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(Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 65 AND 142 (continued)

STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MLLOJA (Albania): For some years now the problem of the arms race in outer space has remained on the agenda of this Committee, becoming in this way one of the most important agenda items under discussion.

There is no doubt that the prevention of an arms race in outer space constitutes an urgent necessity, which complies with the aspirations of peace-and freedom-loving peoples and States, whose representatives have been expressing their concern during the deliberations of this present session. Every year, since the thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly has been calling for the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purpose, rather than turning it into another arena of the arms race. But what has happened in reality?

Regardless of all these concerns the imperialist super-Powers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, have included outer space in their global arms race and in their war preparations. Outer space is now considered a new realm of military supremacy and diktat, as if the unprecedented military build-up and the huge arsenals of weapons of mass destruction stockpiled in our planet do not suffice to blow it up many times, as has often been mentioned by various representatives.

The United States and the Soviet Union, having assembled huge material and financial and human resources for the further militarization of space, are making persistent efforts to develop high-technology space weapons and to deploy them in outer space. Now they have engaged in a new round of the arms race in space. Most of the American and Soviet space weapons carry out spying activities; they monitor and pick up data about the hotbeds in various strategic regions, in accordance with their warmongering plans.

There are many high military officials in the United States who are calling for increased budgets in order to expand the programmes devised to exploit outer space for military purposes and to develop and station there new military arsenals. It has now become something common for the specialists to elaborate on

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war preparations and other matters related to the future nuclear war in space. Thus, they speak of "star wars" not as scientific fiction, but as a reality.

The Soviet Union does not lag behind in this field either. There has been a steep increase in spending on programmes related to the development and manufacturing of different space weapons. Most of their space missions carry out military activities.

As in the past, now too, the delegation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania strongly denounces the efforts made by the super-Powers to turn outer space into another theatre of war. That is why we consider the Soviet and American demagogical claims allegedly to prohibit the arms race in outer space as mere propaganda. Through such a propaganda smokescreen they are both trying to create a false image before world opinion, that they allegedly are concerned about such an escalation of the arms race in space.

Recently, in this context, there has been much talk about the eventual start of Soviet-American negotiations on the prevention of the militarization of outer space, which has become one of the principal items of their dialogue. This is not by accident. In fact both parties have come out in favour of such negotiations, but, as each of them proceeds from particular actual interests, aims and objectives, they have not found common ground to start. One thing is most clear in all the fuss being made: whether or not such bargaining begins is of no importance for the peoples of the world. The existing arsenal of space weaponry, not to mention the future programmes, is such that it has already turned outer space into a real military depot. Even if any agreement is achieved by the super-Powers, its real aim would be to maintain the space military balance at a certain parity level between each other and, at the same time, keep the distance between them and others.

The delegation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, which has always denounced the aggressive policy and the unprecedented arms race of the super-Powers and other imperialist Powers, shares the concern expressed before this Committee by many delegations regarding the intensive efforts being made with the aim of the further militarization of outer space and its use for aggressive purposes. We hold that no one should cherish any illusion that outer space will voluntarily be demilitarized by the super-Powers. The mutual accusations they exchange, the proposals for bilateral negotiations as well as the continuous demagogic statements

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on the demilitarization of outer space are part of their rivalry and co-operation for world hegemony and aim at creating false illusions among peoples, who for their part have had enough words and meetings on disarmament.

The People's Socialist Republic of Albania does not wish to become part of the super-Powers' demagogic fuss on the prohibition of an arms race in outer space. On the contrary, we maintain that the conversion of outer space into another battleground threatening peoples' freedom and sovereignty makes it more necessary to speak out and oppose energetically and effectively the further militarization of space. The great space achievements, which are a product of mankind's toil, sweat and thought, must be used effectively to its benefit, rather than to destroy it. Hence, it is imperative to stay the hand of the super-Powers and prevent them from threatening or destroying our planet from outer space.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): My delegation would like today to discuss agenda item 64, "Question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons".

Austria is greatly concerned about the use of this most dangerous, cruel and hideous type of weapon. The especially insidious character of chemical warfare, its severe ecological implications, and the fact that it threatens primarily the unprotected civilian population make the banning of these weapons a matter of the highest priority.

Austria was one of the first countries to ratify the 1925 Geneva Protocol. In 1955, my country renounced the possession of chemical and bacteriological weapons. Austria was also among the first signatories of the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

However, the fate of those two international agreements covering only certain aspects of chemical weapons should prompt us to seek a comprehensive convention. Experience has shown that the strengthening of existing partial agreements has so far proved to be impossible. In a number of cases, it has not been possible even to investigate reported or alleged violations of such agreements.

In this respect, I refer to the Secretary-General's report (A/39/488), which contains guidelines on how the Secretary-General should proceed when confronted with an allegation of the use of chemical or biological weapons. In the view of my delegation, that report is further proof of the need for an early conclusion of a comprehensive chemical weapons convention.

Austria, which is not a member of the Conference on Disarmament, has had the privilege of being invited by the Geneva Conference to participate in its work, especially in the deliberations of its Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. My Government has noted with interest that the negotiations under way in Geneva on a convention on chemical weapons which would prohibit the development, production or other acquisition, stockpiling or retention of chemical weapons, or the transfer of those weapons, directly or indirectly, to anyone, are now in an advanced stage. The report of the Conference on Disarmament (A/39/27) outlines the eventual structure of the convention and contains proposals for important parts of it. We now have a reference document with agreed texts, and with alternative formulations where positions differ.

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There is no doubt that substantial progress has been made this year. Last February the Soviet Union declared its readiness in principle to accept permanent on-site verification of the destruction of chemical weapons, and in April the United States submitted a draft convention on chemical weapons. Other important proposals have come from a number of Western and non-aligned countries. We take these as encouraging signs that an agreement will be reached in the not-too-distant future. The auguries we see today are favourable, and we should all strive towards the speedy conclusion of a convention banning chemical weapons.

With respect to the verification of a future ban, certain difficult hurdles have yet to be overcome. I would state that the question of verification is, not surprisingly, presenting major obstacles in the search for a chemical weapons convention. Chemical weapons have been used only too efficiently in this century; they have been and continue to be stockpiled in militarily relevant quantities. We do not ignore the fact that verification seems particularly difficult with respect to chemical weapons, since they are virtually identical in appearance to ordinary weapons and can be distinguished only at close range. Furthermore, plants for producing chemicals for military use are difficult to distinguish from plants producing chemicals for industrial purposes.

It is easy to see that for a chemical weapons convention to be successful, confidence in compliance with the provisions of such an agreement should be assured. It will therefore be essential to agree on a verification system whereby compliance and non-compliance with the convention can be unmistakably identified.

Austria is hopeful that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, when it resumes its work next January, will make substantial progress on the issue of verification. Nevertheless, my delegation is fully aware that it will be impossible to ensure a 100-per-cent certainty of compliance. Given this fact, we should seek not illusory perfect verification measures, but adequate ones.

Ultimately, the question of whether or not we are to have a chemical weapons convention will hinge not on a technical or military decision, but on a political one, which will require courage and confidence.

Having commented on the progress already achieved in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, my delegation feels bound to express its concern that research and development might result in technological innovations outstripping the pace of the negotiations. It would indeed be deplorable if the development of new

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chemical weapons, the increase in effectiveness of known chemical agents and further development of temporarily harmful gases occurred before a chemical weapons convention could be concluded. We are all aware of the simple fact that it is easier by far to prohibit weapons before they are deployed on a large scale than afterwards.

Let us also bear in mind the danger of the proliferation of chemical weapons. The production of certain kinds of such weapons is no longer the exclusive domain of some highly industrialized Powers. In fact, more and more countries possess the skill and the facilities to produce chemical weapons such as mustard gas and a range of nerve gases. We should remember too that since the end of the First World War chemical weapons have been used in third world countries exclusively.

For all these reasons, Austria urges all parties to the negotiations not to let pass the present chance to arrive at a comprehensive solution to the question of chemical weapons. Only after the total destruction of existing stocks and the destruction or conversion of chemical weapons production facilities will the use of these dangerous weapons be brought effectively to an end.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia): My delegation has already expressed its views concerning global problems of disarmament at plenary meetings of the General Assembly as well as in the general debate in the First Committee. Therefore, I shall limit myself in today's statement exclusively to the problems of the Conference on Disarmament, with a particular emphasis on how my delegation views the performance of the Conference during the current year, and on what we consider must imperatively be achieved there in the near future.

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As stated in paragraph 120 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament is the only existing multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. It is quite normal, therefore, that the General Assembly call upon the Conference on Disarmament to undertake negotiations and to expect corresponding results. In General Assembly resolution 38/183 I, entitled "Report of the Committee on Disarmament" the Conference on Disarmament was urged to undertake substantive negotiations on the priority questions on its agenda to provide, for that purpose, its existing working organs with appropriate negotiating mandates and to establish, as a matter of urgency, working organs on the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, on the prevention of nuclear war and on the prevention of the arms race in outer space.

At the very beginning of this year's session the Czechoslovak delegation in the Conference on Disarmament proposed, on behalf of the group of socialist countries, mandates for organs to be entrusted with negotiations on its main agenda items. When submitting the relevant working paper my delegation expressed its fears that, if not equipped with clear and unequivocal mandates for its working organs, the Conference on Disarmament might become another deliberative, rather than a negotiating, body in the field of disarmament. What we certainly do not need is a transformation of the Conference on Disarmament into another platform for academic discussions. We therefore insisted that subsidiary bodies of the Conference should be entrusted with the task of formulating, if not whole treaties, at least parts of them. The lack of appropriate mandates for negotiation could give some delegations an opportunity to conceal their lack of political will to negotiate.

However, in spite of our endeavours and in spite of attempts by members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Conference on Disarmament has not succeeded in establishing really meaningful working organs on such important issues as nuclear disarmament, the prevention of nuclear war or the prevention of the arms race in outer space. In spite of the wishes, proposals and pressures of the majority of delegations the adoption of negotiating mandates and the establishment of subsidiary bodies did not materialize. We very often heard arguments - mostly from the delegation of the United States - that it was first necessary to explore all aspects of the problem and only then to decide what to do next. Yet such a

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mere exploration of the issue means academic discussion which, as I have already stated, we wanted to avoid. Therefore, we had to reject such an approach, and we are also going to reject it in the future, for the benefit of the Conference on Disarmament and of disarmament as such.

We should bear in mind what happened with regard to agenda item 1, namely, the nuclear-test ban. The negotiations on that most urgent issue are stalled. They cannot move forward as long as they are confronted with opposition that makes it impossible to achieve progress on a realistic and reasonable basis. It is therefore necessary to negotiate on the scope and on all aspects of the ban on nuclear tests rather than continuing to repeat, ad absurdum, arguments that we must, first of all, reach agreement on verification and that only then can we go further. It has been stated many times, and not only by delegations of socialist and non-aligned countries, that the verification problem has been, in fact, solved already, and that the only thing we need now is to incorporate it properly into a treaty. This problem, which could have far-reaching effects if we do not make considerable progress in the near future, has already been widely discussed during this year's debate, and I do not intend to repeat what has already been stated by others. My delegation would like only to express hopes that the situation of this year will not be repeated next year and that we shall note some progress in the negotiations.

The deplorable situation in the Conference on Disarmament caused by the complete failure to move forward in negotiations on nuclear disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear war was very eloquently described by the representative of the German Democratic Republic on 29 October 1984. We fully support his evaluation of the developments at the Conference as well as the conclusions expressed in his statement.

When analysing the tasks and achievements of the Conference on Disarmament this year, however, we must admit that some subsidiary bodies of the Conference have been established and that they have really worked. The most important of them was the Committee on Chemical Weapons. The issue of the total ban on chemical weapons is as urgent now as ever before. Sixty years after the adoption of the Geneva Protocol banning the use of chemical weapons, the problem of the prohibition

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and destruction of chemical weapons is fully ripe for effective and definitive solution, not only because it is an old - almost an ancient - matter, but, above all, because it is about to acquire a new, dangerous dimension. It has been brought to the knowledge of delegations at the Conference on Disarmament on several occasions that the United States House of Representatives in 1980 approved the allocation of the funds required for the building of a new production facility for binary chemical weapons. In February 1982 the production of binary weapons was approved by a relevant presidential letter to the Congress. Thus, the United States has established a programme that might give rise to a chemical arms race. The fact that the United States Senate has not yet approved a full-scale programme of chemical armament should not obscure the fact that intensive activities were undertaken with a view to carrying through the chemical rearmament programme. There are plans to modernize the United States chemical arsenal and also to use binary weapons to a wide extent on Pershing II and cruise missiles. If the United States Government were allowed to proceed with its plans for chemical rearmament it would seriously undermine international efforts to prohibit and destroy all chemical weapons, including binary weapons.

It is true that the United States delegation was among those submitting proposals for a ban on chemical weapons, but omissions in the United States draft and some of the requirements contained therein make it very problematic. Why have binary weapons traditionally been taboo in all American proposals, including the latest draft? Why are new requirements - such as the open invitation concept - still raised in the field of verification? The authors of that concept were undoubtedly proceeding from its obvious unacceptability. And why have the important proposals concerning the verification of destruction of chemical-weapon stockpiles introduced by the delegation of the USSR not been matched by a similar move by the United States? These, as well as a number of other questions, have been put to the United States delegation in Geneva.

It is true that the United States delegation has made five statements on this issue, as was recently emphasized by the United States representative. Unfortunately, it has always concentrated on repetition of the relevant passages in its own proposal without giving any answers to the questions put to it. The United

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States delegation here has been trying to create the impression that nobody but the United States has submitted a proposal on the prohibition of chemical weapons and that before that occurred this year there had been nothing in that respect. But what is the real situation?

As early as 1972 the Soviet Union, along with other socialist countries, including Czechoslovakia, presented a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. Later, in an effort to break the stalemate in relevant negotiations the Soviet Union agreed that the prohibition should be applied first to the most dangerous deadly kinds of chemical weapons. In the Soviet-United States communiqué, signed at the highest level on 3 July 1974, it is stated that a joint initiative should be developed in that direction. In 1976, bilateral Soviet-United States talks were started. In a letter dated 7 August 1979 the two Powers submitted to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva a joint report on progress in bilateral negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons where agreement has already been reached on a number of crucial questions concerning the application of the verification of the ban on chemical weapons. Without any reason, the United States Government then discontinued bilateral negotiations on that issue with the Soviet Union.

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At the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Soviet Union submitted on 15 June 1982 draft basic provisions of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

In order to create a more favourable atmosphere for concrete work on the text of such a convention in the Geneva Committee on Disarmament the Soviet Union and other socialist States in 1983 put forward a number of constructive initiatives which took account of the positions of both developing and Western countries. I do not wish to make my statement longer by naming them all although I can enumerate them to any delegation which may show interest in them.

Until the presentation of its own proposal, the United States delegation had not responded at all to the proposals of the socialist countries in the Committee on Disarmament; and now the United States delegation tries to evoke the impression that the socialist countries have not acted in Geneva in a constructive manner. Does the United States think that constructive negotiations should consist in unconditional adoption of its proposals? And are we supposed to satisfy ourselves in cases where there are doubts, such as on the question of verification, only with assurances that requirements for obtaining information which are at first sight exaggerated do not embrace any concealed intentions? The socialist countries have always negotiated about a complete prohibition of chemical weapons with sincerity and they will continue to do so in the future.

As we can see, there are many question marks around the United States approach to the total ban on chemical weapons. Let us hope that next year's negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, which will be conducted under the chairmanship of the representative of the Polish People's Republic, Ambassador Turbanski, will clear up most of the still hazy points and that the Conference on Disarmament will finally reach some long-awaited achievements in this field. This does not mean that we do not appreciate the endeavours of this year's Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Ekeus of Sweden, whom we hold in high esteem.

May I now comment shortly on another issue on the agenda of this year's Conference on Disarmament session where in our opinion some useful work has been

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done, namely, the problem of radiological weapons. I had the privilege to act as Chairman of the Committee dealing with that question. My conclusion is that the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons was not a waste of time. Apart from clarifying still further the positions of individual delegations, it has convincingly demonstrated that the majority of delegations want to achieve progress on this issue. However, there were still major obstacles to the possibility of progress in our work. The linkage, consisting in attempts to solve the issue of radiological weapons and the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities in one document, again posed problems to many delegations.

Many problems have arisen also with regard to the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities. I do not intend to comment on them here at greater length. I wish only to stress again that, in spite of all these problems, the work of the Committee on Radiological Weapons in the Conference on Disarmament should be continued. I do not think that all those problems cannot be overcome and I believe that we are not without prospects of progress.

In addition, I should like to stress that in the future work of the Conference on Disarmament we should pay still more attention to the preparation of the comprehensive programme of disarmament. The Ad Hoc Committee established this year under the chairmanship of Ambassador Robles of Mexico should intensify its activities, in which my delegation is prepared to help with all the modest means available to it.

Allow me also to mention briefly another problem of disarmament which is not an agenda item of the Conference on Disarmament but which will nevertheless be one of the major disarmament issues next year, namely, the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). I have the honour to serve as an officer of its Preparatory Committee and I had the privilege to chair its second session. From all the experience I have gained, I wish to stress that it is quite obvious that the Third Review Conference will look closely at what has been achieved, since the second conference, held in 1980, in negotiations on disarmament, especially in the nuclear field. The results of the Conference on Disarmament will undoubtedly be considered. My delegation is of the opinion that it is not sufficient just to call for nuclear disarmament and to

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launch general appeals in this respect. It is to be expected that the Third Review Conference will hear concrete criticism of those delegations which have prevented the Conference on Disarmament from taking action on priority issues of nuclear disarmament.

We still have one full session of the Conference on Disarmament between now and the Third Review Conference. Let us use it to prove that things are really moving in the nuclear disarmament field. The non-proliferation régime could and must be substantially strengthened by the achievement of specific results in the process of nuclear disarmament. The Third Review Conference must do its utmost for a further strengthening of the non-proliferation régime which, in spite of some doubts expressed here recently, has been of far-reaching importance for peace and security in the world. My delegation stands ready to co-operate with all those who are committed to the cause of strengthening the NPT. To those who are expressing doubts about the usefulness of the Treaty, we want to stress that nothing could be gained by simply rejecting the Treaty as such.

My delegation listened with great attention to the general debate in the Committee. The debate has shown how strong is the interest of the overwhelming majority of delegations in the opening of concrete negotiations which would become a substantial step forward in the efforts aimed at limiting and halting the arms race and proceeding to disarmament. If this goal is to be achieved, all Governments must make adequate political decisions and give their delegations at the Geneva Conference appropriate instructions, enabling them to take action and to embody those decisions in concrete measures.

However, the statement of Mr. Adelman, Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency has failed to leave us the impression that the work of the Geneva Conference will be more fruitful next year. The United States representative in his statement repeated the old argument that it was necessary to solve first the question of verification and only afterwards the other issues. Permit me to make a short comment on that matter.

The States of the socialist community are far from underestimating the importance of verification of disarmament measures. They agree that disarmament treaties must be accompanied by adequate safeguards which have to be effective and

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correspond with the scope as well as with the content of the Treaty. But verification must not become a pretext for putting off negotiations on concrete measures or an instrument for obtaining information which has no relation at all to the verification of the respective disarmament measures.

We have heard arguments about a so-called open society which, because of its openness, should have the right to demand that those it classifies as non-open become open by disclosing their military secrets. Let us put aside the question of which society is open and which is not. We could talk about it at great length. Each society protects itself and guards certain information, the disclosure of which could harm its defence. The argument about the so-called openness thus cannot be sustained.

It is interesting that the United States, while constantly demanding so-called transparency and more and more information as a pre-condition for the actual opening of negotiations on concrete treaties, on the other hand claims to know very well that the socialist countries are militarily superior in one sphere or another. Whenever a new round of the arms race is to be launched the United States Government persistently sticks to the argument that it is necessary to fill the gap because allegedly it has been lagging behind. In such a case it does not complain about lacking information. The confrontation of these two arguments speaks for itself.

For a fairly long time we have been witnessing quite different approaches to the basic questions of disarmament. The socialist countries were constantly and continuously putting forward numerous realistic and constructive proposals worked out on the basis of the principle of equality and undiminished security of all parties, that is, proposals which might create a good basis for the strengthening of peace and security in the world. It was not the socialist States which lacked political will to solve the urgent problems of disarmament. We are ready to act in the spirit of the same good will and with the same intensity also in the future.

Mrs. OSODE (Liberia): Mr. Chairman, my delegation is heartened to see you presiding over the meetings of the First Committee. We say this not out of deference to a tradition but because we are familiar with your qualifications and the wealth of experience you bring to your post and also because in you we have witnessed a patient and controlled personality. We trust that under your able and wise leadership the work of this Committee will achieve the expected positive results.

We also wish to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Tom Vraalsen of Norway, for his dynamic and innovative leadership and to extend our best wishes to all the officers of the Committee.

We take this opportunity to say how deeply saddened we were to hear of the tragic death of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India and Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement. In her lifetime she demonstrated qualities befitting a world citizen and an inspired statesman that have no doubt left an imprint on the history of India and the entire world.

We very much endorse many of the interests and priorities being advanced by speakers here. Others are taking the form of cynicism and continued rhetorical attacks aimed at achieving the goals of what is claimed to be an overriding concern for arms control and disarmament and a better and peaceful world.

In discussing the serious matters under consideration, which affect mankind and his environment, care must be taken not to convey internationally, as the case may be, false images of other nations and exaggerated views of their policies. My delegation believes that most of us here know better. We must be courageous enough to acknowledge not only the positive achievements of our allies but also the positive achievements of those thought of as foes. Similarly, we should not be afraid to dissociate ourselves from or express reservations regarding any action or proposal that might do a disservice or injustice to United Nations efforts in the field of disarmament and related matters.

The Liberian delegation appreciates all positive concerted efforts made in the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. We would, however, caution against the trend in the work of those bodies towards their being an exercise in a popularity contest for the best articulation of views and issues, which delegations are finding confusing or contradictory because pious

(Mrs. Osode, Liberia)

declarations do not match deeds. We also, and for good reason, would caution against the seeming popularity contest for the proliferation of agenda items and resolutions on record, devoid of realism and implementation.

Having thus expressed ourselves, my delegation would like now to consider some items on our agenda which might entail disturbing consequences or obligations. The United Nations, which has existed for 39 years, was born and bred in the nuclear age and has devoted all those years to discussions on disarmament. The results so far, as is recognized, are extremely marginal - so marginal that it is natural to question if Governments and people really understand the effects of the nuclear-arms race.

This Committee will recall that on 14 December 1946 the General Assembly recognized the central role of disarmament in relation to peace and security and that in 1959 the General Assembly set general and complete disarmament as a goal to be pursued.

The goal of the negotiations were stated to be, first, that disarmament be general and complete and that war no longer be an instrument for the settling of international disputes and, secondly, that such disarmament be accompanied by the establishment of reliable procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes and effective arrangements for the maintenance of peace in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegation is very much concerned about conventional weapons, which are becoming more sophisticated in quality. Although we are quite disturbed about the rumblings and the possibility of a nuclear war, at this point we would concentrate our attention on conventional wars, more than 150 of which have been reported as being fought since the Second World War.

In recent decades, as can be gathered from cogent statements made here, there has been an abundance of different political and strategic doctrines concerning the foreign or domestic security or the vital interests of States. This is due to the possibility of armed conflicts entered into, as some will say, not for the purpose of repelling military attack but as an answer to economic and political challenges. Furthermore, surveys have shown that in various regions of the world armaments have been acquired for the maintenance of domestic peace as well as for defence against foreign aggression.

(Mrs. Osode, Liberia)

On disarmament and development, my delegation believes that the high level of military spending in the world - in developed and developing countries - not only diverts resources urgently needed to deal effectively with the problem of development but also helps to exacerbate those problems. Being one of the main factors shaping the international context, the arms race exerts a profound influence on politics and the economies of many countries, particularly the developed countries.

My delegation is greatly disturbed about the acceleration of the nuclear-arms race, which could lead to a nuclear war. In the absence of a nuclear war, nuclear explosions are already a serious health hazard to man and his environment. It is our understanding that experimental reactors are now in operation in 50 countries, which shows that, as far as most of the industrialized countries and several of the developing countries are concerned, there no longer exist serious technological or economic barriers against the initiation of nuclear-weapons programmes.

Despite pious declarations, moralizing speeches and good intentions, 50 nuclear explosions were carried out in 1983 - all by the nuclear-weapon States, as reported in the 1984 Yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Even though those explosions may have been conducted for peaceful purposes, we regret that we have not heard such developments being mentioned in the statements of those involved - except, I believe, for one State. My delegation would appreciate it if in future such States gave assurances that those experiments were undertaken to develop specific programmes and projects, were that to be the case, consistent with the profound legitimate aspiration to achieve peace and justice for all peoples.

(Mrs. Osode, Liberia)

In view of the proliferation of nuclear technologies, Liberia is pleased that there will be a Third Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty in Geneva in 1985, which, as a party, it will attend. We look forward to a meaningful debate and a successful result. Since the signing of the Treaty in 1968, developments show only a mockery of the agreement reached. The nuclear-weapon Powers are unwilling or unable to carry out their pledge at least to begin to stop or reverse the arms race and accept the same controls as those seeking nuclear development.

Many countries in the various regions, including Africa, have consistently refused to become parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and yet a majority of countries are parties to it. But my delegation must caution that many of the non-nuclear-weapon States which signed or ratified the Treaty cannot be expected to accept indefinitely a situation in which the nuclear Powers continue to test and deploy new weapons that are prohibited for non-nuclear-weapon States. If one wants to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to additional countries, it would seem that a ban on testing by nuclear-weapon States is the appropriate place to start.

My delegation would like now to address itself to the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. We had the opportunity at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly fully to address ourselves to this serious question. While I admit that my delegation has not had the opportunity to read the report of the Secretary-General to this session on South Africa's nuclear capability, we regret that, in spite of the abundance of information even in United Nations documents on this grave matter, which has been declared a threat to international peace and security, his previous reports presented to this Committee since 1980, I believe, have given no new information. We hope that this will not be the case in 1984. We appreciate the report by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in co-operation with the disarmament bodies of the United Nations Secretariat, contained in document A/39/470. This report leaves my delegation with no doubts about South Africa's development of nuclear technology and installations and acquisition of nuclear capability.

In addition to South Africa's increased acquisition of conventional arms to attack South Africans, Namibians and neighbouring African States, the development of this régime's nuclear capability has been enhanced and accelerated by the

(Mrs. Osode, Liberia)

collaboration extended to the apartheid régime at various levels not only by its traditional alliances that have been consistently exposed, but by others from all regions, as is documented in reliable reports, whom we have chosen expediently to shield.

Since South Africa's nuclear activities have caused so much tension in our region of Africa, only the prevention of such activities, which no one here could sincerely classify as peaceful, will cause the relaxation of those tensions. Until this is done, the climate in which discussions are taking place concerning southern Africa, Namibia's independence and the restoration of harmonious relations and stability in the region, cannot be meaningful.

We are pleased that of all the negotiations taking place, those on chemical weapons have shown a measure of success in the Conference on Disarmament. But we are indeed seriously disturbed by a report, "Facts and reports" by the Holland Committee on Southern Africa, that at the Institute of Aviation Medicine in Pretoria, the racist South Africa military establishment is continuing to develop and perfect chemical and bacteriological weapons for use against the national liberation movements in southern Africa. In its underground installations, numerous personnel are at work on secret research in the field of chemical weapons, in particular on the use of Sarin, a highly toxic nerve gas.

You may recall that on 26 May 1983, testifying before the United Nations Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Southern Africa, Mr. Gavin Cawthra, a white South African conscientious objector, stated that South Africa was researching the development of a so-called ethnic biological weapon which would be programmed to affect certain ethnic groups through the use of carefully selected biological viruses directed at the black population. South Africa's development of such chemical and bacteriological weapons not only shows the inhuman and criminal character of the apartheid régime, but also potential disastrous consequences for the entire African continent. My delegation urges the Conference on Disarmament to look carefully into this matter.

At this juncture, we wish to express our concern about outer space, which has been militarized for years but which, with the perfection and sophistication of weapons, has now gained increasing international attention. It is my delegation's sincere hope that agreement on all aspects of outer space will be reached as soon as possible.

(Mrs. Osode, Liberia)

Finally, we join others in appealing to the United States and the Soviet Union to resume with a sense of purposefulness their bilateral talks on all issues of mutual interest and concern. And we hope that a positive decision will not be further delayed so as to avoid outdated terms of reference when such talks are resumed, or any complication caused by the advance of new armament technological developments by both sides during the course of a protracted delay.

We thank the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research for the useful work they continue to do. We also express our appreciation to those countries which by their generous contributions and programmes have made it possible for participants from developing countries, including an official from Liberia, to receive this fellowship award in 1984, which no doubt will give a better understanding and insight into disarmament matters.

Mr. OSMAN (Somalia): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first time my delegation has spoken in this Committee, I should like to offer my profound congratulations on your assumption of the Chair, as well as on the election of the other officers of the Committee to their respective posts. My delegation assures you, Mr. Chairman, that it will fully co-operate with you in the fulfilment of your task, and we hope that this Committee will achieve fruitful results.

This Committee has adopted a long list of resolutions which have shown no signs of progress towards implementation for several years. The task of repeating similar calls for disarmament measures - in particular for nuclear disarmament - becomes increasingly frustrating in the current climate of nuclear confrontation and against the background of a nuclear-arms race that seems to have gone out of control.

(Mr. Osman, Somalia)

Nevertheless, my delegation believes that the non-nuclear-weapon States, which represent a large proportion of the world's people, must continue to speak out on the critical questions of disarmament and to work with undiminished hope and determination for general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The heaviest responsibility in this regard lies, of course, with the nuclear Powers. They claim to know that a nuclear war is unwinnable and would in all probability put an end to life on our planet. But their actions bear little relation to the awful threat of a nuclear holocaust.

We join the many others who have called once again for serious multilateral or bilateral negotiations by the nuclear Powers on such vital measures as a comprehensive test-ban treaty, a freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and the mutual and balanced reduction of existing weapons and weapon systems. The obligations assumed by the nuclear Powers under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the consensus achieved by the tenth special session both demand the speedy implementation of these measures.

My delegation also believes that it is imperative that no new dimension, such as an arms race in space, should be added to the present nuclear dilemma which already threatens mankind's survival.

As a small non-aligned State, Somalia attaches great importance to the provision of security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States. My delegation regrets that in this question, as in so many issues before the Conference on Disarmament, the negotiating process is blocked at basic procedural levels. We welcome, however, the evidence of good progress on the drafting of a treaty prohibiting chemical weapons. We hope this development is a sign of renewed political resolve which will be applied in other critical disarmament issues before the Conference.

We continue to believe that the goal of general and complete disarmament can be achieved by the establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones, such as the one established in Latin America and those proposed for Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and the Indian Ocean.

We welcome the convening of a regional seminar for Africa on disarmament issues at Cairo in February 1985, and we hope that it can promote the implementation of the General Assembly's Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

(Mr. Osman, Somalia)

Unfortunately, both in Africa and the Middle East, the aspirations of peoples for justice, independence and peace are threatened by the nuclear ambitions of lawless régimes. The well-known nuclear capabilities of South Africa and Israel, and the nuclear collaboration between these States, are major obstacles to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in their respective areas.

We hope the nuclear Powers will refrain from supplying any form of nuclear material or technology to the apartheid régime, which seeks to impose a racist hegemony over southern Africa through military and nuclear blackmail. Israel's refusal to place its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, in defiance of Security Council resolution 487 (1981), should also preclude any action which might strengthen its nuclear capability. The prohibition of horizontal proliferation, contained in article I of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, assumes added significance in the case of countries which have nothing but contempt for international law.

Somalia, an Indian Ocean State, has always supported the principles of the General Assembly's Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We deeply regret the continued postponement of the Conference on the Indian Ocean. The problems of the area have been exacerbated by hegemonistic aspirations and encroachments, which in turn have led to increased super-Power presence in the context of global rivalry. Furthermore, South Africa's determination to use its military and naval strength against the liberation struggle in southern Africa is another destabilizing factor in the region. These and other problems cannot be ignored. We hope that preparations for the Conference will go forward and that it will be possible for it to be held in 1985.

The relationship between development and disarmament has now been firmly established, and my delegation strongly supports the recommendation of the Disarmament Commission that preparations be made for an international conference on this question. Valuable contributions could be made both to development and to disarmament if effective procedures for the reallocation of resources released through disarmament could be established and if the necessary support could be gained for an international disarmament fund.

As Somalia's Foreign Minister, Abdurahman Jama Barre, aptly commented in the general debate in the plenary meeting:

(Mr. Osman, Somalia)

"If the world survives the nuclear age, future generations ... may well ponder the priorities of an age when unimaginable sums were spent on the production and refinement of weapons capable of global destruction while millions of human beings suffered the indignities and deprivations of abject poverty." (A/39/PV.13, p. 121)

While the question of nuclear disarmament is the most critical one facing the international community, the arms race in sophisticated conventional weapons is also a cause for concern. We need to take note of the several important observations made in the Secretary-General's study on conventional disarmament. It is disturbing to consider that 70 per cent of the astronomical yearly expenditure on armaments is spent on conventional weapons and that the developing world has been the stage of almost all the armed conflicts fought since the Second World War, conflicts in which over 20 million people have died. In our view, the most constructive approach to the question of the arms race in conventional weapons would be the removal of the primary cause of the majority of these armed conflicts, namely, the denial of the right to self-determination and independence to peoples under colonial or foreign domination.

The best efforts of diplomats, experts and world leaders have not brought us very far along the road to general and complete disarmament; so perhaps hope for the future lies with the mobilization of world public opinion in support of the principles and policies outlined in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session. In this regard, we continue to attach great importance to the World Disarmament Campaign and we trust that the influence of people at the grass-roots level can be directed towards the goals of disarmament and peace.

The question remains, however, of whether there is time for such a process. In our unstable world the resurgence of cold-war competition, the increasing use of naked aggression as an instrument of national policy, the persistence of colonial and racist oppression and widespread disregard for the idea of collective security all give rise to suspicion, fear, tension and conflict. The resulting world situation fuels the arms race and is in turn aggravated by the arms race.

We believe that escape from this dangerous dilemma calls not only for specific disarmament measures but also for serious efforts to implement the collective security provisions of the United Nations Charter. In responding to these challenges, world leaders must display the wisdom and foresight which created the

(Mr. Osman, Somalia)

United Nations and the ingenuity which led to the creation of weapons of mass destruction. Statesmanship of the highest order must be exerted now to end the drift towards global catastrophe and to set us on the path to security and peace in the world.

Mr. OULD MOKTAR (Mauritania) (interpretation from French): I wish first of all to congratulate Mr. Souza e Silva on his election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. His outstanding qualities are a guarantee of the success of our work. I also congratulate the other Committee officers.

I should like to take this opportunity to convey to the delegation of India our heartfelt condolences on the passing of its country's Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The tragic death of Mrs. Gandhi has saddened the entire world.

The First Committee's work began this year in an international climate which has had a negative effect on various disarmament negotiations. The evil effects on the world economy of the spiralling arms race is producing growing concern throughout the international community. The atmosphere of détente, which is so vital a prerequisite for any progress towards disarmament, seems to have been disrupted, while movement towards a new climate of tension certainly threatens to lead us to the world-wide danger of nuclear confrontation.

This stark, but accurate, picture of the present situation is a reflection of the ongoing trend towards the development and improvement of weapons, particularly nuclear and chemical weapons; this increases the threat of nuclear war - which would without question be mankind's final war.

The nuclear-arms race, which is the direct source of the omnipresent nuclear threat, is today more than yesterday - but certainly less than tomorrow - the principal concern of the entire international community. It need hardly be recalled that this is a problem which affects the whole of mankind, simply because it is perfectly clear that nuclear war would bring about indiscriminate destruction.

While the efforts to halt the nuclear-arms race and to reduce the risk of war have not lived up to our expectations, we continue to believe in the urgent need for continued bilateral and multilateral negotiations in this field. Success or failure in the sphere of nuclear weapons will depend first and foremost on the nuclear countries, and in particular on the two super-Powers. This is why we hope that the negotiations, which are at present deadlocked, will be resumed immediately. Mauritania hopes that recent statements made by the leaders of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of the United States of America reflect a true political will on the part of those leaders to resume without delay bilateral negotiations, in the interest of the whole of mankind.

(Mr. Ould Moktar, Mauritania)

A particular concern of Mauritania is the establishment of and respect for nuclear-weapon-free zones. The creation of such zones is undoubtedly a very important step towards general and complete disarmament. In addition to its presumed ability to guarantee the total absence of nuclear weapon, the nuclear-weapon-free-zone formula could prevent proliferation, thus contributing to curbing the arms race as a whole.

In our view, those are the considerations which should guide this process, which is gaining increasing acceptance and which appears to be the best available approach to achieving our final objective: general and complete disarmament. For that reason, our country has been and continues to be one of the staunchest advocates of the denuclearization of Africa, and it is in keeping with that position that we have always supported the idea of creating nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions as well. However, we have constantly stated that the concept of denuclearized zones, however attractive it may be, cannot be implemented in a viable or effective way unless due respect is given to the principle of non-proliferation and to the instruments that proclaim that principle. We have thus stressed the need to establish machinery to protect the status of nuclear-weapon-free zones from any possible attack.

The historic Zionist attack against the Iraqi nuclear installations has shown through its clear-cut criminal intent that there are countries which would not hesitate to violate the universal principles of the United Nations; it also bears witness to the limitations of existing instruments. In these circumstances, the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa and in the Middle East requires subjecting the nuclear installations of South Africa and of Israel to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, and respect by all nuclear countries of the status of these zones.

After numerous initiatives and various studies, the relationship between the arms race and economic development has been amply documented and cogently demonstrated. We have thus reached a decisive stage in this process. The most recent evidence in this connection was put forward in the report of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, submitted pursuant to resolution 37/84 of 9 December 1982. That report demonstrates the need for the establishment of an

(Mr. Ould Moktar, Mauritania)

international disarmament fund. As the report indicates, this fund would aim to give concrete form to the relationship between disarmament and development, and thus to begin the process of transferring to development a portion of the immense resources devoted to armament. As we have stated before, our country is convinced that such action, through the establishment of an international disarmament fund, would constitute a positive contribution to creating a climate of international co-operation for disarmament and for the economic and social development of all countries.

One of the merits of such a fund is that it would help improve the economic situation in the developed countries as well as in the developing countries, at a time when the world economy is in crisis as a result of the scarcity of resources and of their being squandered on the arms race. My country wishes particularly to stress the magnitude of this absurd situation, which may be illustrated by the fact that every minute 30 children die of hunger or malnutrition while, in the same period of time, \$1.3 million is spent on the arms race.

In these circumstances, the establishment of an international disarmament fund is clearly desirable, since its purpose - apart from giving concrete form to the relationship between disarmament and development - would be to limit efforts expended on the arms race while increasing United Nations efforts in the most urgent humanitarian area of economic and social inequalities.

The international community is already greatly concerned by the presence on earth of an immense destructive capacity, in nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons alike. The idea of extending the nuclear arms race to other environments, such as outer space, is quite simply incomprehensible.

(Mr. Ould Moktar, Mauritania)

My country has always upheld the concept of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. Like the sea-bed and the ocean floor, outer space is the common heritage of mankind, which should be preserved for peaceful development as part of a space co-operation programme that would enhance global economic and social development.

I began by dwelling on the gloomy side of disarmament efforts. Serious disagreements still exist with regard to issues that are basic to any progress, and many of our hopes have been dashed. In spite of controversies, however, there are still possibilities for further progress. Since peace is essential to us all, our only choice is to weather the storm until it is achieved. For its part, Mauritania will spare no effort to ensure that this session represents a positive step towards general and complete disarmament.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.