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Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, this morning we shall begin our general debate on all disarmament agenda items.

Before I call upon the first speaker, permit me to say a few words as presiding officer of this body of the General Assembly.

I wish to begin by expressing my deep appreciation to you all for the honour accorded to me of chairing this important Committee of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. I take this as a mark of your friendship and good will towards my country, Nepal. I shall do my utmost to be worthy of your confidence and trust.

In preparing myself for this responsibility, I have undertaken a series of consultations both here in New York and at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. I also took the initiative of meeting the heads of the Soviet and United States delegations to the bilateral Geneva talks on nuclear and space questions and on chemical weapons. At my request, the Secretary of the First Committee, Mr. Kheradi, accompanied me at those informal consultations, which have given me a clear impression of a common desire to work together to enhance the effectiveness of the First Committee. This has strengthened my personal feeling that the First Committee has a very important opportunity to make meaningful contributions towards our shared goal of advancing the process of arms limitation and the disarmament agenda.

The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament lays down the broad framework of our endeavour, when it states that agreements and other measures should be pursued on a bilateral,

(The Chairman)

regional and multilateral basis with a view to strengthening international peace and security. With a dramatic turnaround in international relations, we have an unprecedented opportunity to move effectively in that direction.

Our major focus has rightly been on substantial and sustained reductions in the global level of nuclear weapons, leading ultimately to their elimination. It is natural for us to look to the United States and the Soviet Union to take the lead in this area because they have the largest share of nuclear weapons and stockpiles.

(The Chairman)

We are encouraged by the continuing serious negotiations between the two super-Powers. The 1987 Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles and the joint announcement made by President Bush and President Gorbachev at their Washington summit in June this year have raised the prospect of an early conclusion of an agreement in the framework of the strategic arms-reduction talks (START). These are no doubt significant developments. However, we still have a long way to go. The process will have to be carried forward and extended to cover all types of nuclear weapons, eventually incorporating those of the other nuclear-weapon States. But hopes have never been higher.

Despite the understandable disappointment at the failure of the Fourth Review Conference of States parties to the nuclear-non-proliferation Treaty to produce a final document, the Treaty continues to command respect as the corner-stone of an effective non-proliferation régime. The re-establishment at the Conference on Disarmament of an Ad Hoc Committee on a nuclear-test ban represents the acceptance of an almost universal consensus on the need for an early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. In that context, I should like to refer to the successful organizational meeting of States parties to the partial test-ban Treaty, held in June this year, and to the amendment conference scheduled to be held in January 1991.

A comprehensive study on nuclear weapons has just been released as a report of the Secretary-General (A/45/373) for consideration at this session of the General Assembly. The experts have compiled the most comprehensive review of the relevant developments in the field over the past decade, including strategic doctrines, technological improvements and recent agreements. The report must be acted upon with a common understanding of its priority.

(The Chairman)

Recent events have once again underscored the urgency of a global and verifiable ban on chemical weapons. Agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union to reduce and eventually eliminate their chemical weapons and the proposed ministerial-level meeting of the Conference on Disarmament should give additional incentives for the early conclusion of a chemical-weapons convention.

The imminent agreement at the Vienna negotiations on conventional forces in Europe will be a landmark achievement in the field of conventional disarmament. The world expects the agreement to be followed by further steps to reduce forces. At the same time, the talks should serve as an example for other regions to seek security at the lowest possible level of forces and armaments. While welcoming the progress towards reductions in conventional weapons and forces in Europe, I wish to reiterate a theme common to many statements in the general debate in plenary meetings this year. Disarmament agreements should incorporate measures making it obligatory for the contracting parties to use their surplus capacities for peaceful purposes and to restrain the transfer to other regions and countries of the world of armaments made redundant by agreements.

Verification is an important element of arms control and confidence building. At this session, we have before us a report of the Secretary-General (A/45/372) to help us in our deliberations on this issue. It is a consensus document of a Group of Experts of international standing. The experts have gone into considerable detail about the possible role of the United Nations in the field of verification. Their report must be taken up with all the seriousness it deserves.

With the end of the East-West confrontation and the development of a new relationship between member States of the two alliances, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) has emerged as a new pillar of European

(The Chairman)

security. The forthcoming summit conference, to be held in Paris in November, is expected to elevate the CSCE process to new heights by transforming it into a common institution for a new peaceful order in Europe based on co-operation. The continuing success of the CSCE process serves as a reminder that a regional system of confidence-building measures will go a long way towards removing the mistrust that lies at the root of the arms race. In this context, I might recall the initial but important work being done by the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. It is in our common interest to extend greater support and encouragement to those Centres to enable them to fulfil their mandate more effectively.

The dramatic improvement in the climate of international relations in recent years has renewed faith in the United Nations. With that renewal of trust in multilateralism, the United Nations can play its proper role in shaping an interdependent world. If the end of the cold war leads to compliance by all with international law, impartially administered and enforced, the world will approach a new millennium with the assurance of security for all nations large and small. The cycle of mistrust, military rivalry, accumulation of arms and mutual fear is at last being broken. We must seize the opportunity to extend disarmament efforts beyond the nuclear and conventional arsenals of the great Powers and their allies. There is growing agreement on the need to seek co-operative solutions to both military and non-military threats to security and to global challenges of a social, humanitarian, economic and ecological nature. At this first session after the unification of Germany we have the chance to show, through result-oriented resolutions, how that vision can be realized.

(The Chairman)

The First Committee has a remarkable opportunity to benefit from changes in international relations. We have seen the welcome results in the work of the Disarmament Commission following the decision to rationalize its work. It is my hope that similar efforts will be made to rationalize and streamline the work of the First Committee. It would facilitate our work if the members of the Committee could strive to find common ground in proposing and consolidating draft resolutions. I must hasten to make it clear that I am not suggesting that we can paper over fundamental differences on some issues. I am only suggesting that we should work together to enhance the emerging consensus in a number of important areas. To be meaningful, disarmament has to be the joint effort of all nations.

As I informed members at our informal and organizational meetings, it will be my endeavour to continue the commendable efforts of my predecessors to enhance the effectiveness and rationalization of the work of the Committee. At the organizational meeting we adopted a programme of work based on the experiences of past sessions. I shall be in constant touch with members and shall seek their guidance regarding the continuing efforts to rationalize the agenda as mandated by resolution 42/42 N. I wish to inform the Committee that the first open-ended meeting of the Group of Friends of the Chair will take place this afternoon at 3.30 p.m. to address the issue of the rationalization of the work of the Committee.

(The Chairman)

There is much hard work ahead, but I am confident of the support and co-operation of the entire membership of the Committee. I am also counting on the high level of competence of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. I hope to be benefited in my work by the valuable experience and advice of the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, and the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Vasiliy Safronchuk. I have of course the benefit of the daily support and long experience and expertise of the Secretary of the First Committee, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, and his colleagues in the Department.

Finally, in keeping with the decision of the General Assembly, may I propose to representatives that we begin our meetings on time, in order to make the best use of the available resources.

MR. NEGROTTO CAMBIASO (Italy): On behalf of the European Community and its member States I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly. I would also like to extend my good wishes and congratulations to the other officers of the Committee. I am convinced that under your leadership the First Committee will be able to complete its work successfully. You can be assured of the support of the 12 member States of the European Community in the accomplishment of the important task with which you have been entrusted.

The Community and its member States welcome the increasingly positive trend in East-West relations, a trend that was already apparent at the last session of the First Committee. That trend has been further accelerated as a result of the dramatic political changes in Central and Eastern Europe and of the continuing progress of the countries of that region in establishing democratic societies. The declarations of the European Councils of Strasbourg and Dublin stress the

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importance of those developments, which give substance to a long-standing hope, namely, that the division of Europe may be finally overcome in accordance with the objectives of the Helsinki Final Act and through the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), which has brought together the peoples and Governments of Europe, Canada and the United States. In this context the unification of Germany constitutes a milestone in the history of our continent and paves the way to increased stability and co-operation.

Promising indicators have also been emerging in other regions. Positive developments have been brought about in southern Africa, where the dialogue between South Africa and its neighbours, along with the prospects of the abandonment of apartheid in South Africa, seems to be conducive to a more promising future for that region.

In Central America it is to be hoped that the elections in Nicaragua, which took place freely and fairly, will contribute to defusing tensions in that area, notwithstanding the various internal difficulties that the Government of Managua has to face.

Even the Cambodian conflict has shown significant signs of evolution. The last Jakarta Meeting represented an encouraging step towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict that has so far prevented that country from sharing in the benefits of peace and development.

Sadly, such a trend is not general, and many conflicts remain unsolved, while others break out. The ruthless aggression against, and the invasion and occupation of, Kuwait by another Member of this body have cast dark shadows on an otherwise generally encouraging background. In the difficult circumstances determined by the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait the action of the United Nations and of the Security Council has been prompt and aimed at creating the conditions necessary for

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the solution of the Gulf crisis in accordance with the terms of the United Nations Charter.

The Twelve believe that peace and security can be achieved only through a full and generalized observance of the principles set out in the United Nations Charter and of the other relevant obligations of international law. They wish to recall the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security as well as the obligations of all Member States to implement its relevant resolutions. The Security Council can, in fact, play an important role in the establishment of improved general conditions conducive to international stability. The Twelve wish also to stress the important role that the Secretary-General is called upon to play in this field.

With regard to the role of the First Committee we express the hope that the unacceptable violation of the United Nations Charter by the Baghdad Government may be brought to an end without delay so as not to harm the expanding process of arms control and disarmament.

Arms control and disarmament negotiations have intensified and achieved unprecedented progress in the course of recent years. The Twelve are fully confident that concrete results in bilateral and regional arms control negotiations brought about by increasing mutual confidence will in turn promote progress in global arms control and disarmament, thus strengthening international peace and security.

The validity of a number of principles on which the arms control and disarmament process should be based in order to achieve results has been proved, namely, the need to enhance the stability at the minimum necessary levels of forces and armaments, as well as predictability, openness and confidence in relations between States. The security interests of all parties concerned should be taken into account and promoted. Effective verification mechanisms should be developed

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in accordance with specific disarmament agreements. Above all, reductions of armaments to the lowest possible levels should take place in conditions of undiminished security for all.

The United Nations plays a central role in the multilateral process of disarmament. Such a role should be enhanced in various ways, since multilateral relations are of increasing importance. Thus the United Nations needs to be able to make progress in the numerous and important questions pertaining to arms limitation and disarmament inscribed in its agenda.

Nuclear disarmament remains one of the highest priorities of the Twelve. We support the United States and the Soviet Union in their current effort in the various fields of disarmament and arms control. In the view of the Twelve, all of the relevant components of the military balance, nuclear and conventional, are of the utmost importance. Since the process of disarmament affects the vital security interests of all States, they must all be actively involved and contribute to measures of disarmament and arms limitations.

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As I have pointed out before, we believe that a regional approach has an important role alongside bilateral and multilateral negotiations in a wider geographical framework. In this context, we welcome the adoption, at the Disarmament Commission's 1990 session, of a report on conventional disarmament, worked out under the chairmanship of a member of the Twelve. The Commission's report is an important document in the process of facilitating conventional disarmament on a global scale. The adoption of measures for regional arms control and disarmament, which must take account of the particular characteristics of each region and the intentions of all countries concerned, constitutes one of the most important and effective ways by which States can contribute to the process of global arms control and disarmament.

This is one of the foremost lessons of the talks under way in Vienna within the framework of the CSCE process. The negotiations on conventional forces in Europe aim at strengthening security and stability in Europe through the establishment of a stable and secure balance at lower levels of conventional armed forces, including conventional armaments and equipment; the elimination of disparities prejudicial to stability and security; and the elimination, as a matter of priority, of the capability for launching surprise attacks and for initiating large-scale offensive actions.

The negotiations on confidence-building measures represent an equally important pillar of our security, as they aim to develop further the régime of the Stockholm document and open up new areas of confidence-building with a view to promoting further transparency and openness in the military field and thus contributing to further reducing of the dangers of military confrontation in Europe. The Twelve look forward to an imminent and successful conclusion to both sets of negotiations.

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The CSCE process as a whole plays a fundamental role in the process of change in Europe. At a time when the European continent is actively engaged in overcoming its historical divisions, the CSCE provides a necessary framework for intensifying political dialogue, for ensuring the effective exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for promoting co-operation, thus making a decisive contribution to the strengthening of peace and security in Europe and the fostering of the disarmament process.

The Twelve are confident that in such a context new concepts of security at a regional level can be developed, notably through the establishment of conciliation mechanisms as well as of innovative forms of multilateral co-operation in the field of security. The achievement of a first agreement in the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe will contribute to the subsequent pursuit of more far-reaching measures aimed at enhancing stability and security in Europe.

This will represent a very important part of a new pattern of security relations in Europe. The Twelve expect that the CSCE summit to be held in Paris on 19 November will, by, inter alia, welcoming the signing of the Treaty on conventional forces in Europe and endorsing the progress in the negotiations on confidence-building and security-building measures, pave the way towards a wider and lasting framework of peace, security and co-operation throughout Europe.

The Twelve hope that the 34 will start discussions with a view to establishing by 1992, after the Helsinki meeting, a new disarmament and confidence-building measures process open to all CSCE members wishing to participate.

Among the factors of increased stability in the present international situation, there are two that look particularly important: the satisfactory 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

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Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - which eliminates a whole class of nuclear weapons; and the prospect of the early conclusion of a START agreement, resulting in substantive cuts in the strategic arsenals of both the United States and the Soviet Union, already announced by President Bush and President Gorbachev. The Twelve welcome these developments.

We consider that making further progress in nuclear arms control continues to be one of the most serious challenges facing the world today. We therefore believe that the need for progress in nuclear-arms control and disarmament requires that special attention continue to be paid to such issues. Our common wish is to see the achievement of substantial and balanced reductions in the global level of nuclear weapons, beginning with those of the United States and the Soviet Union. In this field, the United States and the USSR have a crucial responsibility.

In this context we have taken note, with appreciation, of the commitment of the United States and the USSR to initiate early consultations about negotiations on further reductions in strategic weapons. The Twelve have also taken note also of the agreement reached by the United States and the Soviet Union on the verification Protocols for the 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the 1976 Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty, making possible their early ratification.

In this connection, I should like to mention also that those of the Twelve who are parties to the Partial Test Ban Treaty will participate in the Amendment Conference of January next year.

It is anticipated that negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the reduction of short-range nuclear forces in Europe will begin shortly after an agreement on conventional forces in Europe is signed. Proposals have already been formulated for the elmination of all nuclear-artillery shells in Europe once negotiations on short-range nuclear forces begin. The Twelve welcome

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these developments. We hope that these negotiations will lead to concrete results at an early date, as part of the process leading towards a significant overall reduction in the level of nuclear weapons.

As in previous years, the First Committee's agenda includes proposals for nuclear-weapon-free zones in certain parts of the world. The creation of such zones should contribute to stability in the regions concerned, to non-proliferation and to the disarmament process in general, provided all States affected are prepared to co-operate on the basis of freely concluded agreements and in conformity with internationally agreed principles.

At the Dublin Summit, the Community and its member States emphasized their firm commitment to the objective of nuclear non-proliferation. They believe that if it proved possible to check and reverse the nuclear-arms race, that would help strengthen the non-proliferation régime. We attach the greatest importance to the maintenance of an effective international nuclear-non-proliferation régime, and we shall make every effort to contribute to strengthening non-proliferation and encouraging the participation of further countries in the régime. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an important element in that régime. Upon conclusion of the fourth NPT Review Conference, the Twelve note that, in spite of the fact that the Conference could not produce a consensus on a concluding document, most of the work was done in a positive spirit, and agreement was obtained on most important issues.

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The Twelve believe that the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum in the United Nations system, represents an indispensable forum in the field of disarmament.

The growing number of observers at the proceedings of the Conference on Disarmament is an encouraging development and an acknowledgement of the Conference's current and potential role in promoting world peace and stability. The Twelve also express their satisfaction with the efforts which were positively initiated at the last session of the Conference on Disarmament aimed at improving the agenda and the working procedure of the Conference. The Twelve state their undiminished interest in various items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. They take note with satisfaction of the consensus which it was possible to achieve at the last session of the Conference on Disarmament on the re-establishment, after several years of unsuccessful attempts, of an ad hoc group on a comprehensive test ban. They also look forward to early, substantive progress in the discussion on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, considering that space is an important area for co-operation in the interests of the whole international community. Moreover, the Twelve attach the utmost urgency to the objective of concluding a global, effectively verifiable, comprehensive ban on chemical weapons. Regrettably, this year's negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament have shown limited progress and they have not been conducive to a speedy conclusion of the convention despite the political inputs given by the Paris Conference. A lot of work - particularly in the field of verification - is still necessary in order to resolve the outstanding issues in the shortest possible time. We welcome the agreement between the United States and the USSR on the destruction of a large part of their chemical-weapon stockpiles and express the hope that the crucial issues still to be tackled in the multilateral negotiations will benefit from the continuing dialogue between these two countries.

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Nevertheless the bilateral agreement can be no substitute for the endeavour still necessary to attain the goal of a total chemical-weapons ban. The Twelve will make every effort to ensure that the positive outcome in the bilateral context will be reflected in the multilateral negotiations.

The Twelve are fully aware of the diversity and the complexity of the problems still to be solved. At the same time they have taken note with interest of the idea of a ministerial session of the disarmament Conference to be held at a suitable time to overcome the remaining obstacles and conclude the negotiations.

Fully aware of the risks of proliferation of chemical weapons, the Twelve, in conjunction with other States, have taken the necessary steps to prevent the diversion of chemical products from their legitimate uses. The Community and its member States consider that such measures will remain necessary until a universal convention banning such arms has come into force.

The Twelve call on all countries to adhere to the Convention banning biological weapons and to take the necessary steps to ensure that it is effectively applied. To this end they have urged the countries non-parties to the Treaty to become parties before the Third Review Conference of next year. They also call for wider compliance with the confidence-building measures introduced at the Second Review Conference in 1986 and look forward to their further strengthening and expansion.

In this, as well as in other areas relevant to disarmament, notably that of military budgets data and aggregates, transparency as provided by the United Nations standardized system of reporting is a vital requirement for the strengthening of mutual confidence and overall security. This applies equally to international arms transfers: arms control and restraint in arms transfers undertaken in one region in the world should be consistent with the overall

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objective of contributing to defuse tensions world-wide, thus creating a virtuous circle by arms control and restraint in arms transfers in other regions of the world.

The First Committee can play an increasingly effective role in the disarmament process, particularly if its procedure can be further rationalized. To this end it seems opportune that member States act with a new degree of flexibility and pragmatism, pursuing the simplification of the agenda. New emphasis should be laid on the search for an expanded meaningful consensus as well as encouraging the merger of draft resolutions. A more frequent biannualization or multiannualization of items is a path we also propose to tread. With this aim the Twelve have made a serious effort to contain the number of their proposals submitted to the First Committee.

The Twelve express their appreciation of the positive results, both in substance and procedure, of the last session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. The way to a full implementation of the reform of the Commission is now open and carries the promise of doing work of a more effective kind within that body. In line with this new spirit of co-operation which should imbue the works of the United Nations Disarmament Commission we hope that it will be possible to reach consensus on the 1991 working agenda of the United Nations Disarmament Commission during this session of the General Assembly.

The Community and its member States are bearing in mind the importance of the relationship between disarmament and development, and are convinced that the 1987 International Conference contributed towards a better understanding of the role and complexity of this relationship.

The Twelve have taken good note of the work carried out by the Secretary-General in implementing the action programme adopted by the International

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Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and the report he drafted on the subject.

The Twelve believe that the wish expressed by many States at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly gradually to convert their military resources to civilian purposes can foster the cause of peace.

We also acknowledge the progress in the programmes of research and study promoted by the United Nations on the subjects of international arms transfers and of the role of the United Nations in the field of verification and nuclear armaments. We seek, particularly in the present international situation, an opportunity for expanding the role of the United Nations in this field and we welcome initiatives, such as the recent Kathmandu meeting on the security-enhancing role of confidence- and security-building measures, aimed at fostering regional awareness of disarmament goals.

At the same time useful activities have been carried out by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in the first 10 years of its existence. We look forward to an increase in the positive contribution made by this institution to international awareness on disarmament issues.

I should like to conclude by reiterating the commitment of the European Community and its member States in giving you, Mr. Chairman, their full support during the proceedings of this Committee. As in the past the Twelve are ready to play an active and constructive role, sparing no effort in order to ensure a successful outcome to all the important deliberations about to begin.

Ms. THEORIN (Sweden): First I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this important Committee. I am convinced that, under your wise guidance, we shall be able to achieve good results at this session. I pledge the full co-operation of my delegation.

On the Wall of Isaiah, across the street from United Nations Headquarters, some familiar words of the Old Testament are engraved in stone:

> "... and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks".

In the park by the river, outside the General Assembly Building, there is a well-known statue that has become one of the landmarks of New York. It depicts a tall man, a broad-shouldered blacksmith, forcefully beating a sword into a ploughshare. It is a drastic image of the Biblical vision.

Never in the 45-year history of the United Nations has it been more timely to recall this. The cold war is over. The arms race is winding down. The post-war division of Europe has come to an end. In recent months, Europe has witnessed a series of stunning events, culminating in the unification of Germany - Germany, the mirror of the cold war, the focal-point of the arms race, the epitome of Europe's division.

The cold war is over. President Mikhail Gorbachev, who has meant more than anyone else for and played a leading role in this development, has today been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, which he has so well deserved.

In a few weeks, a summit meeting of historic importance will be taking place in Paris to seal the birth of a new security order in Europe. Thus there are good reasons for optimism - and not only for Europeans, but for the world community as a whole.

On the other hand, in the past couple of months the world community has also had to contend with a new grave threat to international peace and security. That

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case of unprovoked aggression, that flagrant violation of national sovereignty, has been universally condemned. The callous holding of thousands of civilians against their will is a rare case of utter contempt for international law and human decency. The crisis must not be allowed to escalate into war.

The United Nations is at the centre of ongoing efforts to find a solution to the crisis. The Security Council has displayed great resolve and determination, firmly agreeing on mandatory sanctions against Iraq. The United Nations is playing the role it should and must play in ensuring international security.

This is a development my Government whole-heartedly welcomes. It is a breakthrough for the application of the basic principle of collective security. Iraq must immediately cease its unlawful occupation, withdraw the forces of invasion, and guarantee all foreigners their inherent right of movement.

The menace of chemical weapons has again come to the fore. Inadmissable threats have been made to use chemical weapons. Chemical arms are weapons of mass destruction. They have limited military utility against protected troops, but can be employed for terror purposes, causing unspeakable suffering to the civilian population. Possession of such weapons is nothing to boast about.

At the same time, it seems as if many States from different groups participating in the Conference on Disarmament have not yet realized the urgency of the conclusion of a comprehensive chemical-weapons ban. The work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has again registered substantial progress on many of the important technical issues under consideration. However, a breakthrough in the negotiations has eluded us so far.

In previous years, the negotiations have focused very much on technical matters in the convention. This year, an effort has been made to tackle a number of key political issues. That is necessary in order to bring us to the stage of

(Ms. Theorin, Sweden)

final drafting. However, so far the results have not been encouraging. In some instances, key delegations have lacked operative instructions. Others have gone back to old positions that most delegations thought had been abandoned long ago in the negotiations. Some have shown unwillingness to discuss the concrete problems, preferring procedural bickering to substantive negotiations.

For several years, the conclusion of a chemical-weapons convention has seemed to be within grasp, as most countries agree that the future convention must have the following characteristics: it must be truly comprehensive in scope; it must be verifiable and based on an effective régime of inspections on request; it must be non-discriminatory and universal.

The concern we feel today is based on the fact that proposals have been made or positions taken that are contrary to these basic premises regarding the comprehensiveness and non-discriminatory character of the convention and the effectiveness of its verification system. Such positions must not be further pursued if we want to conclude a convention.

There have been positive developments in the bilateral Soviet-American negotiations on chemical weapons. Sweden welcomes the binding agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union not to produce chemical weapons and to initiate the destruction of the bulk of their chemical-weapons stocks even before the conclusion of a chemical-weapons convention. We also welcome their offer to assist other States in the destruction of their chemical weapons.

Unfortunately, the bilateral agreement also contained a proposal to the Conference on Disarmament that would give them the right to retain a small amount of chemical weapons beyond the established destruction period. That would in effect give declared chemical-weapons States a veto over the final implementation of a chemical-weapons convention.

(Ms. Theorin, Sweden)

That is one of the proposals to which I have referred that endanger progress towards a comprehensive ban and have already soured the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. Sweden trusts that the United States and the Soviet Union, which have both expressed some flexibility, will reconsider their positions so that we can proceed in confidence towards the total elimination of all chemical weapons.

It is evident that political will must be mobilized to solve the outstanding issues and conclude a comprehensive convention. A major effort must now be made. If the chemical-weapons negotiations do not succeed, we will face the danger of increased proliferation and use of chemical weapons.

In July, the United Nations Group of Experts on a Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons, which I had the honour of chairing, adopted its report by consensus. My delegation intends to submit a draft resolution to draw the study to the attention of the General Assembly. I believe the study turned out to be the right thing at the right time. The study on nuclear weapons is the first United Nations study in the field of security to be completed in the present atmosphere of co-operation between East and West.

The comprehensive report provides technical data and statistics on existing nuclear weapons. It accounts for trends in the technological development of nuclear-weapons systems; it analyses doctrines and strategies concerning nuclear weapons; it describes the development, production and testing of nuclear weapons, as well as the effects of the use of nuclear weapons and the consequences of nuclear war; it assesses nuclear weapons and international security; it comments on nuclear-arms limitation and disarmament; it examines the legality of nuclear weapons; and it outlines a set of political conclusions.

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The study ends on an optimistic note. It postulates that reliance on military strength for national security will be increasingly supplemented by policies of confidence-building and wide co-operation in various fields, and by negotiation and dialogue with a view to strengthening security for everyone.

It is my hope that the update of the United Nations Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons will become a stepping-stone for further nuclear disarmament initiatives. I hope that in due course it will be translated into more languages than the official languages of the United Nations, and hence become available to experts and laymen around the world. I also hope that it will become a standard reference for the nuclear disarmament issues of the 1990s.

Three months ago the study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification was completed. It is essential, and becoming even more so, that all countries be encouraged to make use of the means of verification which have now become available. In the view of the Swedish Government, the United Nations should play an important part in this context.

I therefore note with great satisfaction that the Group of Experts on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification concluded its work by submitting a consensus report. The report discusses and illustrates the great potential of the United Nations in this field, and it is the hope of my Government that it will be used for the benefit of the entire international community. This would promote truly international verification of arms limitation and disarmament agreements.

The Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty ended a month ago. Consensus could not be reached on a final document, even though most of the basic features of the Treaty were reaffirmed by almost all participants. Sweden considers the non-proliferation Treaty a singularly important instrument in the area of nuclear disarmament. It deserves the unfailing loyalty

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of all the parties to it; all must share the responsibility for its future. The Swedish Government strongly deplores the outcome of the Review Conference. My Government would have hoped for more of a spirit of co-operation and a stronger will to compromise in the interest of promoting both the non-proliferation Treaty and a comprehensive test-ban treaty. One must not be made the enemy of the other. The outcome was the wrong signal at the wrong time. This was the wrong cause to jeopardize. The antagonism manifested at the Review Conference has done a disservice to the Treaty.

On the other hand, there were also several positive developments. Sweden was encouraged by the emerging agreement between the participants about the need to strengthen the non-proliferation régime. I would point out here that later this year my Government intends to present national legislation to Parliament to control the export of missile technologies and certain products which may be used for purposes of mass destruction. There was also substantive progress at the Review Conference on a number of important issues, such as full-scope safeguards, security assurances, the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The outcome of the Review Conference prevented us from recording in an official document this progress, including the limited, yet not insignificant, head-way also made on the issue of a nuclear test-ban.

The outcome of the Review Conference accentuates the need to achieve substantial nuclear disarmament results before the next non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 1995, when the length of the extension of the Treaty is to be decided. The days of the first term of the non-proliferation Treaty are numbered like the grains of sand in an hourglass. The non-proliferation Treaty runs until 1995, when a decision on its extension is due. The challenge we are facing is to ensure a significant extension. We cannot afford to see the future of the

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non-proliferation Treaty post-1995 vanish like the sand running away in an hourglass.

The continued blocking of nuclear-test-ban negotiations may undermine the authority of the non-proliferation Treaty. On the other hand, a weakening of the non-proliferation Treaty can prevent further progress towards a comprehensive test-ban treaty. This vicious circle is not inevitable.

The re-establishment in July in the Conference on Disarmament of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, after seven years of stalemate, was encouraging - temporarily. It was certainly not enough. I find it puzzling that there was no automatic consensus to continue immediately at the next Conference on Disarmament session. It is vital that at the next session of the Conference on Disarmament the Ad Hoc Committee, with the active participation of the nuclear-weapon States, start negotiations on this issue. This is a commitment enshrined in both the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963 and the non-proliferation Treaty of 1970.

The seven years of paralysis on this issue in the Conference on Disarmament led to understandable frustration, which, in its turn, has found expression in the convening of an amendment conference on the partial test-ban Treaty in January next year.

For a number of reasons, Sweden considers the Conference on Disarmament to be the appropriate forum for negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Nevertheless, Sweden will participate in the amendment Conference in a constructive manner.

For many years the Swedish Government has consistently sought to contribute to better information and to achieve increased openness in military matters.

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The General Assembly, by adopting the resolution on objective military information, which commanded an overwhelming majority, has expressed the belief that the adoption of confidence-building measures to promote openness and transparency would contribute to the prevention of misperceptions of military capabilities and intentions.

Furthermore, the General Assembly in that resolution expressed the belief that balanced and objective information on all military matters - in particular, on the part of nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States - would contribute to the building of confidence among States.

My delegation has noted with satisfaction that the resolution was adopted with favourable votes from all five nuclear-weapon States. By voting for the resolution, the five nuclear-weapon States would seem to have acknowledged the importance of displaying openness and transparency in all areas of military activity - on land, in the air or at sea.

In the opinion of the Swedish Government, there is a need for more openness and transparency at sea. Specifically, Sweden finds the secrecy surrounding the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons at sea inconsistent with expressions of support for confidence-building. The selective application of a sanctuary of secrecy in one area of military activity may undermine the credibility of legitimate demands for openness in other military spheres.

Nuclear-weapon States bring nuclear weapons into the territory of foreign countries, claiming innocent passage, without giving any notice of the presence of such weapons on board. This kind of presence is not innocent, in the view of most people, and their demand for reliable information is legitimate. The practice of nuclear-weapon States of neither confirming nor denying the presence or absence of nuclear weapons on board is not conducive to building confidence. It has instead

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given rise to public concern world-wide. My Government therefore urges those States to abandon their pre-glasnost principle of neither confirming nor denying. At least every fourth nuclear weapon is estimated to be earmarked for maritime deployment.

However, while conventional disarmament in the main military alliances is gaining momentum; while negotiations on considerable strategic nuclear-arms reductions are approaching their conclusion; while two thirds of the land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles of the two main nuclear-weapon States have actually been eliminated already; deliberations on naval forces have been essentially limited to strategic nuclear weapons.

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There is now growing international recognition that serious negotiations on all naval nuclear weapons are long overdue. Seaborne strategic nuclear weapons are the subject of bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. However, the short- and medium-range seaborne nuclear weapons intended for targets at sea or on land have yet to be properly addressed in disarmament negotiations.

My Government has been especially concerned about the widespread deployment of increasingly sophisticated sea-based nuclear-armed cruise missiles. Sweden regrets the high ceilings established for the numbers allowed in the agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union to limit such missiles.

Nuclear weapons intended for targets at sea threaten to lower the nuclear threshold and consequently have implications for international security as a whole. Sweden has welcomed the unilateral withdrawals of tactical nuclear weapons deployed at sea that have already been implemented and would welcome further such withdrawals. The ultimate goal, however, must be the complete denuclearization of all naval forces. An important step in that direction would be the prohibition of all nuclear weapons on all naval vessels other than those specifically exempted by agreement. At this session of the General Assembly Sweden will present a proposal for negotiations on the prohibition of non-strategic nuclear weapons at sea.

In the present atmosphere of East-West co-operation and radically improved prospects for significant reductions of weapons and armed forces, we have reason to hope that the so-called peace dividend will materialize. Both human and material resources will be released, creating a great potential to meet non-military needs.

Thousands of eminent scientists and engineers, thousands of highly qualified workers engaged in military production, will soon channel their creativity into the civilian sector of society. We face the challenge of utilizing their talents for

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the social good. It is my conviction that they have a vital role to play in the effort to safeguard the common future for our one and only Earth.

The degradation of the global environment has led to threats to the survival of mankind. People all over the world are increasingly perceiving these developments as formidable threats to their security. An effective plan of action encompassing strategies at the national, regional and global levels to halt and reverse environmental degradation is needed.

Economic policies and investment strategies have to be redirected in order to ensure sustainable development. Technologies for ecologically beneficial production will certainly play a central role in this process. These are the technologies of the future. Those investing in such technologies today will be tomorrow's economic winners. New technologies for cleaner production are of crucial importance to developing countries as well. They should have access to these technologies on favourable terms. This is one of the key issues on the agenda of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in 1992.

Disarmament will lead to shrinking markets for corporations engaged in military production. They should consider redirecting their production to vistas more profitable in the longer run. The potential of focusing on environmentally safe and sound technologies is considerable. It will, however, have to be studied in order to provide concrete guidance. The United Nations therefore should seriously study economically beneficial ways and means to redirect investments in military production to environmentally sound technologies. Such a study would constitute a valuable input to the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development, in Brazil. My delegation proposes that the General Assembly should consider how such a study might most productively be undertaken.

(Ms. Theorin, Sweden)

The triple challenge is sustainable disarmament, sustainable development and a sustainable environment. Therefore we shall beat our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning-hooks.

Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil): My delegation wishes to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I am confident that we shall all benefit from your able and skilful guidance. Let me extend our greetings to the other elected officers of the Committee who will be assisting you in your endeavours. Permit me also to express our gratitude to Ambassador Taillardat and the other officers of the Committee at its session last year for their productive work during the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

I will refrain from restating in detail the view that the world is entering into a new era with increasing hopes for an international order marked by peace and co-operation. But the presence among us of the representatives of an independent Namibia and of a unified Germany, as well as the views expressed by a large number of Member States, including Brazil, in the general debate in the Assembly, certainly bear witness to a profound transformation in the patterns of international relations.

The new political atmosphere has had a special and significant impact on the idea of disarmament, which is this Committee's primary concern. In their summit meeting last June Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev arrived at important agreements in the nuclear, chemical and conventional fields which seem to point to a long-awaited new approach towards international security, moving from the balance of terror to what has been called a balance of interests.

My delegation welcomes the progress made by the United States of America and the USSR in their bilateral negotiations, particularly the agreement regarding

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the conclusion of a treaty on the reduction of strategic armaments (START) and the initiation of negotiations on a START II which will, we hope, significantly reduce their overwhelming capacity to destroy each other and the world.

In Europe, the region that has undergone the most dramatic changes, new impetus has been given to an early conclusion of a treaty on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe, with positive implications for the relationship between the two major military alliances. The changes in Europe also augur well for the process under the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and for the consolidation of a new European relationship based on confidence and co-operation. Disarmament in the region, which has the largest concentration of weapons, now seems within the realm of the possible.

In praising those positive developments in bilateral negotiations I am nevertheless obliged to point out, as President Fernando Collor stressed in his statement at the opening of the general debate in the Assembly, that:

"Efforts towards disarmament are still incipient and their diplomatic handling has never been so remote from international forums." (A/45/PV.4, p. 16)

While nuclear disarmament remains the primary responsiblity of the nuclear-weapon States, it is of legitimate concern to the entire international community, since it affects global security - that is to say the security of each and every country. While praising and stimulating the new commitment of the two major Powers and their military alliances in adopting steps leading to the slowing down and cessation of the nuclear-arms race and towards effective and irreversible measures of nuclear disarmament, the international community as a whole should be much more actively involved in the task of removing the threat of nuclear war.

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The USSR and the United States have declared their intention to strengthen multilateralism and the United Nations. Taking into account their call for a new approach to international security, with the full participation of the international community, there is ground to expect that disarmament negotiations will not remain the privilege of a handful of nations with the largest arsenals of nuclear and other weapons. In this critical issue the international community as a whole can and must have a say.

We should strive together to widen and give new meaning to multilateral efforts in disarmament, particularly in the United Nations disarmament bodies: the Conference on Disarmament, its sole negotiating body, the Disarmament Commission and this Committee.

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Strengthening the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, as well as fostering the creation of new zones, is one of the contributions that we can make towards this end. Brazil, which has signed and ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco and is a member State of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic, is convinced that such zones can make an important contribution towards denuclearization and the reduction of tension throughout the world.

Nevertheless, there has been some opposition to the idea of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, which are landmark contributions to the process of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. For instance, in the Treaty of Tlatelolco - whose provisions Brazil strictly respected even before the Treaty's full entry into force - the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean undertook to achieve the objective of utilizing nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes and decided to prohibit the acquisition or introduction of nuclear weapons in the zone defined by the Treaty. Those nations accepted also a verification system designed to ensure compliance with their obligations. As the day approaches when the Treaty will come into force in the zone as a whole, countries belonging to the zone feel they will have to ascertain how the obligations assumed by the nuclear-weapon Powers towards the Latin American and Caribbean parties are being fulfilled.

Another measure of paramount importance is the cessation of all nuclear explosions for all time. This is a matter to which Brazil attributes the highest priority. In this connection, I wish to recall the statement by President Collor in the General Assembly's general debate, when he said:

> "Brazil today discards the idea of any experiments that might involve nuclear explosions, even if only for peaceful purposes. We trust other nations will consider the possibility of following the same path." (A/45/PV.4, p. 13)

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

By renouncing its right to develop and use peaceful-nuclear-explosion devices - a step taken in accordance with international law, particularly article 18 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco - Brazil commits itself fully to the international community's effort towards the cessation of all nuclear explosions, whether for military or for peaceful purposes. This objective should be pursued through negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and in the Moscow Treaty Amendment Conference, with a view to achieving a treaty that effectively bans all nuclear tests by all States in all environments.

We therefore pledge our support to those countries that took the commendable initiative of calling for the Amendment Conference. We are prepared to work closely with them for a successful outcome of that Conference, so as to ensure the fulfilment of the obligations freely assumed in the partial test ban Treaty and in other international instruments.

We participated actively in the Ad Hoc Committee established this year in the Conference on Disarmament. The purpose of its work was to bring about concrete and urgent negotiations towards a comprehensive test ban. Together with a large number of other delegations, we urge the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee early in the 1991 session to pursue that goal, and we are ready to continue to participate actively in it.

We welcome the statement by Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, of the USSR, that

> "As a matter of utmost urgency, nuclear tests have to be stopped. If testing is stopped, we have a chance to survive; otherwise the world will perish." (A/45/PV.6, p. 53)

We call upon all States to show the same resolve and to join the majority of the international community in achieving a comprehensive test ban treaty in the shortest possible time.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

The sovereign decision of Brazil to renounce its legal right to develop and use nuclear-explosion devices for peaceful purposes does not mean that it has abdicated its right to full economic development or that it has renounced, now or for the future, the technological, scientific and industrial options that are essential to the promotion of its social and economic development. We continue to believe that Tlatelolco is the natural path to discipline in regard to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

On this matter, I wish to draw the Committee's attention to document A/45/586, which contains a statement issued jointly by Argentina and Brazil, as observers at the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The co-operation between Argentina and Brazil in all fields, particularly the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, is proof of our clear commitment to the principles of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. In this context, we stated:

> "Brazil and Argentina remain deeply committed to the principles stated by the international community in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX), which set forth the basic tenets of a multilateral treaty to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, Argentina and Brazil respect the letter and the spirit of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The full implementation of this Treaty is currently the subject of an active and intense exchange of views among interested parties." (A/45/586, pp. 2 and 3)

In our efforts to eliminate the scourge of nuclear war, other urgent measures too should be considered without delay. Let me enumerate a few, which require no further explanation: a freeze on the production of nuclear weapons, of their systems of delivery, and of fissionable materials for weapons purposes; a total ban on the use of nuclear weapons and, pending the achievement of such a ban, a legally binding commitment, without any qualification, by the nuclear-weapon Powers not to

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use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against countries that do not possess such weapons; and, finally, an effective arrangement for the prevention of nuclear war.

For many years these measures have been discussed in disarmament forums, without significant results. The lack of results stems not from irrelevance but from different factors, which we are told have been superseded by events. Therefore, those measures remain valid contributions from the international community towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, at a time when, in the words of the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly,

"the fostering of a moral and political climate in which nuclear weapons are stigmatized and foresworn is no longer utopian". (A/45/1, p. 18)

Recent international events have increased the prevailing sense of urgency to conclude a universal and non-discriminatory ban on chemical weapons - a measure that is currently under active consideration in the Conference on Disarmament. We examined with interest, but with some reservations regarding the question of the maintenance of a dissuasory stockpile, the agreement reached at the June summit meeting between the United States and the Soviet Union on the elimination and non-production of chemical weapons. We welcome the renewed pledge of those two States to work towards the conclusion of the convention - a pledge reiterated by President Bush and by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze in the General Assembly's general debate.

Brazil, which does not have chemical weapons, and does not intend to have chemical weapons, has been actively participating in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and is ready to support a convention on non-discriminatory chemical weapons - a convention that prohibits the development, production, stockpiling and use of those weapons by all States, and calls for their destruction, but does not unduly hamper legitimate chemical industries.

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We are therefore prepared to support any initiative that would contribute to the speedy conclusion of the negotiations in Geneva. After long years of negotiation and the Paris and Canberra Conferences, and in view of the declared willingness of many States to conclude the chemical weapons convention, the time has never seemed more ripe for the adoption of a clear commitment to finalize it in 1991. If the political will really is there, as has been declared, this goal is certainly within reach. Let us therefore, at this session of the General Assembly, take a clear decision regarding a time-frame for conclusion of the negotiations and for opening of the Convention for signature.

Let me, though, stress one point. If we are to ensure the universal validity and acceptability of the Convention we must commit ourselves to its universal and non-discriminatory character. Upon its entering into force, all States should destroy their chemical weapons, ruling out those weapons as a means of warfare once and for all.

In a statement on this subject the Group of 21 of the Conference on Disarmament stressed that the proposed revisions made by the United States and the Soviet Union

> "will have negative effects because they, inter alia, put conditions and postpone the decision for the total elimination of chemical weapons, give rights to States based on the possession of chemical weapons, and create a situation of legal uncertainty about the scope and the implementation of the multilateral convention." (A/45/27, appendix II, p. 299)

Brazil shares the view that

> "the total destruction of all chemical weapons and chemical-weapons-production facilities should be unconditional and decided from the very conclusion of the convention, as already provided for in the present draft convention ...". (ibid.)

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Five years after it was established in the Committee on Disarmament, the Ad Hoc Committee dealing with the prevention of an arms race in outer space has still been unable to engage in meaningful negotiations, in spite of the legitimate interest of all nations in ensuring that outer space, the province of mankind, be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, thus contributing to the enhancement of international co-operation in space activities.

Increasing concern with activities that run counter to the purposes and spirit of the Treaty on outer space and to the obligations assumed under it, on the one hand, and the need to foster co-operation in space applications and space technology, on the other, underscore the urgent need to engage in meaningful negotiations. Consideration of the item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space by the Committee on Disarmament and consideration of the item on ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space are clearly interrelated and complementary.

The Committee on Disarmament should be allowed to undertake negotiations to expand the scope of the existing Treaty on outer space in conformity with its main objective - that is, the utilization of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of mankind. We welcome, in this context, recent proposals for concrete areas of work in the Committee on Disarmament, particularly in the field of confidence-building measures in space. Bearing in mind the relevance of space applications and technology to socio-economic development, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should also be allowed to examine substantively the many questions falling within its purview regarding the utilization of space for the benefit of mankind, including those questions that might be under consideration in the Committee on Disarmament.

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The importance of the universal and non-discriminatory character of the convention on chemical weapons and the questions related to outer-space issues lead me to another issue, of a more general nature although no less important and relevant to disarmament negotiations. For developing nations, as well as for the industrially advanced, access to the full range of scientific and technological benefits has become a crucial question. We should thus avoid any measure that could maintain technological dependence, and should prevent the fragmentation of the world into closed technological blocs. In the words used by President Collor in his address to the General Assembly:

"Aware of the fact that access to technology, as well as to its production and use, is a new and necessary paradigm, Brazil cannot but express its strong concern with the barriers that still persist to free exchange in such a decisive domain". (A/45/PV.4, p. 22)

Contrary to the need for increasing co-operation in the scientific and technological fields, particularly for the benefit of developing countries, we have seen a renewed effort to resort to discriminatory concepts of non-proliferation of advanced technologies, while endorsing their peaceful or military use by a few States. The net result of such policies is the prevention of the dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge, of high importance for the development effort of developing countries. Brazil is not in a position to accept the idea, forcefully argued by some technologically advanced countries, that peaceful technology is inherently indistinguishable from its military applications. Neither can we concur with its corollary that any "sensitive" knowledge - normally the more advanced technologies - must be safely kept in the hands of those which already possess it, supposedly for the good of all.

As is the case in the chemical-weapons convention, the objective of avoiding proliferation of any weapon technology would be best served through the negotiation

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of universal and non-discriminatory mechanisms. These should ensure, at the same time, the objective of controlling the military uses of any technology, without hampering the flow of scientific and technological knowledge for peaceful purposes. I could not add a word to the statement in the section of the report of the Secretary-General that deals with the question of the qualitative arms race. He suggests

> "that the international community make a special effort to clarify the important issues involved and produce clear and fair guidelines acceptable to all. This would remove a great deal of apprehension in a large number of countries that are affected by the supply policies currently applied by exporters of technology". (A/45/1, p. 20)

Brazil, for its part, is ready to follow that advice.

While nuclear disarmament remains the foremost concern of the majority of the international community, conventional weapons have received increasing attention. Belonging to a region which presents the lowest levels of military expenditure and having a long tradition of peaceful relations, based on mutual confidence and strong links of co-operation, Brazil looks with concern to the accumulation of huge arsenals. Those arsenals have a destabilizing effect, particularly in regions where tension is high or where real conflict exists.

This Organization has already set forth a series of principles, particularly in paragraph 22 of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, regarding the balanced reduction of armed forces and of conventional armaments. More recently, at this year's session the United Nations Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus a document dealing with conventional disarmament. A study regarding international arms transfers is being drawn up by a group of governmental experts.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

All these efforts should set the basis for future work in dealing with the issue in a responsible manner. My delegation is prepared to work towards setting clear guidelines regarding the issues involved in the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons, together with negotiations on nuclear disarmament, with balanced measures of conventional disarmament, based on the principle of undiminished security of the States involved.

We have examined with interest the proposals put forward by some delegations and reflected in the Secretary-General's report on the question of an international register of arms transfers. We share the perception that transparency would certainly contribute to disarmament efforts and we look forward to considering the conclusions of the study at present under way, which could be supplemented by a study of the question from the angle of the production of armaments. When we address the question of transfers, a clear distinction should be made between legal and illegal, or covert, arms transfers, as the former are a question of disarmament while illegal transfers are an illicit activity that should be dealt with accordingly.

After many frustrating sessions, with meagre results, this year the Disarmament Commission was able to agree, under the experienced guidance of Ambassador Sutresna of Indonesia, on recommendations on four items on its agenda: South Africa's nuclear capability, the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, conventional disarmament, and the text of the draft declaration of the 1990s as the third disarmament decade. We also adopted recommendations on the item dealing with naval armaments and disarmament, regrettably with the absence of one delegation. Initial consideration was given also to the item dealing with objective information on military matters. The successful outcome of the session highlights the fact that effectiveness is not predicated on procedure but rather derives from the political commitment to achieve concrete results. These fruitful

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results should strengthen our resolve to enhance the role of the Disarmament Commission as the deliberative body on disarmament, by fully implementing the reform plan we adopted, which allowed us to conclude our consideration of those items and which opens new prospects for the future work of the Commission.

We favour the adoption, at this session of the General Assembly, of a resolution which would recommend a working agenda for next year's session of the Disarmament Commission. By adopting our working agenda well in advance of the 1991 substantive session of the Commission, we would allow delegations time for appropriate preparations and for setting up the necessary groundwork. Consultations are already well under way regarding the composition of the agenda, with many proposals before us. My delegation has already pointed out the criteria that should guide the composition of our agenda, which should be seen as a whole and negotiated as such. The final result should be a balanced agenda, in which the different interests and positions can be contemplated in the selection of the four items. I am sure that we shall be able to reach a satisfactory and balanced working agenda before the end of this session.

In the draft declaration on the third disarmament decade adopted by consensus by the Disarmament Commission, we acknowledged the profound interrelationship of questions relating to disarmament, social and economic development and environmental protection. The world military expenditure is in tragic contrast to the misery and poverty that affect the majority of mankind, feeding the vicious circle of poverty, environmental devastation and poverty.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

The Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development should serve as a warning and as a stimulus for the international community to take immediate action to disarm and use the resources so freed to help in the urgent tasks of development and environmental protection.

Moreover, through many documents, in particular the Brundtland report, the international community has recognized that the mere existence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the risk of their utilization, poses the gravest danger to the world's environment, as such weapons are not only capable of elimiminating life several times over, but can also make large areas of our environment uninhabitable or sterile for decades or even centuries.

Concern over the preservation of the environment from the effects of the arms race is already present in the Antarctic Treaty, the sea-bed Treaty, the outer space Treaty and the partial test-ban Treaty as testimony to the efforts already made to preserve those environments from the threat of destruction. Furthermore, many studies have been produced by the United Nations on the subject and on related matters.

It is high time that the United Nations consider, in a more systematic way and as a contribution to the international concern over the issue, the undeniable relationship between disarmament, development and the protection of the world's environment. While not discarding other possible means to consider this subject, we believe that the Disarmament Commission, as the deliberative body on disarmament, could make a significant contribution in this matter in the context of the preparations for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

Allow me to come back to an issue I raised from a different angle at the beginning of my statement. As in previous years, the issue of streamlining the work of the First Committee is before us. The task gains even more importance

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owing to the growing awareness of the opportunity to advance the multilateral disarmament efforts that might be at hand with the changes in international relations. An overloaded agenda, with a large number of marginal issues and resolutions on the same issues which sometimes produce contradictory recommendations, and the lack of real and sincere efforts to breach differences, are basic problems with which we have to deal.

My delegation is prepared to examine constructive and practical proposals that can contribute towards solving these long-standing problems of this Committee. We should recognize, however, as was certainly the case in the Disarmament Commission, that no amount of organizational restructuring or revamping of the machinery can substitute for genuine good faith and a real determination to solve collectively the questions of disarmament.

Let me conclude by recalling a statment made by Ambassador Marcos de Azumbuja, currently the Brazilian Secretary-General for Foreign Policy. At last year's general debate on the items on disarmament, Ambassador de Azambuja said:

> "We are relieved by the signs that a new era is beginning, one of dialogue, transparency, détente and demobilization of military might. Let us hope that this trend proves to be deep-rooted and permanent, contradicting our somewhat ingrained pessimism, natural after repeated frustrations. Let us hope also that this new peaceful era of convergence between the foes of yesterday will not be built at the expense of those of us in the developing world, and that the new order will not forget its responsibilities towards those that lived through the cold-war years either as close spectators or minor actors, or as its victims". (A/C.1/44/PV.6, p. 45)

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Yasushi Akashi.

Mr. AKASHI (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): Allow me, first of all, Mr. Chairman, to express my great personal satisfaction and pleasure at your well-deserved election to your high post and to pledge to you the full co-operation of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. My warm congratulations go also to your three other colleagues, the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur.

Permit me also to join in the expression of our deep gratification over the news this morning from Oslo of the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his outstanding achievements, which have indeed transformed the global landscape for peace and disarmament.

The First Committee is beginning its first truly post-cold-war session. The growing co-operation between the United States and the Soviet Union and between the two major alliances, and the resulting diminishing sense of danger, might in some respects have been expected to lead to less emphasis on questions related to security and disarmament. However, it is evident from the debate in plenary meetings that many Member Governments continue to attach profound importance to issues of disarmament and arms reduction. Many have said that the evolving developments should be utilized to consolidate and expand areas of disarmament agreements and that urgent efforts should be directed to several new areas. I am confident that the First Committee will wish to conduct its business in the spirit of constructive co-operation to help resolve new as well as old issues on its agenda.

Much attention is being paid to the great danger of proliferation of nuclear, chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction. We are warned that redundant arms resulting from East-West disarmament agreements should not find their way to other areas of the world for short-term economic or political gains.

(Mr. Akashi)

Scientific and technological developments should be closely monitored so that they will be utilized not to intensify arms competition but to verify agreements, reinforce stability, and further human welfare.

Many speakers have also referred to the key role of regional efforts for disarmament as a complement to global endeavours. Confidence-building measures have been pointed out as important in preparing the groundwork for subsequent arms reductions. We can only rejoice in the acceptance by more and more States of a broadly defined notion of security going beyond military security. Efforts must be accelerated to reach more agreements by capitalizing on the situation brought about by positive and dramatic developments in Europe. At the same time, there are disturbing developments which call for greater vigilance by the international community, in particular in dealing with local tensions and conflicts in several regions in the world.

Disarmament and arms control are part and parcel of an overall political process. They play an important part in reducing levels of tension. It is not suprising, therefore, that there is a growing conviction that arms reduction should constitute an essential element in any effort towards peace and stabilization. Efforts towards the reduction of arms and armed forces should be combined with peace-making and peace-keeping in particular situations.

The First Committee is meeting at a time of unprecedented changes in the world. Efforts towards the normalization of relations are now spreading beyond Europe to many parts of the world, including southern Africa, North-East Asia, South-East Asia and Central America.

(Mr. Akashi)

The Middle East, particularly the Persian Gulf area, and parts of Africa remain, however, a glaring contrast to the generally favourable outlook in the world. The gathering threat of conflict once again casts a shadow over the brighter prospects of security that are being achieved through constructive peace and co-operation.

On nuclear arms issues there is a contradictory picture. On the one hand, major bilateral steps towards reductions are being pursued by the two major Powers; on the other, global efforts for nuclear non-proliferation have been enmeshed in a dispute over a comprehensive test ban. While it is hoped that Governments will continue their negotiations to strike an acceptable balance between their differing perspectives, it will be necessary to ensure that many positive elements which appear to have been accepted in the course of deliberations at the recent Fourth Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty not be lost sight of entirely.

It is regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament, despite its persistent work, has made only limited progress on the chemical weapons convention. Time is running out on this matter, and I am certain that 1991 will be a decisive year for the adoption of the convention. I assure Member States that the Secretariat will be ready to co-operate fully with the members of the Conference on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons in providing whatever services are needed to complete expeditiously the work on the Convention.

The global disarmament scene has, to the dismay of many, so far reflected only incompletely the positive and concrete progress made in bilateral and regional disarmament. A ray of hope has been introduced, however, in the work of the Disarmament Commission, which this last spring under its dedicated Chairman, Ambassador Sutresna of Indonesia, and other able Chairmen of the subsidiary bodies

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recorded a noteworthy series of agreements and conclusions on some of the perennial items on its agenda. It shows that serious efforts for dialogue and rationalization are not in vain, even in the thorny area of multilateral disarmament.

In arms limitation and disarmament the United Nations agenda is a lengthy one, reflecting its continuing preoccupation over the years and new concerns resulting from the recent international developments. The Secretariat is deeply engaged in fulfilling the ever-growing list of mandates given by the Assembly. The Department for Disarmamen[illegible] :airs is entrusted with providing an expanding range of substantive and procedural services with respect to the various intergovernmental bodies dealing with disarmament issues, including the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, as well as the meetings and conferences of States parties to disarmament agreements. The preparatory and follow-up actions required in connection with the deliberation and negotiation activities outlined above continue to make heavy demands on the limited resources of the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

As the Committee is aware, there has been an upsurge of interest among Member Governments in conducting systemtic surveys on particular subjects through the work of groups of governmental experts. I cannot over-emphasize the usefulness of having governmental experts associated with such an exercise. They bring to bear the general concerns of their Governments, and yet, at the same time, they serve as qualified individual experts. Accordingly, they provide a judicious balance of [illegible]litical, with technical and intellectual, requirements.

[illegible] studies requested by the General Assembly are neither academic nor theoretical research of an abstract nature; nor are they straight diplomatic negotiations. These studies often stake out the essential middle ground between pure research and negotiations. They may thus be called "pre-negotiation",

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representing a careful and comprehensive assessment of a complex field prior to governmental representatives commencing formal consideration of the subject in question.

I am sure that Member Governments would wish to consider what subjects are most appropriate for different types of studies. Some of these may be ripe for exploration by the proven means of groups of governmental experts. Others could be dealt with more appropriately through diplomatic negotiations or academic research. Still others may best be considered within the format of a general conference with participants of diverse backgrounds who could produce a useful cross-fertilization of ideas.

Two years ago the General Assembly established two groups of governmental experts dealing with nuclear weapons and the role of the United Nations in verification. In addition, it commissioned expert studies which might be called "mini-studies" in two other areas - namely, on effective and verifiable measures that would facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and on South Africa's nuclear-tipped ballistic missile capability.

I believe that the comprehensive study on nuclear weapons (A/45/373), ably chaired by Ambassador Maj Britt Theorin of Sweden, who already spoke about her report, is a thorough assessment of the question, going beyond the mere updating of a similar study conducted 10 years ago. Participation of experts from three nuclear-weapon Powers in the new study has given a unique character to the exercise, although this element may have made it perhaps more difficult to reach consensus within the group.

The study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification (A/45/372) was the result of an Assembly decision arrived at after great efforts among countries with substantially different positions on this matter, which was a

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major focus of attention at the third special session on disarmament in 1988. The group was competently chaired by Ambassador Fred Bild of Canada, and reached conclusions and recommendations by consensus.

The study on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East (A/45/435) and that of South Africa's nuclear-tipped missile capability (A/45/571) were conducted by much smaller groups of independent experts. Assisted by the Department of Disarmament Affairs, as required, these experts have assembled the latest available information and provided thoughtful analyses of two sensitive topics.

I should like to express my sincere thanks to all the experts as well as the Governments concerned for their co-operation with the Secretary-General in preparing the studies. These reports should help in pushing forward areas of common understanding and joint approaches to highly complex questions.

Another study by governmental experts commissioned by the Assembly in 1988 on "transparency in conventional arms transfers" will be completed by mid-1991 and presented to the Assembly at its next session. In this connection the United Nations Secretariat was able to join forces with the Government of Italy, the City of Florence and a non-governmental organization called the "Forum for the Problems of Peace and War" in hosting a seminar on arms transfers last April. It was a parallel exercise to the ongoing United Nations study but with the broader participation of a number of academics and experts, as well as non-governmental representatives and political leaders, and served to highlight the growing importance of the arms transfer question in the contemporary world. Representatives are aware in this connection of the proposal made by the Secretary-General in his annual report this year to establish an international arms transfer register.

(Mr. Akashi)

(spoke in French)

In line with the adoption in the past two years, of resolutions on scientific and technological developments and their impact on international security, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, in co-operation with the Government of Japan and the city of Sendai, convened a seminar on this subject last April. This meeting of experts drawn from several scientific disciplines, as well as from political, diplomatic, media and non-governmental circles, was an enriching cross-cultural experience in more than one sense.

The discussions held in Sendai were based on commissioned papers dealing with five technological areas in which developments could have security implications: nuclear technology; space technology; information technology; materials technology and bio-technology.

The projections of future developments in these five areas, as well as some broader political and moral questions, were the subject of a frank, rich and fruitful exchange of views among high-level professionals from different disciplines. In this connection, representatives will see how much the report of the Secretary-General on this subject (A/45/568) has benefited from the wide-ranging discussions which took place.

Last June the Department for Disarmament Affairs conducted a seminar on confidence-building measures in the maritime domain at Helsingor, Denmark, at which it had the honour to welcome the Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. This was followed in September by another seminar on the subject in Varna, Bulgaria.

While full harmonization of positions held by participants could hardly have been expected in an area as controversial as that of naval disarmament, both

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seminars were considered by the participants to have been particularly useful in clarifying the views expressed and in identifying areas for future exploration.

The largest gathering organized by the Department for Disarmament Affairs this year dealt with the question of conversion, or the economic adjustments involved in the change from military to civilian industries. That gathering was held in Moscow in August with the support of the Government of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Peace Fund. It was attended by more than 150 participants from over 40 different countries. Various United Nations agencies and programmes such as the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also participated. In addition to diplomats, political leaders, industrialists, plant managers and trade-unionists, a large number of economists and some non-governmental organizations took part. A lively debate took place on a highly topical issue now confronting many countries faced with substantial reductions in their defence budgets. The Conference provided an opportunity for an exchange of the most recent national experiences in facing the challenge of weapons disposal and the diversification products into the civilian sector.

The Secretariat, through these activities, is trying to monitor developments in different areas, anticipate new issues and identify areas of agreement and even solutions. The Department does so with the generous help of Governments, experts, non-governmental organizations and foundations. I wish to acknowledge the valuable advice that the Department receives, in this connection, from the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, as it shares with us its wealth of experience and its insights into an area of interest to us.

Many Governments attach increasing importance to regional and subregional approaches to disarmament and arms limitation. Promotion of greater co-operation

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among Governments and other organizations in this matter is an objective pursued by our Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament located in Lomé, Togo, for Africa; in Lima, Peru, for Latin America and the Caribbean; and in Kathmandu, Nepal, for Asia and the Pacific. Extremely useful discussions have been conducted at these centres, as well as elsewhere, in the respective regions under the auspices of the Centres. These meetings provide an appropriate forum where diplomats and others from various disciplines, mostly from the regions concerned but sometimes from outside the region as well, can meet and identify areas for common approaches to the problems of the countries of the region or of a smaller subregional grouping. I feel strongly that the value of the dialogue organized by these Regional Centres, where participants often speak in their personal capacity, is widely appreciated. The Department for Disarmament Affairs intends to pursue these discussions, within the limits of its extrabudgetary resources, in close consultation with the Governments and non-governmental organizations concerned.

(continued in English)

The General Assembly has before it a report of the Secretary-General on the World Disarmament Campaign (A/45/555), which this year consists of two parts: routine information on the activities undertaken during the past year and an assessment of achievements and shortcomings of the Campaign as perceived by the Secretariat - an assessment which was requested by the Assembly. It is this latter part on which the Secretariat is particularly anxious to hear the views of representatives. Since its launching at the second special session devoted to disarmament in 1982, the World Disarmament Campaign has, in my opinion, proven to be an effective instrument for deepening the understanding of disarmament matters by the general public, as well as by more articulate sectors of public opinion,

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such as non-governmental organizations and others, through the dissemination of objective and balanced information.

In our view, in addition to the general and global thrust of the Campaign, the new situation evolving in disarmament matters calls for a more issue-oriented approach with greater emphasis on in-depth consideration of specific topics. This would mean more co-operation with all five constituencies of the World Disarmament Campaign as well as actual negotiators. Dialogue with non-governmental organizations may also involve a new focus in that disarmament non-governmental organizations may have to engage ecological non-governmental organizations in discussions on finding environmentally safe ways for the destruction of weapons, for example. We need both to promote the positive trends witnessed in the past few years and to help channel attention in new directions in which greater public involvement is needed.

An innovative, forward-looking attitude is required, as well as a comprehensive outlook on the subject-matter concerned, in relation to the totality of our tasks. The World Disarmament Campaign should not become a routine, compartmentalized activity. The flexibility of the Campaign should be used to enlist the support of other groups, and diverse professions should be associated with ongoing activities so that their discussions can be enriched and refined by different perspectives. Financial provisions will, however, have to be made for the Campaign, and I hope the Committee will address this question also.

(Mr. Akashi)

The information activities of the Department for Disarmament Affairs continue to be reviewed and redirected to keep pace with changing disarmament scenes and priorities. To cite a few examples, our new publication, entitled Topical Papers, our attempt to co-produce, with the Department of Public Information and, it is hoped, with significant outside financial assistance, a major documentary film on chemical weapons, and our greater co-operation with university groups reflect this awareness.

We are entering the eleventh year of our disarmament fellowship programme. The programme continues to attract much interest, not only from developing countries, but also from some developed countries. It has been considered a unique opportunity to train staff and to promote expertise in disarmament matters. An ever-widening circle of former disarmament fellows in the world testifies to its relevance. It will be noted that this year we have invited associate fellows from the two parts of Korea as a contribution to the relaxation of tension in North-East Asia.

As for 1991, we are already preparing for another extremely busy year. In addition to the planned session of the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, the Department will also have to provide the services for the partial test-ban Treaty amendment Conference, as well as the Third Review Conference on biological weapons. Our regional centres will be active in organizing seminars, symposia and regional workshops in Cameroon, Venezuela, Nepal and Indonesia. In addition, we are holding discussions with the Soviet Peace Fund about a possible conference in Leningrad, with Japan about a meeting in Kyoto, and with the Government of Austria about a seminar on global confidence-building measures to be held in Vienna next February.

(Mr. Akashi)

Furthermore, we are gratified to find significant interest in follow-up steps of the two conferences we held this year, which dealt with the implications of science and technology for international security and with the question of conversion of military industries to civ' an purposes. These conferences and seminars should all be placed in the overall, global context of our unceasing attempt to promote progressively greater clarity and the convergence of views on questions of security, arms control and disarmament among as many Member States as possible.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs intends to modernize and strengthen its disarmament data base so that it can better serve Governments and others with comprehensive updated data, available electronically and instantaneously to appropriate users on various aspects of disarmament, such as chemical weapons negotiations, verification related to a chemical weapons convention, arms expenditures, and available expertise in different areas. I am glad to have had the opportunity to convene informal discussions in Geneva with members of the Conference on Disarmament on this matter in May and August. These consultations have reinforced my conviction regarding the significance attached by Member States to a comprehensive, freely accessible and modern disarmament data base, which will facilitate reflection, consideration and negotiation. I also feel that such a data base will be able to respond to some of the recommendations made in the recent study on the role of the United Nations in verification. A functioning data base could also provide a ready-to-use mechanism for following trends and developments in areas related to disarmament issues.

The challenges facing us in the area of arms limitation and disarmament are immense, even overwhelming. While progress may be slow at times, it has certainly been gratifying in some respects in the last few years. The Secretariat

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considers it a unique privilege to be a partner in the continuing common endeavour of the international community to push forward towards a safer, less armed and more humane world. Agreements are not reached as often as we would wish, and there have even been bitter set-backs. While actual protagonists in negotiations are Governments themselves, the Secretariat would like to be an ever-watchful, helpful and imaginative facilitator and even a catalyst, if such a role is desired by Governments.

Member States have a long disarmament agenda in the forthcoming several weeks of this Committee, as well as next year. I wish the Committee success in its deliberations, under your outstanding leadership, Mr. Chairman. Your responsibility is great, and you are meeting at a time of unusual opportunity. The Secretariat will continue to assist members of the Committee to the maximum of its capabilities.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to remind members of the Committee that, in accordance with the decision of the Committee as reflected in its programme of work and timetable, the list of speakers for the general debate on all disarmament agenda items will be closed today at 6 p.m. I hope that those delegations which have not yet inscribed their names on the list of speakers will do so as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.