountain of our prejudices and perpetual fears, we may enter the twenty-first century without the threat of a terrible conflict hanging over our own or our children's heads.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): Before closing this meeting, I should like to express my sincerest thanks to all who have spoken for their substantial contribution to our Committee's work and for their renewed expressions of friendship towards my country, my Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Bouteflika, and his representatives in the Committee. It will be my duty and pleasure to transmit to Mr. Bouteflika the expression of those feelings of friendship and confidence.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.