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Chairman: Mr. FAHMY (Egypt) (Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 to 69 and 151 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. BRAUTIGAM (Federal Republic of Germany): I wish first to offer the Chairman my congratulations on his election to his responsible office. His considerable experience in the field of disarmament and arms control in Geneva is a reassurance to us that our work in the coming weeks will be skilfully and competently guided. May he, the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur enjoy a successful tenure of office.

The representative of France has already made a statement on behalf of the Twelve and thus also on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany. I am adding the following remarks on behalf of my Government.

The object of our efforts in the field of disarmament and arms control is to create a more peaceful world with fewer weapons and less tension and with greater security and stability. We are primarily, of course, concerned with our own continent - Europe - but we are aware that we face a common global task.

Our efforts have obviously produced considerable progress since last year's session of the General Assembly. We note with satisfaction that the climate of East-West relations is better now than at any time in the past. As a result, the general conditions for arms control and disarmament have remained favourable. The era of abortive negotiations, of appeals that went unheard and of mutual demands belongs to the past. Now agreements are being signed and implemented.

The reduction of land-based intermediate-range nuclear-weapon systems of the United States and the Soviet Union - including those on German territory - continues on schedule and will lead to the elimination of a whole class of weapons. The Stockholm agreements of 1986 on confidence-building in the

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Republic of Germany)

conventional sphere are also being put into practice. And there is reason to believe that the current negotiations in Vienna and Geneva will prove successful. We must maintain this momentum of disarmament and extend it to all areas of arms control. None must be left out.

(Mr. Bräutigam, Federal
Republic of Germany)

What are the specific implications for each area? We consider conventional stability in Europe to be the most urgent priority in the field of arms control. The prospects of achieving greater stability and security for our continent are good. In the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe the States members of the two alliances have been conducting in Vienna since the beginning of March, the two sides see eye to eye on the aim of a first agreement, which is to eliminate disparities in those weapon systems that are decisive for either side's capability for surprise attack and large-scale offensive action. We want to achieve this aim primarily by establishing parity below the level of the weaker side in each of the main weapon categories. Specifically, this means that, from the Western point of view, neither side should be allowed to possess more than 20,000 main battle tanks, 16,500 artillery pieces, 28,000 armoured troop carriers, 5,700 combat aircraft and 1,900 combat helicopters.

Parity alone is not stability. We know from past experience that a conventional balance - that is to say, with the two sides having equal military capabilities - is in itself not sufficient to prevent war. Hence our objective in an initial agreement is not only to reduce and limit force holdings but also to establish measures which will curb the use of military power - the so-called stabilizing measures. In a later phase, we want to achieve further reductions and limitations of arms, as well as a restructuring of forces, with the aim of making them more defence-oriented.

In pursuance of the expanded Western proposal of 13 July 1989, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries put forward proposals in Vienna on 21 September concerning stabilizing measures, information exchange, verification and non-circumvention. The West has thus completely filled in the framework for a first agreement on conventional forces in Europe and once again shown itself to be

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the forerunner in developing the conceptual foundations of conventional arms control. It has at the same time underscored the seriousness of its intention to bring about a first substantive agreement within a year.

Our Eastern negotiating partners have adopted a constructive attitude. This is borne out by their response yesterday to the Western negotiating package on exchange of information, verification and stabilizing measures. We note with satisfaction that in these areas too, despite some considerable differences of opinion on detail, the East accepts the essence of the Western concept.

The negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures likewise afford an opportunity to create co-operative security structures. In this context, we aim to make up for the lack of transparency, to extend the range of predictability in the military sphere, to promote military contacts and thus create mutual confidence. Our aim is to introduce specific measures to minimize the possibility of miscalculating military activities and the danger of misunderstandings, and in this way enhance the ability to avoid and manage crises.

Another important aspect of these negotiations focuses on the discussion of security concepts and military doctrines. One major objective in this context is to reconcile the actual size, deployment and structure of forces with declared defensive security concepts. The objectives pursued in both sets of negotiations are bold and unprecedented, but the speed at which they are progressing shows that the road taken is the right one and promises results. The new architecture of co-operative security we are dealing with in Vienna is of fundamental and, ultimately, global significance. There is no European copyright for it. We therefore consider it necessary that this session of the General Assembly debate the ways and means of reducing the capability of armed forces for offensive action.

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Republic of Germany)

In recent years we have time and again witnessed the terrible effects of chemical weapons. The danger of further proliferation of these treacherous weapons is growing. Only a global and comprehensive ban can remove that danger. Time is not working for us; hence every effort must be made at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament to bring about the speedy conclusion of a comprehensive, global and verifiable convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

In the course of this year, following the impressive consensus among the 149 participating States at the Paris Conference in January, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has been considerably intensified. Progress has on the whole been less than we expected because the crucial breakthrough has not been achieved, but it has been possible to carry the draft convention further along in important areas. Together with numerous contributions from the participants in the negotiations, it offers a good basis for speedy and practical solutions to the remaining problems.

The successful Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, held at Canberra, has produced a new dimension of support from the chemical industry for the Geneva negotiations on chemical weapons, which will have a favourable impact on the progress of work there and on preparations for the implementation of the convention banning chemical weapons. That Conference also revealed that all countries have a responsibility to exercise restraint and to take immediately the necessary steps to prevent the spread of chemical weapons.

In his address to the General Assembly a few weeks ago, the President of the United States of America presented extensive proposals for expediting the destruction of chemical weapons. We welcomed that initiative, just as we welcomed the comprehensive bilateral agreements between the United States Secretary of State

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and the Soviet Union Foreign Minister on an early exchange of data, questions of verification and the modalities of the chemical weapons destruction phase. In our view, these proposals and agreements are highly conducive to transparency and confidence building, and we are convinced that they will accelerate the solution of the problems still on the agenda in Geneva.

I wish to repeat that my Government will do everything possible to achieve a global and verifiable prohibition of chemical weapons at the earliest possible date.

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Republic of Germany)

As to the prohibition of biological weapons, the exchange of relevant data provided for in the Final Declaration of the September 1986 Conference, the second to review the biological weapons Convention, is crucial for securing greater transparency as regards compliance with the Convention. At the third review conference, scheduled for 1991, States parties will have to show whether they have fulfilled their obligation to exchange data. This will also test the credibility of their commitment to global arms control.

We therefore appeal to those contracting States that have not yet done so to communicate the necessary information to the United Nations Secretariat, as agreed. At the third review conference, as Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher announced in his address to the Geneva Conference on Disarmament on 2 March, the Federal Republic of Germany intends to seek the adoption of verification measures supplementary to the Convention.

Owing to the destructive power of nuclear weapons, which is beyond human imagination, nuclear-arms control is of special importance in the United Nations debate on disarmament.

The Federal Republic of Germany renounced the possession of nuclear weapons many years ago. That is why it is not party to the negotiations on nuclear-weapon reductions. But as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and a country in which nuclear weapons are based, it has a direct interest in those negotiations. Given the present situation in Europe, our aim cannot be to seek the complete removal of nuclear weapons. After all, it is partly due to the existence of nuclear weapons that Europe has been spared war for over 40 years. For the foreseeable future, and provided they are kept at the lowest possible level, nuclear weapons will remain a stabilizing factor in East-West relations in Europe.

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Good progress is being made towards reducing nuclear weapons to the lowest level necessary for safeguarding peace. The ongoing negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union in Geneva on deep cuts in their offensive-weapon arsenals have received a fresh stimulus as a result of the meeting of their Foreign Ministers in Wyoming. The changed political climate between East and West and, specifically, the readiness to seek compromise solutions demonstrated at that meeting, boost our hopes that the progress achieved can quickly be translated into tangible results at the conference table.

The comprehensive concept of arms control and disarmament adopted at the last NATO summit opens up a specific arms-control perspective with regard to short-range nuclear weapons. The United States is willing to negotiate on the partial reduction of United States and Soviet land-based nuclear missile systems of shorter range to an equal and verifiable level as soon as the implementation of an agreement on conventional forces in Europe has been reached. This will close a major gap in the field of nuclear-arms control.

The implementation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - in which the Federal Republic of Germany is involved as a basing country - is proceeding smoothly, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty. This is a good omen for future negotiations and agreements. That Treaty is also a good example of how arms control agreements can do more than lead to the removal of a whole class of weapons. They can also enhance confidence building and help nations accustom themselves to arms control as part of the normal way of life. It is my country's hope that in future decades disarmament and arms control will be an unspectacular routine affair, not only in Europe and North America but all over the globe.

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Republic of Germany)

My Government advocates a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, to be put into effect as soon as possible. This presupposes a tried and effective global verification régime. As a non-nuclear-weapon State, the Federal Republic of Germany is making practical contributions to this end. My Government will be participating in the experimental global exchange of seismic data beginning in January 1990. We appeal to all countries with the technical potential to do the same.

My Government welcomes the progress achieved by the United States and the Soviet Union towards giving effect to the two so-called threshold agreements and hopes they will soon be ratified so that talks can begin on further restrictions on nuclear tests. Such step-by-step restrictions on the way to a comprehensive nuclear-test ban are, in our view, the only real option. The appropriate forum for multilateral debate on all matters relating to a test ban is the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

The non-proliferation Treaty has proved itself to be the corner-stone of international stability and a basis for efforts to safeguard peace. My Government welcomes the fact that another 15 non-nuclear-weapon States have signed the Treaty since 1985. We appeal to all countries which have not yet done so - nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States alike - to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty.

Recent developments in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union on matters of arms control clearly indicate that both are increasingly aware of their responsibility deriving from article VI of the Treaty to negotiate on nuclear disarmament in good faith. The Federal Republic of Germany is strongly committed to ensuring that the Treaty remains an effective instrument for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the basis for international co-operation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy beyond the year 1995.

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Republic of Germany)

The General Assembly and this Committee are the only forums in which all nations can intensively discuss the current situation and the tasks that lie ahead in the field of disarmament and arms control. Let us, therefore, make use of them.

It will be helpful if we bear in mind both the possibilities and the limitations of debates on disarmament within the ambit of the United Nations. We can, and indeed we should, closely follow and comment upon the ongoing arms-control negotiations, but we should not try to duplicate them. We can, and we should, discuss the priorities of the arms-control agenda, but we must keep realities in mind as we do so.

In the past the Committee has debated and developed important principles of arms control and disarmament. There is, for example, the requirement for transparency of military budgets. Other examples are the call for objective information on military matters and the long-standing efforts of my Government to highlight the need for confidence building, which were confirmed by means of a consensus resolution last year.

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Republic of Germany)

This year my delegation will introduce a new topic in this debate on principles: the defensive orientation of armed forces. It is time to realize that no country can be allowed to retain the capability to launch a surprise attack or initiate large-scale offensive action.

The important debate we are about to have in this Committee on the principles, state and tasks of disarmament and arms control must not be impaired by the rituals of repetition, by a propensity for mutual recrimination, and by a lack of willingness to reach a consensus. This year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission is a warning to us all not to allow our debate on disarmament to lapse into sterility. This, too, we shall have to discuss in the weeks ahead.

We want our debate to be lively and topical. There will be no need to avoid controversy provided that we stick to the issues. We hope to conclude our debate by articulating the will of the community of nations, which would then translate into an appeal to the negotiators.

My delegation will play an active and constructive part in the work of this Committee. It will introduce and explain the motives for its own initiatives, and it will set out my Government's position on the various items on the agenda. The Chairman can be assured of our support in the work.

Mr. IBÁÑEZ (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like first of all to congratulate Ambassador Taylhardat on his election as Chairman of this important Committee and to say how delighted I am to see him in charge of our work. I am convinced that under his expert and able leadership we shall achieve progress on the tortuous and always difficult path towards disarmament. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election. I also

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express my sincere appreciation for the outstanding work accomplished by last year's Chairman, Ambassador Roche of Canada.

Last Monday, Ambassador Morel of France made a statement on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community to which, of course, my delegation fully subscribes. However, I should like to explain in further detail the position of my Government on some of the subjects on our agenda to which we attach special importance.

The overall international climate affects the work of the General Assembly every year. Since we met in this forum last year, the international situation has steadily improved as a result, among other things, of the growing ease of bilateral relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as of the progress achieved in the process of democratization and of respect for human rights in certain countries. All this allows us to have an increasingly hopeful view of the future. In this framework of international security and disarmament, the United Nations has played, and must continue to play, an essential role. Towards that end, we must seek ways to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations by rationalizing our work and by seeking consensus on those subjects which provide a solid basis for concentrated efforts. In this respect, we are convinced that the time has come to approach in a pragmatic way the rationalization and reorganization of our work in the First Committee.

For instance, what sense is there in continuing to present year after year identical draft resolutions which have been adopted without a vote? Once this organ has reached consensus on a given draft, that text and that specific subject ought to disappear from our agenda. On the other hand, the example of the results obtained in the last two years in the field of chemical weapons should be followed in other areas of our agenda, grouping or merging in a single draft resolution all the texts which are presented on the same subject. Thus, the number of drafts

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submitted to the Committee would be considerably reduced and the Committee would only have to study and take action on an expanded text for every cluster of items.

We are also concerned about the situation in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, particularly in view of the lack of results of its substantive session this year. We therefore consider it imperative to review its working methods as well as its agenda, in order to focus the efforts of delegations on a smaller number of subjects which are more likely to secure the desired consensus. We are convinced that this is the only way to preserve the role which we believe to be essential, that is, that the Disarmament Commission must continue to play its role as a universal forum for debate and in-depth study of specific subjects on the disarmament agenda.

Likewise, we shall continue to support fully the irreplaceable role of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. For that reason and because of the fact that for some years we have been participating actively as invited observers, we still hope to become full-fledged members in order to contribute more effectively to its work.

The creation of a climate of confidence and transparency among States, which is intrinsically related to national perceptions of security, is a corner-stone for the building of détente. Therefore, as the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fernandez Ordoñez, indicated in his statement before the General Assembly, we must continue to seek the reduction of the existing imbalances in the various categories of weapons, to increase this confidence and to achieve a greater military stability at significantly lower levels of forces than those of today. We are convinced that it is possible to maintain the security of all States by agreeing to and implementing in a parallel way measures of arms control and disarmament. In this process an essential role should be played by the

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verification systems in order to ensure compliance with what has been agreed and to prevent the appearance of distrust, which can limit our possibilities of success.

Spain attaches special importance to the events which are occurring in Europe, and specifically to the initiation in Vienna on 6 March 1989 of the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe and on confidence- and security-building measures, both in the framework of the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). We believe conventional disarmament to be an essential and inseparable part of disarmament seen as a whole. We have stated on several occasions that the adoption in this field of regional measures which take into account the specific characteristics of the region is one of the most important and effective ways of contributing to the process of arms control and disarmament.

(Mr. Ibañez, Spain)

For years now we have been witnessing with deep concern the accumulation of armaments of this type in many parts of the world, but especially in Europe, where imbalances and asymmetries jeopardize the stability of the old continent and, consequently, world peace itself.

Therefore, Spain, together with the other countries of the Atlantic Alliance, is sparing no effort to achieve substantial progress in the negotiations taking place in Vienna. In the Final Communiqué of the last summit, the States members of the Alliance expressed their intention that the said negotiations would be completed in the middle of next year. We believe that the achievement of a stable and secure balance of conventional forces at a lower level, as well as the implementation of a new set of confidence- and security-building measures, will reinforce all that has been achieved in the Stockholm Document, thus increasing the security not only of the European continent but also of the international community as a whole.

In this connection, my Government wishes to express its deep concern at the proliferation of ballistic missiles in countries that, traditionally, did not have them. Currently these rockets are equipped with conventional charges, but they could carry nuclear or chemical warheads in the future. These missiles have recently been used in different conflicts. It is for this reason that on 10 March last the Spanish Government, as further evidence of its interest in promoting international peace and security through arms control, adopted a set of guidelines on transfers of elements capable of being used for the production of missiles of this type - turning the so-called régime of the Seven into the régime of the Eight.

The adoption of this régime, which is a positive contribution to the disarmament process, is a consequence of my Government's deep concern about the conventional-arms race, as well as about possible nuclear proliferation. These guidelines are not intended to hinder either national space programmes or related

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international co-operation, provided that such programmes do not contribute to the deployment of systems that can carry nuclear or chemical warheads or weapons capable of causing massive and indiscriminate destruction. We are pleased that this subject was addressed by the United States Secretary of State and the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs at their meeting in Wyoming.

In the field of nuclear weapons, we welcome the progress achieved by the United States Secretary of State and the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs in their Wyoming meeting towards a reduction of 50 per cent in the nuclear arsenals of both countries. The formal breaking of the link between an agreement on Strategic Arms Reduction Talks with the anti-ballistic-missile Treaty; the announcement of the dismantling of the Krasnoyarsk radar; a new Soviet approach to the problem of the sea-based Cruise missiles; a constructive approach to the subject of inter-continental ballistic missiles; and an agreement on the principles that should govern verification measures, as well as stabilization measures, including prior notification of strategic exercises - these things lead us to believe that a treaty to reduce by half the strategic nuclear arsenals of both countries will be signed soon.

Disarmament and arms control must not be confined to the East-West dimension. The recent Paris Conference stressed the urgent need to conclude swiftly a treaty for the complete elimination of chemical weapons - a treaty placing a global ban on the production, stockpiling or use of these weapons, and containing binding provisions for the destruction of stocks. I must mention the Canberra Conference, involving the chemical industries of a large number of countries, which concluded successfully just a few weeks ago.

Chemical weapons, because of their special characteristics and their indiscriminate nature, as well as the danger of their proliferation, are a threat

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to the entire international community. Consequently, one of my country's main priorities in the field of disarmament is to seek their eradication. Therefore, we welcome the rapid progress that has been achieved in the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union for the banning and elimination of these weapons. This progress was confirmed at the recent meeting between Mr. Baker and Mr. Shevardnadze - I refer to the agreement on the destruction of stocks of chemical weapons and of the establishments involved specifically in their production, and to the fact that an exchange of verifiable data between the two countries regarding their stockpiles of chemical weapons is contemplated.

We hope that this progress will have a decisive and vital impact on the negotiations within the Geneva Conference on Disarmament with a view to the conclusion of a total and comprehensive agreement eradicating these weapons and banning their production, stockpiling and use. Regional approaches, or approaches that would have similar effects, would hardly provide a sufficient or satisfactory solution.

One subject to which my Government attaches importance is that of a global ban on nuclear tests. We welcome the progress that has been achieved in this field, and we hope that it will allow the ratification, in 1990, of the verification protocols to the Treaty on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and the threshold test-ban Treaty.

Spain considers that a gradual, step-by-step approach, with the final goal of a total test ban, is the most appropriate way to achieve our objective. We are also convinced that the Geneva Conference on Disarmament must play an essential role, in tandem with the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the USSR.

(Mr. Ibañez, Spain)

Finally, during the past year we have witnessed the holding of two meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the forthcoming Review Conference of the non-proliferation Treaty. My country, which recently acceded to the Treaty, and which attaches great importance to non-proliferation, has announced its candidature for one of the vice-chairmanships at the conference. We hope that the Conference will enjoy the fullest co-operation of all the Parties, so that the validity of the Treaty may be enhanced.

At the beginning of my statement I stressed the importance that my country attaches to the work done by the United Nations in the field of international security and disarmament. Because of the role played by both the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission as universal forums for the consideration of these subjects, I can assure this Committee that my delegation will spare no effort to contribute constructively to the success of its work.

Mr. AKSIN (Turkey): I wish to express the great satisfaction of my delegation at the fact that Mr. Taylhardat is guiding the work of this important Committee. I wish also to congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election.

In addition, I want to extend my delegation's heartfelt sympathy to the delegation of the United States following the tragic earthquake that has struck California. Likewise, our deep sympathy goes to the Chinese delegation following the tragic losses caused by the earthquake in China.

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

Over the past 12 months positive developments have taken place in the field of East-West relations, arms control and disarmament, thus confirming the climate of optimism and expectation we identified in our debate last year.

The successful conclusion of the Vienna follow-up meeting to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) opened the way for the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe that are currently in their third round at Vienna. Turkey takes an active part in this new process of negotiations between the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, where new and promising proposals have been put forward and progress has been made towards establishing a secure and stable balance of conventional forces at lower levels. There is already a convergence of views on the principle of equal collective ceilings and a new willingness to correct imbalances between the two sides through asymmetrical reductions. We hope that that constructive spirit will continue to prevail and contribute to further progress in the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe.

Turkey also attaches importance to the second set of negotiations in Vienna between the 35 States participants in the CSCE on confidence- and security-building measures, which it views as an indispensable corollary to disarmament efforts. Indeed, any progress in the field of arms limitation is directly linked with the security concerns and perceptions of the countries involved. Hence, confidence- and security-building measures have a primary role to play in securing more openness, transparency and comparability in military matters in order to reduce uncertainty and insecurity.

The implementation in good faith of the Helsinki Final Act and its concluding documents in all their aspects will decisively contribute to the promotion of an atmosphere of confidence and goodwill in Europe and thus to the smooth progress of the negotiations under way in Vienna.

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

The Preparatory Committee for the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, scheduled to take place in Geneva in August-September 1990, has already held its first and second sessions and has completed an important part of its work under its mandate.

As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Turkey holds the view that strict adherence to the Treaty is of vital significance. While the Treaty has so far performed its essential function, the need to strengthen further the non-proliferation régime remains. We are for universal adherence to the Treaty and hope that the forthcoming Review Conference will encourage greater international co-operation in the field of non-proliferation as a means of contributing to international security. Similarly, increasing international co-operation in nuclear safety and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be given firm and universal support.

The convening of the Conference on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at Paris in January 1989 and the unanimous adoption of a final declaration encompassing various aspects of that important problem have constituted a major development in the disarmament area. The timing of the Conference was right, coming at a time of accelerating proliferation and use of chemical weapons and when the rapid increase in the toxicity and effectiveness of chemical-warfare agents has added to their destructive capability.

The appeal in the final declaration addressed by the participating States to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to redouble its efforts to conclude a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction appears to be having an impact. Further progress has been achieved this year by the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, and the draft convention has now reached an advanced stage of

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

preparation. Turkey hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will move ahead to the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention that would globally ban the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons, under effective verification.

In this connection we think that the highly mobile character of chemical weapons would render any chemical-weapon-free zones or any other regional or partial special-status arrangements unrealistic. My country does not have chemical weapons in stock, nor does it aspire to possess any in the future.

We are pleased that the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons hosted by the Australian Government in September has been another step towards the elimination of chemical weapons. The world's chemical industry has declared its support for a global convention banning chemical weapons and has stated its willingness to participate with Governments in the necessary national measures to prepare for the effective entry into force of the convention. Turkey recognizes the importance of such co-operation between Governments and industry and the necessity - as expressed by the representative of Australia in the Committee - of a correct balance between the security concerns of Governments and the commercial concerns of industry.

The memorandum of understanding agreed in Wyoming on a bilateral verification experiment, including the exchange of data on United States and Soviet chemical-weapon stockpiles and visits and inspections of chemical-weapon sites to verify that data, should contribute to fostering confidence in a future convention.

We welcome the proposals made by President Bush in his address to the General Assembly for a radical reduction in chemical weapons even before the entry into force of the convention on a global ban and the positive Soviet response contained in the statement by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. Such bilateral steps constitute an encouragement for the multilateral negotiations on the convention at Geneva.

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

After the entry into force of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - and its ongoing implementation, the hopes of the international community are focused on the successful conclusion of an agreement on the substantial reduction and limitation of strategic arms between the United States and the Soviet Union. A satisfactory strategic-arms-reduction treaty would contribute significantly to the maintenance of the momentum in the arms-control process and enhance overall strategic stability. We are glad that at the recent meeting in Wyoming between the United States Secretary of State and Soviet Foreign Minister progress was registered towards that goal as well as on a range of related issues.

The question of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban remains one of the important issues on the disarmament agenda. We note with satisfaction that some progress has been achieved between the two major nuclear-weapon States in the framework of their negotiations on limiting and eventually banning nuclear testing through a stage-by-stage process. We note that the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to arrive at an agreed mandate for an ad hoc committee in this field, but that some consultations have been conducted.

We continue to support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, with the agreement of all concerned States, in those regions where nuclear weapons do not exist. That should make a contribution to the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons. Where nuclear weapons already exist, the attempt to create nuclear-weapon-free zones can bring about security gaps and cannot be implemented without other complementary disarmament measures.

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

Turkey attaches importance to the continuation and success of the arms-control and disarmament process as a whole, which it views as a comprehensive, integrated endeavour encompassing nuclear as well as conventional and chemical weapons and confidence- and security-building measures.

We also value highly the role played by the United Nations and its organs within its process and stand ready to contribute to the enhancement of that role. We hope that the pragmatic and realistic approach that has led to the successes registered in recent years in various arms-reduction endeavours elsewhere will also prevail in the work carried out here in the First Committee and that the United Nations will thus be able to exert greater influence on global disarmament efforts.

Mr. AL-ZADGALY (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation would like first to express its condolences to the delegations of the United States and China on the great loss suffered by those two countries as a result of earthquakes. We ask the two delegations to convey our condolences to their Governments and to the bereaved families.

Pursuant to rule 110 of the rules of procedure - a rule you have urged us to observe in the First Committee Mr. Chairman - I shall deal directly with substantive matters. At the outset, I assure you that our delegation will co-operate with you and will wholeheartedly participate in the Committee's work and deliberations, so that recommendations and resolutions can be put forward that will express the sincere desire of all delegations to achieve greater success and unanimity on the many issues relating to international peace and security that are of concern to us here as one international community.

My delegation agrees with you, Mr. Chairman, and with most of the delegations that have already spoken, that the meetings of the First Committee are taking place this year at a very important juncture, when there are many factors that give us reason to feel reassured and hopeful in the present climate of détente. The ratification by the United States and the Soviet Union of the agreement they reached to remove short-range and medium-range nuclear weapons from Europe has deep political significance. It proves that the two countries are convinced of the futility of the theory of nuclear deterrence in the establishment of peace and tranquillity, and that they believe that dialogue, negotiation and respect for mutual interests can form the basis for the building of common international security.

Therefore my delegation welcomes and supports the agreement reached last month between the leaders of the two countries to work for the achievement of the second objective - that is, to reduce their arsenals of offensive strategic weapons by

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50 per cent and to make a start on a genuine limitation of the arms race and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, we are of the view that there cannot be a full discussion of the non-proliferation of those weapons if it does not take place in the framework of the intention to remove them completely. The international community's desire to achieve that objective has prompted it to welcome the foregoing initiative as the first step on the road to complete nuclear disarmament.

This climate of détente and the dialogue between the two countries have begun to have positive and tangible results, as evidenced by the easing of international tension. They constitute a sound basis for the creation of a safer world and augur well for an expanded dialogue that could lead to the solution of a greater number of international problems.

On this occasion I should like to make some observations on those issues which Oman regards as important and which should be dealt with here. I recall the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That Document painted a bleak picture, but it was realistic at that time. It expressed a feeling that is still prevalent among the countries of the world today - that we must either stop the arms race or face annihilation - and it placed the issue of nuclear weapons on the list of items to be dealt with as matters of priority.

It is important that we should not allow the recently created positive international climate to be dissipated; on the contrary, we must try to build on this climate because of our belief in the triumph of peace based on justice and love between peoples.

The importance of bilateral disarmament negotiations cannot be denied, but they should not detract from the importance of multilateral negotiations, nor should they be regarded as an alternative to them. Bilateral and multilateral

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negotiations should complement and strengthen each other in order to reverse and halt the arms race. The issue of disarmament is of importance and interest not only to certain States but to mankind in general. Thus it is incumbent upon us to support and supplement the efforts of the United Nations concerning issues of importance to mankind, such as the prevention of the outbreak of nuclear war and the achievement of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. If the efforts of the United Nations in the field of disarmament have not met the expectations, it is because of the lack of the political will to implement the resolutions and programmes worked out in that respect. Furthermore, national interests have taken precedence over the common international weal. We must make collective, concerted efforts to work out a comprehensive and complete programme of disarmament.

The report submitted last year by the Secretary-General on a study - carried out with the help of a group of experts - on the climatic effects of nuclear war calls for serious consideration of the effects of certain conflicts on the rest of the world and for the conclusion of a treaty banning nuclear-weapon tests under water, underground and in outer space. We urge delegations to facilitate the work of the ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament on the multilateral negotiations on a treaty banning all nuclear tests and explosions.

The Sultanate welcomes and supports all international efforts called for by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva in recent years, aimed at halting the production, stockpiling, proliferation and use of chemical, toxin and bacteriological weapons. These efforts should lead to the strengthening of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, a truly multilateral instrument, in order that agreements on limiting the use of chemical weapons could be reached. We therefore welcome the results of the Paris and Canberra Conferences and emphasize the need to establish a link between the banning of nuclear weapons and the banning of chemical weapons, in

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accordance with the priorities mentioned in paragraph 45 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In this connection, the right of all States to peace and security must be ensured.

The beginning of preparations for the Fourth Review Conference of the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty constitutes a true challenge for the international community. The fact that the Sultanate is not a party to that Treaty does not prevent us from speaking out against the proliferation of the futile and dangerous nuclear-weapons race. We call for concrete measures to stop the vertical and horizontal spread of nuclear weapons. We hope that the results of the Review Conference will eliminate the doubts that have been held that the Treaty will impose a fait accompli and merely perpetuate the status of the nuclear-weapon States and of those which have renounced those weapons or do not possess them. We in the Sultanate reject the idea of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We call attention to the risk of such weapons falling into the hands of certain countries which have aggressive intentions and which might use those weapons as a means to threaten a non-nuclear-weapon State. That could lead to suspicion, destabilization, an increase in regional and international tensions, and the legitimization of the arms race. It would also waste natural and other economic resources because of the need for the means of legitimate military defence.

The Sultanate of Oman, like other peace-loving countries members of the Organization, feels that it is becoming increasingly important to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. While supporting the creation of such a nuclear-weapon-free zone and a zone of peace, we draw the international community's attention to Israel's increased nuclear capability and its refusal to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty or to place its nuclear facilities under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency. That is a true threat to the security of the Middle East region and impedes the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone there.

(Mr. Al-Zadgaly, Oman)

Thus there is a real risk of destruction and instability.

The Sultanate of Oman supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to prepare a study for presentation next year. We believe that it is the duty of the international community today to consider seriously the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, taking into account the circumstances and nature of the region. This could greatly strengthen international peace and security.

Oman, since it became a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean has made every effort to push forward the preparatory process for the Conference on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, in accordance with the Declaration. We hoped that the new trend of optimism in international relations will make a significant and decisive contribution to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean so that the Conference may be held in Colombo in 1990 as a first step towards the implementation of the Declaration of the General Assembly. However, the difficulties created by certain countries may prove an obstacle to this. We call upon these countries to follow a policy of détente and intensify efforts to ensure that the Conference is held at the scheduled time.

In this respect we welcome the declaration of the countries of South Asia, which demonstrates their desire not to acquire or possess nuclear weapons, and we hope that this will lead to a binding legal agreement and to the crystallization of the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia.

The Sultanate of Oman supports all proposals calling for restriction of the practice by certain transnational corporations of disposing of nuclear, chemical, toxic and radioactive wastes in the territories of developing countries, particularly in Africa, the Middle East and the South Pacific and especially since the countries concerned are not responsible for those wastes. This is a serious

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question that deserves attention because it involves immoral practices which threaten mankind and the environment in which we live. We consider it urgently necessary in all environments to limit the dumping of such wastes and to conclude comprehensive legally binding agreements in this respect.

The concept of common international security makes it incumbent upon us to consider outer space as the common heritage of mankind, which should be used solely for peaceful purposes. We call upon the countries that are technologically, scientifically and economically capable of so doing to make sure that outer space is not used in any way illegally or unreasonably but is used only for purposes that serve peace and humanity.

We are seriously concerned by the release of the news last year that Israel had launched a rocket carrying a satellite to spy on the defensive military capabilities of Arab and African countries and by the landing of an intermediate-range Israeli rocket on the coast of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in recent weeks. We regard these as aggressive acts which could lead to insecurity and instability in the Middle East region and the Mediterranean, and thus involve the countries of the region in an arms race in outer space.

The question of naval armament is a thorny issue which merits attention. In this connection, the Sultanate of Oman considers it necessary to take measures to build confidence and security by decreasing the risks of incidents and confrontations on the seas, in particular by ships carrying nuclear weapons. It is important that international measures complement those adopted at the bilateral level and are negotiated within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. They should include guarantees of the security of non-military activities on the seas and the security of coastal States and the safety of ships belonging to countries not parties to a conflict.

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Any discussion of disarmament would be incomplete if it did not include conventional disarmament. Since the Second World War there have been armed conflicts in which conventional weapons have been used. These have led to the death of millions of people and the wastage of vast sums of money on the purchase of such weapons. It is important that this aspect of the arms race be given due attention, and that all countries abide by the Charter of the United Nations by refraining from the threat or use of force and from interference in the internal affairs of any State. This would give countries the sense of security that must be ensured before any disarmament efforts are made. In this connection we welcome the efforts made within the framework of the Stockholm Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to reduce the numbers of conventional weapons.

The Secretary-General, in his report last year on the economic and social consequences of the armaments race, stated that there were two options before the international community, either to pursue armament or to turn with urgency and determination to a sound and balanced process of economic and social development within the framework of a more stable international economic and political order. The international community supported the validity of this argument when it adopted by consensus the Final Document of the Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which declared that disarmament and development are among the most urgent challenges of our time. More than \$35 billion is being spent annually on military research and development at a time when many countries are suffering from famine, drought and desertification.

In spite of progress in the field of development, scientific achievements are devoted to the arms race and the production of instruments that threaten the very existence of mankind, such as nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

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There is an urgent need to encourage the reduction of military budgets. International peace and security would be promoted if all countries in all regions took practical steps to reduce military arsenals to the minimum necessary to meet their legitimate security concerns. An agreement on these issues would release huge resources which could be used for development and to make the world more stable, prosperous and peaceful.

As we approach the 1990s, developments in the countries and regions of the world make it clear that peace could be established through diplomacy and negotiations - two important means which are especially significant in the field of diplomatic relations.

Because we believe in the need to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, we consider it to be high time to re-evaluate the work in this field of the competent organs of the United Nations, foremost among which is the Conference on Disarmament. It has made great efforts to achieve progress in the field of disarmament and the time is opportune to support its work so that better results may be achieved. A start on giving full effect to the 1983 resolution calling for expansion of the membership of the Committee - now the Conference - on Disarmament would be a good first step. There is an urgent need, also, to evaluate and rationalize the work of the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee so that through their efforts they may strengthen international peace and security.

Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to extend greetings and a promise of co-operation to the Chairman of the Committee and the members of the Bureau.

Listening to the statements in the last few days, it is clear that the positive atmosphere that permeated our deliberations last year continues to prevail

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during our current deliberations. It is our hope that the continuing favourable developments in East-West relations and the trends towards openness and interaction between the two super-Powers will leave a similar mark on our work this time. It is also our hope that efforts at streamlining the work of this Committee, undertaken in the last few years will be further consolidated under the chairmanship of the representative of Venezuela.

What is clearly discernible from the statements made thus far is the mood of optimism concerning serious and sustained dialogue on the disarmament question. To a large extent this sense of optimism derives from the achievements thus far, particularly in the bilateral negotiations between the USSR and the United States. We welcome the announcement that the verification protocols in respect of the Treaty on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and the threshold test-ban Treaty are being prepared for signature at the projected summit meeting between the United States and the USSR early next year. We hope that the agreements signed and the understanding reached in Wyoming and the projected summit between the two super-Powers will strengthen and consolidate the disarmament process.

In welcoming these positive developments in the bilateral disarmament negotiations my delegation cannot but express its disappointment that the substantial improvement in the relationship between the two major Powers has had little impact on the multilateral disarmament process.

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We are disappointed to see that in the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral negotiating forum in Geneva, there was very little tangible progress made, except in the area of chemical weapons. It is sad to say that movement in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament has been so insignificant over the years that for the most part the issues before the Conference have remained very much frozen in time, languishing in inertia. In the meantime, the international community remains, as ever before, in pious hope of some dramatic breakthrough that will breathe new vigour into these negotiations of vital importance.

Malaysia would urge serious and expeditious treatment of the issues on the multilateral disarmament agenda, for the fate of humanity may well depend on the eventual success of these negotiations. The issues of priority in the disarmament process have been well identified. Clearly, high on the multilateral agenda, as has been established in the Conference on Disarmament for over a decade, are the negotiations on nuclear weapons in all their aspects. The horrendous destructive power of these weapons of mass destruction has been tragically demonstrated and remains a lasting reminder of the insanity of nuclear war. Studies on the effects of nuclear war on the life of the planet, as catalogued in the Secretary-General's report, have graphically portrayed the grim dénouement of such insanity. Indeed, even a nuclear war fought on a limited scale would unleash death and destruction on a planetary scale, triggering the Arctic nuclear winter, reducing Earth to a darkened, frozen planet. A nuclear war, however limited, should therefore never be contemplated. We are gratified to note that this was recognized by the leaders of the two super-Powers when they declared that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought". Humanity awaits in hope of the solemnization of this pledge in a binding treaty for ever banning the use of nuclear weapons. In the meantime, we would urge the nuclear Powers to seriously engage in discussions on reducing the

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risks of such wars. In this regard, we consider the proposals put forward by the Soviet representative a few days ago to be useful starting-points for a serious dialogue among the nuclear Powers on this aspect of the nuclear issue.

The Conference of Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries held at Belgrade recently issued a comprehensive statement on the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on the disarmament issue, to which the Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia made reference in his statement. In closely associating itself with the statement, Malaysia calls for urgent and serious negotiations, at the multilateral level, on the nuclear issue in all its aspects. Delay or procrastination would only breed inertia and, worse, increase the level of armaments, which would make negotiations that much more difficult.

The matter is of great urgency because of the spiralling growth of such weapons since the end of the Second World War, despite the various agreements reached between the two super-Powers. Although we hail the signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - it provides for the elimination of only about 4 per cent of the nuclear-weapons arsenals of the two super-Powers, leaving the remainder of those arsenals intact - not to mention those of the other nuclear Powers that are not covered by the INF Treaty. It is therefore imperative that, as we urge the two major Powers to press ahead with their negotiations, there should be an equal impetus in the multilateral negotiating process. We should tap the full potential of negotiations at the multilateral level, specifically in the Conference on Disarmament, so as to complement negotiations at the bilateral level. This is because, although we recognize the crucial nature and important contribution to the disarmament process of the bilateral negotiations between the two super-Powers and welcome the progress made in these negotiations, those negotiations cannot be a substitute for

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negotiations at the multilateral level as regards the comprehensiveness of their coverage or the universal impact of their achievements.

In our quest to rid the Earth of the nuclear scourge, a fundamental issue that must be addressed as a matter of urgency is that of nuclear testing. Malaysia is convinced that complete nuclear disarmament is impossible of attainment unless and until there is agreement on a comprehensive test ban. We believe that there will be no genuine nuclear disarmament as long as the nuclear Powers continue to maintain their nuclear deterrence by modernizing their nuclear weapons through testing. The nuclear-weapon States must recognize that the key to nuclear disarmament lies, not just in eliminating existing nuclear-weapon stocks, but also in not improving the sophistication and destructive power of such weapons. They should recognize that a nuclear-test-ban treaty is an indispensable step on the road to nuclear disarmament. We would therefore urge them not to try to rationalize or justify the continuation of nuclear tests on some political or technical grounds.

Malaysia attaches the greatest importance to the early cessation of all nuclear testing and will support any move that will serve to advance that objective. In this connection, and in the face of the prolonged inertia in the Conference on Disarmament on the crucial issue of a comprehensive test ban, Malaysia has endorsed the initiative for the convening of an amendment conference that would seek to transform the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Clearly, this initiative is a manifestation of the deep frustration felt by many countries over the lack of progress in the negotiations on this subject. It is also a manifestation of the increasing alarm at the spiralling nuclear-arms race, which knows no logic but its own relentless pursuit of superiority. We believe that with more than the required support needed for the convening of the amendment conference, the message of the international community

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is clear. We therefore look forward to the early convening, in 1990, of the amendment conference, which will effectively contribute towards the goal of nuclear disarmament.

We also believe that there is an important link between the attainment of a comprehensive test-ban treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We believe that, at a time when the international community is actively preparing for the Fourth Review Conference of the NPT in 1990, in anticipation of the renewal of that Treaty five years later, the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty would contribute greatly to strengthening and preserving the relevance and validity of the NPT. We all agree on the importance and success of the NPT in checking the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We all agree on the need, not only to maintain the validity of this Treaty, but also to strengthen it by securing its universal ratification and applicability. Clearly, it is the expectation of every State Party to the NPT that the Fourth Review Conference will once again express unanimous support for the objectives of the Treaty and commitment to its provisions. My Government continues to subscribe to the view expressed in the Final Declaration of the First Review Conference, and echoed in the Third Review Conference, that "strict observance of the articles of the Treaty remains central to the objective of averting further proliferation of nuclear weapons". It believes that, in pursuance of this objective, serious efforts should be made to seek universal adherence to the NPT. It also believes that one of the surest ways of inspiring universal confidence in the NPT, thereby inviting adherence to it, is for the parties to the Treaty to fulfil their obligations, including those under article VI.

If the nuclear Powers are serious in their desire to eliminate nuclear weapons, they will have no other recourse than to work for the cessation of all nuclear testing. On a more fundamental level, they will also have to have the

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courage to rethink and reassess the validity of their military doctrines. In an age when nuclear wars cannot be won and therefore must never be fought, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence has become obsolescent. While the doctrine of deterrence might have been valid in, and have served, earlier and less apocalyptic times, it clearly does not do so in a nuclear age. It is out of step with the dynamics of our times and ought to be seriously re-examined. Human experience dictates that if you carry a stick you must be prepared to use it. Yet in a world that is only at the press of a button away from Armageddon, it is the height of insanity for anyone to contemplate the use of these awesome instruments of total annihilation. It is clear that the doctrine of nuclear deterrence cannot be carried to its logical conclusion and is therefore no longer a credible proposition in the nuclear age, given the unacceptable costs of nuclear warfare.

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Indeed, no less than the leaders of the two super-Powers themselves had recognized this reality, when they declared their now famous dictum, which I quoted earlier. Since they obviously meant what they said - it would be dreadful to think otherwise - there is no alternative for those that keep faith in that doctrine other than its serious and early reappraisal. In this regard we find the proposal made by the Soviet delegation for a meeting of experts from the nuclear Powers and States hosting nuclear weapons to consider the parameters of minimum nuclear deterrence a sound and practical approach in the serious examination of the doctrine in the context of our times.

Equally important and urgent is the need to advance the negotiations on another priority issue, namely, effective international guarantees to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Obviously the most effective measure to assure non-nuclear-weapon States is nuclear disarmament and the effective prohibition of nuclear weapons, but until these are achieved it is important to provide assurances on the non-use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to these countries. Having given up the nuclear option, it is the natural expectation of the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty that these so-called negative security assurances will be secured. Malaysia therefore shares the view and supports the proposal, as contained in General Assembly resolution 43/68, that pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons there should be a legally binding instrument to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Another matter of profound concern to my Government is the proliferation of chemical weapons and their use in regional conflicts. Malaysia abhors the use and proliferation of such weapons of mass destruction and joins in the demand of the international community for the elimination of such inhumane weapons through the conclusion of a comprehensive chemical weapons convention. We are encouraged by

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the discernible progress made in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament in the preparation of that convention. We also welcome the reaffirmation of the validity of the 1925 Geneva Protocol on chemical weapons during the Paris Conference on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, held in January this year. We note that the Paris Conference has generated new and increased confidence in the prospects for a global ban on chemical weapons as reflected by the increased impetus, at least initially, in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. It remains our hope that the confidence generated at that Conference, which was attended by no less than 149 countries, would have provided the inspiration for States to renounce totally the use of these terrible weapons and to co-operate fully in ensuring the effectiveness of the projected chemical weapons Convention.

We believe that the recent Government-industry Conference in Canberra on chemical weapons has provided an important perspective - that of industry - in the negotiations on a chemical weapons convention. We are also encouraged by the positive developments in the United States-Soviet talks on chemical weapons. The understanding reached on data exchange and verification measures between them, the proposal on the reduction of chemical-weapon stockpiles made by the President of the United States, and the positive response by the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union in the General Assembly should provide a major incentive in the next and subsequent rounds of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

My Government monitors closely the progress of the negotiations on the projected convention in the Conference on Disarmament and would urge the negotiators to speed up their work and not lose the valuable momentum that has been generated. While fully appreciating the technical and political complexity of the issues under negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament as well as the unprecedented scope of the future convention, we would nevertheless urge the parties concerned to show greater political will and accommodation so as to enable

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the early conclusion of the convention. It is our hope that the convention will have universal adherence and applicability so that the use of such weapons of mass destruction will be for ever banished. We would also urge the early conclusion of that convention since unilateral measures, however welcome, are only temporary in nature and limited in their scope and impact and will not lead to the complete elimination of these weapons. Equally inadequate and ineffective are regional measures to do away with such weapons.

Malaysia also subscribes to the view that outer space is the common heritage of mankind and should therefore be preserved for purely peaceful purposes. We believe that, given the rapid advances in space technology and the more than likely possibility of the extension of military competition into outer space, there is an urgent need for a comprehensive régime regulating the use of outer space by the international community.

Malaysia also follows closely developments on the other issues on the multilateral disarmament and international security agenda. We believe that greater efforts must be made both at the international and regional levels for the limitation and regulation of the conventional arms race, including those at sea, as this would significantly contribute to the lessening of world tension. We also subscribe to the view that other confidence-building measures, such as greater openness and transparency in military matters, are important contributions to the disarmament process and international peace and security. In this regard Malaysia supports the creation of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world as important and necessary confidence-building measures in the complex global disarmament process. In our view, the creation of such zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones would contribute to the strengthening of the fabric of international peace and security.

In our own region of South-East Asia, Malaysia continues to believe in

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the validity and relevance of such a zone as providing a structure for regional order and stability and remains committed to the establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia. Malaysia remains equally committed to the promotion of the idea among countries of the region of the eventual establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia and draws a lot of satisfaction and inspiration from the successful establishment of the South Pacific nuclear-weapon-free zone.

My Government continues to believe there is an inherent relationship between disarmament and development and that disarmament contributes directly and indirectly to economic and social development. In a developing country like Malaysia, an extra dollar spent on the purchase of arms would mean a dollar less spent on building schools, hospitals, roads and bridges. The logic of these examples may be simplistic, but it is unassailable. The hard lessons learned by the developing countries in the utilization of their scarce resources give them valuable insights which some of the developed countries cannot grasp.

As we address the issue of global disarmament in the context of international peace and security in this and other forums, it is appropriate for us to pause and consider the larger dimensions of the question. It is the view of my delegation that in narrowing our focus on the specific issues of disarmament before us we should not be oblivious to the dangers to international peace and security inherent in the numerous regional conflicts around the globe. A number of these conflicts, such as the conflict in the Middle East, not only have a very long history but are prone to external interference and therefore to exacerbation into wider conflicts involving major actors on the international stage. The issue of international peace and security is indivisible. We cannot afford to have a blinkered view of the disarmament process and pursue our narrow goals of world peace through disarmament in a compartmentalized fashion, separate from, and paying scant

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attention to, the objective realities of regional conflicts around us. The international community has the collective responsibility to seek peace and security not only through disarmament but also through the resolution of these conflicts. In this regard, special responsibility and leadership are expected of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council and its permanent members.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of China, who wishes to make a statement.

STATEMENTS BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mr. TAN Han (China) (interpretation from Chinese): A number of delegations have expressed condolences with regard to the earthquake disaster in China. The Chinese delegation wishes to express its heartfelt thanks for those condolences, which we shall transmit to our Government and people.

Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America): I do not want to prolong the meeting, but I am compelled to do so briefly.

Earlier this week Ambassador Ronald Lehman, Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, expressed our Government's appreciation for the condolences expressed by the Chairman on behalf of the members of the First Committee on the occasion of the catastrophic earthquake that occurred on 17 October in northern California. Since Ambassador Lehman was here and his remarks were made we have heard and been genuinely touched by the remarks of our First Committee colleagues expressing their sorrow and lending their support in these hours of tragedy.

We have seen similar outpourings of grief and expressed our own condolences on those occasions in the past when tragedy has befallen the States of our colleagues. Such occasions are poignant and important reminders that as we go about our work in this Committee there is an ever-present brotherhood underpinning our relationships that unifies all the States members of this body and always manifests itself during times of tragedy.

On behalf of our Government, I wanted to express our heartfelt appreciation for the impressive, but not unexpected, support we have received from our colleagues.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to inform members of the Committee that the following delegations are on the list of speakers for Monday morning's meeting: Greece, Romania, Kuwait, Nigeria and Bahrain.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.