



FIRST COMMITTEE
15th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 21 October 1987
at 3.30 p.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/42/PV.15
27 October 1987
ENGLISH

40p.

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. IBÁÑEZ (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): As I am speaking today for the first time in the First Committee, Mr. Chairman, I should like to express the satisfaction of my delegation at your election. Your ample experience and deep knowledge of the items on our agenda will be of great importance for the success of our work. I also congratulate the officers of the Committee.

Last week the representative of Denmark made a statement on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, including Spain, in which he pointed out that the work of the First Committee cannot be viewed in isolation from the general evolution of international relations and, in particular, East-West relations.

This evolution casts a ray of hope on our work. On many occasions, Member States have regretted that, despite intense efforts at dialogue and negotiation and the existence of various bodies devoted to disarmament, the arms race not only has not been halted, much less reversed, but has continued its irrational and alarming course. Our criticism is not concentrated so much on the structural or institutional deficiencies that have prevented progress towards disarmament as on the lack of the political will to achieve it on the part of States, above all States with greater responsibility in this field.

However, on this occasion, at the beginning of our work in this Committee, we can for the first time in many years welcome a new spirit in the approach to disarmament which is exemplified by the latest developments in the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Our optimism has to be cautious, but we cannot fail to stress that what has until now been a fervent,

(Mr. Ibañez, Spain)

but unfortunately unfulfilled, wish of the international community could well today be a ray of hope based more on the strength of reason than on mere illusion. It is the hope that before the end of this year there could be an unprecedented agreement of historic significance to eliminate certain categories of nuclear weapons. It will be the first disarmament agreement, in the strictest sense, that has ever been achieved.

(Mr. Ibañez, Spain)

We are convinced that if this agreement is reached, all the conditions will be in place for others to follow, since an extremely important psychological barrier will have been broken and something that seemed Utopian will have been proved - that it is possible to reduce, and to reduce drastically, nuclear weapons through negotiations. Moreover, this could be achieved without reducing security - we believe, on the contrary, that security would be enhanced at higher levels of confidence - and without invalidating military doctrines, which have so often been misused as an excuse for a concept of security based on the qualitative and quantitative development of armaments.

Certainly, the elimination of intermediate nuclear weapons would be the most outstanding result of the agreement in principle reached last month between the United States of America and the Soviet Union, but it would not be the only one. Following a positive evolution already visible in the past few months, we hope to see considerable progress in an area we deem essential for the credibility of any disarmament agreement - verification.

The agreements that will be signed in due course for the elimination of intermediate-range nuclear weapons will certainly include the necessary provisions to guarantee their respect by both parties through verification techniques, including on-site inspection, which, if agreed, will be evidence of a clear will to make that respect not only real but also visible and verifiable. My Government has repeatedly called attention to its conviction that disarmament agreements must include appropriate verification provisions if they are to be at all effective and long-lasting. Consequently, we welcome this positive approach to the issue.

My delegation also considers that this new climate should be further developed and strengthened through the signature, as soon as possible, of an agreement to reduce strategic nuclear weapons by 50 per cent.

(Mr. Ibañez, Spain)

Another positive outcome that we welcome is the joint Soviet-American communiqué of 17 September on the readiness of both parties to explore in the near future practical ways to achieve the cessation of nuclear tests. Spain, which is a party to the partial test-ban Treaty, has always considered that the conclusion of a treaty banning all tests, while not a substitute for efforts to reduce existing nuclear arsenals, is an important step in their elimination. Consequently, my Government expresses its satisfaction with this new - albeit limited - impetus to a subject it considers of the utmost importance.

Together with its expression of satisfaction at the developments to which I have referred, my delegation would nevertheless like to reiterate its conviction that nuclear and conventional disarmament are not separate questions. Our objective should be general and complete disarmament. In the meantime, peace will be preserved only if there is a balance in the arms arsenals of the different States to do away with any temptation to aggression.

We shall not be able to build a safer world only by eliminating nuclear weapons. We recognize the importance of an agreement that could be reached to that end, but efforts in that direction should not deter a parallel process in the area of conventional disarmament, which must be followed with the same intensity and determination at both the global and the regional levels. Spain is fully committed in that sense to the efforts being carried out in Europe, built upon the encouraging results of the Stockholm Conference on confidence-building on the continent, within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) to establish the basis for negotiation on conventional stability at lower levels of forces.

In the framework of the United Nations itself, we hope that at its coming session the United Nations Disarmament Commission will continue its consideration in depth of the question of conventional disarmament, and we are confident that it will make progress.

(Mr. Ibañez, Spain)

If we do not at the moment have sound reasons to be optimistic in regard to conventional disarmament, we note with satisfaction the important progress made in the Conference on Disarmament regarding the drafting of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction. The evidence of their past as well as their present use, in violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, reinforces the need to conclude such a convention.

In view of the present course of negotiations, we hope that the difficulties still outstanding on articulating a safe, efficient and rapid system of verification can be overcome without delay and that a solution can be found for the other specific questions still pending - concerning, inter alia, the declaration of stockpiles, the order of their elimination and the application of sanctions in cases of violation.

Spain, which neither possesses nor wishes to possess chemical weapons, is open in all these areas to flexible formulations which will make it possible to achieve consensus on the elimination of these weapons of mass destruction, while at the same time ensuring the necessary strict compliance with the Convention. As our objective is the complete elimination of those weapons, we view with concern certain proposals that would result in the acceptance of a temporary chemical rearmament in order to reach a balance that does not exist today.

In the past few weeks, the Spanish Parliament has concluded the process of approval that will permit my country to deposit in the near future its instruments of accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Spain will thus legally confirm a de facto renunciation of nuclear weapons and will at the same time formally sanction in the international sphere the decision approved by the Spanish people in a referendum last year to prohibit the installation, stockpiling and introduction of nuclear weapons on Spanish

(Mr. Ibañez, Spain)

territory. We consider this decision an important contribution to strengthening the non-proliferation régime.

My delegation fully shares the concern of the international community about a possible extension of the arms race to outer space. It is imperative that the military use of outer space remain restricted to stabilizing functions such as the objective observation of the data required to verify compliance with commitments undertaken in the fields of confidence-building measures, arms limitation and disarmament, and the prevention of acts of aggression. In this connection, we hope that the bilateral negotiations between the two super-Powers will result in formulas to implement their declared commitment to prevent an arms race in outer space and that the parallel work of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament will soon yield tangible results. In the meantime, we remain convinced of the importance of strict respect for the present terms of the ABM Treaty.

The Spanish Delegation is satisfied with the results of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. The participating countries have demonstrated not only a considerable disposition to dialogue but also a remarkable will to compromise. This has resulted in a final document that fulfils the objective of launching a necessary and suitable process of collective analysis of the relationship between two important topics of our time in this multilateral forum of the United Nations.

We are convinced that in the future this will be one of the most important topics on our agenda. The Conference held recently in New York has in our opinion established a suitable basis for continuing the review of these problems and has laid down the fundamental elements that will direct action by Governments in this field.

(Mr. Ibañez, Spain)

In a few months' time we shall face another important challenge when we meet at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We hope that the same constructive spirit as presided over the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, together with what we expect will be favourable conditions on the international scene, will enable the special session to produce the positive results we desire. My delegation has given its views on the draft agenda, which we would like to be realistic and, at the same time, far-reaching, and has expressed its conviction that the best way to contribute to the session's success will be for Member States to concentrate their efforts towards the future, building on the consensus reached in the Final Document of the first special session.

I should like to conclude with a reference to that desirable consensus. In the last few years we have repeatedly insisted that the authority of the First Committee does not rest on the number of resolutions approved. I believe that we have exceeded the reasonable limit of texts that we can absorb and study with the necessary seriousness, while, at the same time, no effort has been made to enlarge the number of Member States approving them. We need to be moderate in number and generous in compromise in order to make consensus the corner-stone of the Committee and the guarantee of the prestige of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, in which we wish to see it play a central role. The delegation of Spain will be inspired in its work by that principle.

Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria): As I have already mentioned in presenting the report of the Disarmament Commission, the majority of delegations view the last session of the Commission as having been successful, although it failed to achieve the desired progress on all agenda items. The session demonstrated that the Disarmament Commission is gradually finding its place as a broadly representative organ in the disarmament mechanism of the United Nations, with ample opportunities

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

for maintaining contacts, exchanging views on major issues and exerting influence on the entire process of disarmament discussions and negotiations. The work done at the last session of the Commission has acquired particular importance in view of the forthcoming third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

I would like to dwell in greater detail on two of the items on the Commission's agenda to which Bulgaria devotes particular attention, namely, naval disarmament and verification.

The curbing of the naval arms race, the limitation and reduction of naval armaments and the extension of confidence-building measures to the seas and oceans constitute a relatively new area in the efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament. The inclusion of that item in the agenda of the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission reflects the growing concern of the majority of Member States that the further build-up and intensification of naval activities endanger international peace and security, upset stability on a global scale and within individual regions, and may lead to the escalation and widening of existing conflicts. In this connection I would like to express our concern over the increased foreign naval presence in the Persian Gulf, which heightens tensions and violates the provisions of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), which calls upon all States to refrain from interfering in that region.

Recent naval developments have put the curbing of the naval arms race in the forefront of efforts to eliminate the military threat. The world's seas and oceans are increasingly being transformed into a major arena for the nuclear-arms race, where over 13,000 nuclear warheads have been deployed and missiles and other nuclear-weapon delivery vehicles are being flight tested. The intensified naval presence in various regions and the ambiguities concerning the presence of nuclear

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

arms aboard naval ships and submarines are fraught with the danger of provoking incidents at sea and of the outbreak of a conflict of unpredictable consequences.

Another source of danger is the strategic plans that apply the doctrine of nuclear deterrence to the world's seas and oceans, as well as the naval armaments designed to implement those plans. The deployment of offensive counter-force weapons at sea, the strategy designed to hole up enemy naval forces destined for destruction, the anti-submarine-warfare plans, the build-up of powerful aircraft-carrier task forces and their constant presence around the globe, the establishment of a world-wide network of naval bases - in short, the whole ambition to transform the world's seas and oceans into a springboard for nuclear deterrence but one which can also be used for launching a nuclear first strike - are all a reflection of the position-of-strength approach to international affairs. We therefore find it essential, with a view to achieving the denuclearization of the world's seas and oceans, to consider and adopt measures to curb and reverse these dangerous trends in the build-up of naval forces and armaments.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria is of the view that if the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as the other countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty or members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), would compare and co-ordinate the basic tenets of their military doctrines, and if the two sides would accept mutual security as the basis for their relations and agree upon its principles - first of all, the important principle of the non-first-use of nuclear weapons - it would be possible, as a first step, to eliminate certain types of naval armaments, limit certain missions of naval vessels armed with nuclear weapons and gradually proceed to a position in which they had only non-nuclear arms required for defence needs, on a basis of reasonable sufficiency, and to a more balanced composition of naval forces at sea, the demilitarization of certain sea and ocean areas and, thus, the establishment of a natural buffer zone among States.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

The Bulgarian delegation fully shares the concern expressed by many States over the geographic spread of nuclear arms to seas and oceans. In this connection we support the proposal not to deploy nuclear weapons in and to withdraw such weapons from certain oceans and sea areas. This aspect of the problem of naval arms is intricately linked to the efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, in ocean and sea areas, among others. Bulgaria, which is an ardent advocate of the idea of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world, welcomes the entry into force of the Rarotonga Treaty, which creates such a zone in the South Pacific, and hopes that, like the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, the other nuclear-weapon Powers will sign the relevant protocols to that Treaty. We also fully support the idea of transforming the South Pacific into a zone of peace and co-operation, as called for by the General Assembly. Also deserving of consideration is the readiness of the Soviet Union to provide guarantees for the nuclear-weapon-free status of the Baltic Sea within the context of a future nuclear-weapon-free zone in northern Europe. It is also our view that the reliable functioning of present and future nuclear-weapon-free zones would be greatly facilitated if the nuclear-weapon Powers would start to give notification of the absence of nuclear arms from their vessels within such zones.

What is particularly worrying is the deployment of cruise missiles at sea, which has opened a new, uncontrollable aspect of the nuclear-arms race. At a time when the world is welcoming the tentative agreement in principle between the Soviet Union and the United States to eliminate medium-range and shorter-range missiles, we cannot but take note of the aspirations of those in certain circles to replace the missiles to be eliminated with sea-based cruise missiles.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

It is obvious that a nuclear war cannot remain confined to the sea alone. Therefore, it is our view that any negotiations should include tactical nuclear weapons based at sea, the possible use of which, in an armed conflict or as a result of miscalculation, might lead to the outbreak of all-out nuclear war. A number of Member States have made this point time and again in their statements.

The adoption of certain measures on a regional scale would have a major impact on the strengthening of peace and the prevention of conflict situations. They are, for example, the reduction of naval fleet activities in the Pacific Ocean, including limiting the patrol areas of Soviet and American naval vessels with nuclear weapons on board to as far away from the shores of other countries as to have those countries outside the reach of their nuclear weapons, the limitation and prohibition of anti-submarine warfare in certain ocean and sea areas, a limitation on the number and level of naval fleet activities of any non-littoral State in the Indian Ocean and the withdrawal of the naval forces of the United States and the Soviet Union from the Mediterranean Sea, and so on.

Equally important is the question of ensuring the security of maritime communications by confidence-building measures of a political, legal and military-technical nature and the non-use of force. In our view, the elaboration of such security guarantees in the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, in the Persian Gulf and in the international straits should be the subject-matter of early negotiations. Measures to combat terrorism and piracy on the high seas could also be worked out.

In the view of many Member States, there are good prospects for constructive consideration of extending confidence-building measures to the seas and oceans, such as prior notification regarding fleet exercises, transfers and manoeuvres, inviting observers, restricting cruising and patrol activities of naval formations, limiting the levels and intensity of naval exercises - including of amphibious

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

forces - prohibiting fleet exercises or manoeuvres in international straits and adjacent regions, as well as the use of live ammunition during exercises in areas of traditional sea lanes, and so on. These issues could be given priority consideration in a general context as well as in the context of individual regions, such as the Indian and the Pacific Oceans, the Mediterranean Sea, and the seas of northern Europe.

We find equally interesting the idea of elaborating a multilateral agreement to prevent incidents at sea. Such an agreement should present no difficulty whatever, given the existence in this area of bilateral agreements in force between the Soviet Union and the United States as well as between the Soviet Union and Great Britain.

We are pleased to note that this year the Disarmament Commission has made considerable progress on the issue of confidence-building measures. In this connection, I should like to commend the personal contribution of Ambassador Alatas of Indonesia who, as our co-ordinator, invested a great deal of his time and diplomatic skill to achieve positive results. The document agreed upon reflects the understanding shared by the majority of delegations that, at this stage, certain confidence-building measures are ripe for further consideration and future negotiations. The People's Republic of Bulgaria also shares the opinion that the Disarmament Commission could take up consideration of confidence-building measures at an early stage since this is a matter where Member States could easily arrive at a common ground. The adoption of confidence-building measures could reduce the danger of armed conflict at sea and create favourable conditions for progress in the field of naval disarmament and strengthening international security.

This year the Disarmament Commission considered for the first time the question of verification in all its aspects on the basis of General Assembly resolution 41/86 Q, which was co-sponsored by Bulgaria. The adoption of that

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

resolution by consensus is an indication of the interest all Member States take in having the agreements reached provide for adequate systems of verification which would build confidence among States parties and facilitate implementation of the envisaged arms limitation and disarmament measures. The working group on the question of verification, under the able guidance of Ambassador Roche of Canada, had a constructive discussion which contributed to clarifying the position of countries and to identifying the areas of their possible convergence. The most positive result was the formulation of certain basic principles of verification which elaborate upon, and add to, the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the tenth special session.

It is our opinion that verification based on the principles of reciprocity, equality of States in their rights and obligations, and undiminished security, is an extremely important element of arms control and disarmament agreements and that verification requirements should be made increasingly stronger. In our view, effective verification is a guarantee that all States parties to agreements will comply with the obligations undertaken and will not try to circumvent them. The importance of verification is all the greater in view of the need to achieve a breakthrough in international relations, to build confidence among States and to adopt measures for genuine disarmament. We are in favour of effective and adequate verification at all stages and in all areas of arms limitation and disarmament - namely at the sites where weapons are dismantled and destroyed, at testing grounds and military bases, including those in third countries, at training centres, storage places and production facilities, be they State- or privately-owned.

At the same time, we oppose the misuse of verification as a pre-condition for, or an impediment to, having negotiations and agreements. In this connection, I would like to point out that for many years certain circles have exploited the problem of verification, not for fear of possible violations, but, as a former

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

high-ranking United States official has acknowledged, in order "to stop the mad momentum of arms control". It is not the policy of the member States of the Warsaw Treaty to violate agreements or to reject strict and comprehensive verification. The People's Republic of Bulgaria is in favour of complying unwaveringly with obligations undertaken under existing agreements, as well as preserving everything positive that has been achieved with painstaking efforts. Only thus will it be possible to preserve confidence among States and ensure favourable conditions for the elaboration of new agreements on arms limitation and reduction on the basis of openness, greater predictability and easier verification.

The joint Soviet-American experiment at Semipalatinsk, the inspection of the radar station at Krasnoyarsk by a group of American congressmen, the invitation to Snikhani, the presence of the American inspection team at Soviet military exercises - all are convincing evidence of the political will of the Soviet Union and its openness in the military field which provides a golden opportunity to reach sweeping agreements in the field of disarmament.

Further evidence of this constructive policy are the proposals for comprehensive verification of the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests, the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons and prevention of an arms race in outer space that have recently been put forward by the socialist countries at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. The consideration of the question of verification in the Disarmament Commission, which we find most timely and useful, should not be carried out in the abstract, but should contribute to current and future talks on arms limitation and disarmament. On the basis of the verification record of existing agreements, as well as the latest advances in science and technology, we should try to move ahead in developing principles, methods and procedures of verification in specific areas such as nuclear disarmament, conventional disarmament, prohibition of chemical weapons, a nuclear-weapon-test

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

ban, non-militarization of outer space, and so on. Such an approach would be in accordance with the principle enunciated in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, namely, that verification measures should correspond to the purposes, scope and nature of each agreement, a principle which has not been questioned by any State.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

The differentiated consideration of the organizational and technical aspects of verification in all fields should, of course, be based on the generally accepted provision of using national technical means and international verification procedures, including the establishment of international organs, exchange of military information, and on-site inspections in a combination necessary for the specific agreement. This general provision also needs further elaboration.

For example, one idea could be to agree on the conditions under which all States parties to an agreement would have access to pertinent information collected by national technical means. There could also be improvement in international procedures for co-operation, consultation, and exchange of information with a view to avoiding unwarranted accusations.

Another idea could be to strike a reasonable balance between systematic international on-site inspections, on the one hand, and challenge inspections in the event of a suspected violation of agreements, on the other; as well as to make better use of the good offices of the United Nations and other international organizations, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for example, in the verification of agreements.

Speaking of strengthening the role of the United Nations in this field, we proceed from our understanding of the need to establish within the United Nations framework an international mechanism for verification of compliance with the agreements on reducing international tension, on arms limitation and disarmament, and on the monitoring of the military situation in areas of conflict. The States parties to arms limitation and disarmament agreements could even at this early stage, on a mutual basis, provide the United Nations with periodic and comprehensive information about their compliance with respective obligations.

Finland's proposal to establish a verification data-base at the United Nations is also an attractive one.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

We consider that those issues should become the subject of serious consideration in the Disarmament Commission. It would be most useful in this respect if the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) would prepare an in-depth analytical study on ways and means of setting up an international verification mechanism within the United Nations framework.

The Bulgarian delegation is ready to co-operate in a constructive and business-like manner with all interested delegations for the clarification of verification problems with a view to facilitating the negotiations on effective disarmament agreements, including adequate verification systems.

Mr. COVARRUBIAS (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all, I wish to associate myself with the many congratulations that have been offered to you, Sir on your election to the chairmanship. I also wish to convey my congratulations to your fellow officers of the First Committee. Your diplomatic experience and ability certainly guarantee that our work will be successful.

This year the First Committee has started its work in a propitious, optimistic atmosphere for international relations, full of promise and hopeful prospects for the ongoing talks between the two great Powers that may well be a milestone in the history of disarmament. This atmosphere of unusual optimism is also being fostered by the achievements in Geneva in the field of chemical weapons, the Stockholm Agreement, the initiative of both super-Powers to start negotiations on a nuclear-test agreement; and the adoption by consensus of the Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which reflects a willingness to confront this problem realistically and without evading the issue or delaying matters and to take an important step in the concept of security covering not only military but also economic, social and humanitarian aspects.

(Mr. Covarrubias, Chile)

Chile, a country which cherishes peace, the rule of law and compliance with international obligations, has supported the principles of the Charter ever since it was first formulated. Consequently, we believe that compliance with the Charter is a categorical imperative for international coexistence, and we therefore advocate the strengthening of all legal norms that contribute to the compulsory peaceful settlement of disputes and to strengthening the powers of the United Nations and the Secretary-General.

Of course we must be pragmatic and realize that, since we are not protagonists ourselves and play only a minor role on the disarmament scene as a developing country, it is easy for us to find ourselves expressing excessively simple and fascile positions calling for general and complete disarmament - a goal with which we all agree but which must be achieved gradually through the establishment of a general atmosphere of trust. Within this context, we feel that one effective means to which all Member States - large and small, powerful and weak - can contribute is subregional or regional agreements.

Latin America, a region which for decades was free of armed conflict, can point with pride to the Tlatelolco Treaty, which established the first denuclearized zone in the world, and to the negotiations that led to the Guatemala Agreement, an important experiment which although applicable to one area can none the less lead to world peace.

As representatives are aware, in the 1980 Secretariat report on the nuclear test ban it is stated that one of the principal objectives of all United Nations work in the field of disarmament has been to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race, put an end to the production of nuclear weapons, and eventually eliminate them altogether. In this regard, the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is considered to be the prime and most urgent measure to end the nuclear arms race

(Mr. Covarrubias, Chile)

and could be an important step to foster nuclear non-proliferation. A treaty banning all tests would itself be the most important measure to curb the qualitative nuclear arms race.

We therefore enthusiastically welcome the initiative of the two great Powers in negotiating an agreement on nuclear tests with a view to bringing about their cessation. We hope with some optimism that this will be an example to be followed by the other members of the nuclear club, because, although my country is situated in a region in which nuclear weapons are prohibited, we are periodically affected by such testing.

As a coastal State on the Pacific Ocean, Chile wishes to place on record once again its strong protest at the nuclear tests held in the region and to reiterate the position of the countries members of the South Pacific Standing Commission - in that we vigorously reject the nuclear explosions in that geographical area since they constitute a grave threat to the marine environment and its natural resources, and pose a danger of nuclear radiation. If, as has been repeatedly claimed, they do not pose such a danger of nuclear radiation, then one wonders why the tests are being conducted so far from the continental frontiers of the country conducting them.

We believe it is of the highest importance to give effective backing to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to support one of its functions, namely, the monitoring of the nuclear plans of all States through the application of a proper and well-balanced safeguards system, without prejudice to the strengthening of effective nuclear co-operation, the Agency's principal function, which is the most efficient means of assuring nuclear development for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Covarrubias, Chile)

While there is every justification for granting priority to nuclear disarmament, because never in the history of mankind has the destructive capacity of a single weapon been so immediate and so global and never before has one had to cope with the real possibility of total self-destruction owing to the accumulation of weapons equivalent to 1 million Hiroshima-type bombs, it is the duty of the international community to remain alert and to be prepared to act effectively to cope with the conventional arms race in terms of both the frequency of the use of such weapons and the level of death and destruction they have caused, and also because of the expansion of the international transfers of such weapons.

The transfer to the third world of conventional weapons from developed countries and the existence of numerous conflicts in various parts of the world involving the major interests of the great Powers demonstrate the fragility of our system. Today armaments are so sophisticated that a conventional conflict can be almost as murderous and cruel as a local war involving the use of nuclear weapons. Their development in both quantitative and qualitative terms has increased in geometric terms over the past few decades and accounts for a large share of world military spending. In fact, they make up more than 80 per cent, a proportion which is a heavy burden on developing countries.

Until transfers to third-world countries can be brought under control the regional arms race will continue to give rise to a major problem that must be tackled with imagination and strong political will. We believe that the regional dimension of disarmament merits our full attention because, as we have said, it has a direct impact on the third world by cutting into its economic capacity and swelling its external debt.

It is necessary to promote confidence-building measures that will make countries feel less need to acquire sophisticated weapons and maintain unduly large armed forces.

These are the points that my delegation deems it necessary to submit to the Committee in this general debate, because we believe that in the vast disarmament field these are the ones of most immediacy, usefulness and urgency. We must not forget that our great task is to achieve nuclear disarmament and a reasonable limitation of conventional weapons, which, unfortunately, with each passing day continue on their inexorable course, which has so far proved irreversible. This will continue unless the great Powers and all the other States of the world promptly reach agreements leading to the control and reduction of all types of weapons.

In conclusion my delegation hopes that one day, and sooner rather than later, disarmament will become a reality so that there may be a world in which future generations can live in peace, security and prosperity.

Mr. TANTEM SAPYA (Thailand): On behalf of the Thai delegation, Sir, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you on being elected to the chairmanship of this Committee. My delegation is ready to co-operate with you and with the other officers of the Committee - to whom we extend our warm felicitations - in ensuring the success of this session.

It is an irrefutable fact that the world today is over-armed. At the same time, it is also an irrefutable fact that there prevails in this global village of ours a sense of renewed optimism, cherished by the sincere hope that the world we live in will be more secure in future. It is precisely because of this hope that the recent agreement in principle entered into between the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate intermediate- and short-range missiles, further fuels this sense of optimism. Thailand welcomes this as a move which is conducive to world peace and stability. My Prime Minister, in his speech to the General

(Mr. Tantemsapya, Thailand)

Assembly on 7 October, said, inter alia:

"Thailand is pleased to learn of the agreement in principle between the Soviet Union and the United States on the elimination of intermediate- and short-range missiles and of the forthcoming summit meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev. We hope that after this important beginning further efforts will be made to reduce the strategic missile arsenals by 50 per cent. Effective measures are also necessary in the fields of chemical and conventional weapons." (A/42/PV.28, p. 8-10)

The Thai delegation is therefore looking forward to the planned summit between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev this fall. We join the international community in the hope, as also reflected in the decision adopted in the plenary meeting this afternoon, that a treaty eliminating intermediate- and short-range missiles will be signed between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union at the said meeting. For the Thai delegation, this development clearly demonstrates that the strong political will, coupled with a sense of responsibility and strengthened by mutual confidence and trust, could lead, as they should, to concrete and tangible results which should in turn lead to further progress in other areas, particularly on the questions of disarmament and world peace discussed in the Committee.

General Assembly resolution 41/60 G, of 3 December 1986, called for the convening of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Given the growing concern over the arms race and the rapid development of weapons technology, the third special session on disarmament is both timely and necessary. My delegation takes note of the work of the Preparatory Committee so far. It is our hope that the final document of the third special session will provide us with guiding principles for disarmament efforts in the years to come.

(Mr. Tantemsapya, Thailand)

Military spending constitutes a huge proportion of most nations' budgets. Therefore, a stride in the field of disarmament would make available more funds for economic development. My delegation participated in the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development - irrespective of whether the two disciplines were interrelated - because of our belief that in the overall picture economic security can and does contribute positively to a reduction of tensions and thus to world peace. The Conference raised important new issues and helped to clarify existing ideas on the relationship between disarmament and development. The Final Document adopted by the Conference demonstrates a convergence of ideas and principles. Thus, what is now needed is an earnest effort by all concerned towards the implementation, in particular, of the programme of action.

We still hear reports of the alleged use of chemical and biological weapons in some regional conflicts. The conclusion of a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of such weapons is therefore urgently required. We welcome the work that has been accomplished by the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference on Disarmament, in Geneva. We look forward to further progress towards the completion of negotiations on this issue when the Ad hoc Committee resumes its meetings in January next year.

(Mr. Tantemsapya, Thailand)

Nuclear-weapon testing continues to be conducted in various parts of the world, and a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty - of which an overwhelming majority of States Members of this Organization are in favour - has yet to be concluded. My delegation notes with concern that, if nuclear testing were to continue, not only would existing treaties be weakened but the nuclear-arms race could be intensified and the risk of a nuclear holocaust increased. In that regard, my delegation believes that priority should still be accorded to the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. My delegation therefore welcomes the agreement between the United States of America and the Soviet Union to begin full-scale stage-by-stage negotiations on nuclear testing before 1 December 1987, to find effective measures of verification that will make it possible to ratify the 1974 Treaty on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests and the 1976 Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes, thus leading the way towards the ultimate goal of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban.

For 42 years the world has been successful in avoiding another global conflagration. However, that same period has seen approximately 150 regional conflicts, some of which are still going on today. In Asia, the continued occupation of Kampuchea and Afghanistan by foreign forces provides but two examples. The Iran-Iraq conflict is still going on unabated. Those conflicts and their repercussions have spilled over into neighbouring countries and are but a few examples of the regional conflicts that could escalate into a wider, or even a nuclear, war.

To the Thai delegation, therefore, the question of conventional weapons cannot be separated from the question of nuclear weapons. While working towards nuclear disarmament we must not lose sight of the importance and urgency of conventional disarmament. Modern conventional weapons are in use in regional conflicts around the world, and they have gained greater destructive power and accuracy owing to

(Mr. Tantemsapya, Thailand)

advances in technology. They have also become even more costly. The build-up and maintenance of military might in the form of conventional arsenals is therefore of deep concern to my delegation.

In other areas of peace and security, the Thai delegation supports in principle the idea, and the establishment, of zones of peace, including nuclear-weapon-free zones. We sincerely believe that these can help in no small measure to promote international peace and security. That is why Thailand, in co-operation with its partners in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), is considering ways and means of establishing a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia. The Thai delegation is very well aware that the co-operation of and guarantees by the big Powers in this endeavour are indispensable. We have already seen the slow progress in reaching the goals of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, which was adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session, in 1971. In that latter case, so long as co-operation is not forthcoming from all parties concerned, postponement or delay of the Conference on the Indian Ocean will be inevitable. As for Thailand, we continue to support the early convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean in conformity with the wishes of the littoral and hinterland States of that region.

All in all, the past year has seen interesting movement on the world scene in so far as disarmament and world peace and security are concerned. Many new and seemingly far-sighted ideas and concepts were advanced, and my delegation is following them with keen interest. However, many of those recent concepts and ideas, as well as the proposals contained in them, seem to the Thai delegation to be still impeded by big-Power rivalries. It seems to us also that we must wait a while before the momentum towards an agreement or understanding for a safer world picks up. Heartened by recent promising developments, my delegation would

(Mr. Tantemsapya, Thailand)

nevertheless like to echo once again the sentiment that, in the final analysis, international efforts to bring about genuine and effective disarmament and world peace will succeed only when there is mutual trust and confidence among all States. We reiterate also that States Members of the United Nations would do well to abide by the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

The international community must persuade those who prefer the military option for the settlement of disputes that in terms of other benefits to their security there is more than the military option, and that the security of one cannot be gained at the expense of the security of others.

Mr. GRANDERSON (Trinidad and Tobago): I should like, first of all, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. The admirable and skilled manner in which you have conducted the work of the Committee to date justifies the confidence unanimously placed in you. My delegation also extends its congratulations to the other Committee officers and pledges its full co-operation.

Despite the present difficulties and the volatility of the international political situation, there have been a number of encouraging developments in the area of nuclear-arms limitation and disarmament which are cause for cautious optimism and which, we hope, will have a positive effect on the work of the First Committee.

Constructive dialogue between the United States of America and the Soviet Union in the area of nuclear-arms limitation and reduction has resulted in an agreement in principle to eliminate intermediate-range and shorter-range nuclear weapons. Such an accord would be truly historic, as it would for the first time reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world. It could also contribute to the improvement of the general climate of East-West relations and give greater impetus to efforts to reduce the arsenals of strategic weapons.

(Mr. Granderson, Trinidad and Tobago)

My delegation is also heartened by the progress of the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on drafting a treaty on chemical weapons, although a number of thorny issues are still to be resolved. The announcement by the two super-Powers that negotiations on nuclear testing, which were suspended six years ago, will resume shortly is also encouraging. Some headway, both political and technical, seems to have been made in the complex area of verification, a fundamental element of arms control agreements.

The recent convening of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and the adoption by consensus of a Final Document were in many ways an achievement, and a victory for the multilateral approach to two of the greatest challenges facing the international community. By underlining the multidimensional links between those two concepts, the Conference made it clear that they were not two separate issues facing two different world constituencies. The Conference also broadened the definition of security by highlighting the non-military threats to national and international security. My delegation hopes that the groundwork laid at the Conference will be a base for future concerted action.

Despite these glimmers of hope, there has been a singular lack of progress in many other significant areas of nuclear disarmament where fundamental differences persist. The repeated urgings of the international community and the unilateral gesture of one of the two super-Powers have not yet brought an end to nuclear testing or advanced the conclusion of a nuclear-test-ban treaty.

(Mr. Granderson, Trinidad and Tobago)

The delegation of Trinidad and Tobago continues to believe that the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty is an essential prerequisite to curbing the qualitative spiral of the nuclear-arms race and to dampening the nuclear competition which has been a major source of distrust.

The possibility of outer space becoming the arena for an extension of the nuclear-arms race continues to be a source of great concern. On this twentieth anniversary of the entry into force under the auspices of the United Nations of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, there is a growing need for all Member States to ensure at both the bilateral and multilateral levels the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of mankind.

In spite of the international community's declared commitment to the maintenance and strengthening of nuclear non-proliferation, the clandestine nuclear activities of the apartheid South African régime continue to be a factor of destabilization in southern Africa and a serious obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

Though the issue of nuclear disarmament continues to be given, as it should be, the highest priority in the deliberations of the First Committee, my delegation is of the opinion that increasing attention must be paid to the question of conventional weapons and to the need for conventional disarmament. The massive build-up of conventional weapons, their deployment and use are a continuing threat to international security as well as to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and national independence of States. In a world in which over 80 per cent of the approximately \$1,000 billion spent annually on arms goes to the procurement of conventional weapons, this aspect of disarmament must not be underestimated.

The proliferation of ever more sophisticated conventional weapons and the magnitude of arms transfers, in particular to the developing world, are a source of

(Mr. Granderson, Trinidad and Tobago)

deep disquiet for my delegation. The acquisition of these weapons diverts scarce financial and human resources from the priority task of social and economic development. The negative impact of such expenditure is even more striking in the developing countries, whose fragile economies are already hard pressed to deal with the urgent demands of development. In his current report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General has rightly drawn attention to the gravity of this problem:

"The acquisition of large quantities of sophisticated arms by developing countries places a severe strain on badly needed resources while adding nothing to the strength of their economies. Furthermore, it adds to external debt and creates a secondary demand for imports that increases dependence."

(A/42/1, p. 9)

History has shown that the improvement and bloating of arsenals do not enhance national or regional security. Indeed, they aggravate internal tensions, exacerbate regional rivalries by upsetting regional balances and make conflicts, military or otherwise, even less amenable to political settlement. Lastly, it is evident that these conventional weapons are not acquired simply for their deterrent value. The fact that some 150 conflicts have taken place since the Second World War, all of them in the developing regions of the world, is ample testimony to their widespread use. These conflicts have exacted and continue to exact an unacceptable toll in deprivation, destruction and death.

A number of factors contribute to this disturbing proliferation of nuclear weapons. On the one hand, for many recipient countries the acquisition of arms is seen as a form of self-protection in an international climate of fear and distrust and of growing insecurity and instability. On the other hand, the manufacture and sale of arms have been increasingly important to the economic well-being of many industrialized countries. The militarization of international relations has also

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led to frequent recourse to arms transfers as an instrument of foreign policy, a means of favouring friends and demonstrating concern. This has created the paradoxical situation in which it is often easier to obtain military aid than development assistance.

Regional measures of disarmament for both nuclear and conventional forces, as well as regional initiatives aimed at enhancing regional stability and security and dissipating distrust, merit the full support of all Member States.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world is a means of avoiding entanglement in the competing strategic interests of the super-Powers as well as a unique regional disarmament measure. In this context the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago urges the ratification by France of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America - the Treaty of Tlatelolco - so that nuclear-weapon-free status can be extended to those territories lying within the zone of application of the Treaty. Trinidad and Tobago welcomes the coming into force of the Rarotonga Treaty for a South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone as well as the continuing efforts of the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in this direction.

The recent establishment of United Nations regional centres for the promotion of peace and disarmament in Latin America and Africa is also to be commended. These centres can play a vital role in changing attitudes about military expenditure and in promoting regional peace and stability.

It is evident from the statements of representatives who spoke earlier in the general debate that there is a growing awareness of the need to vitalize the work of the First Committee. While Trinidad and Tobago shares the view that changes of a formal or practical nature are needed, such as a decrease in the number of resolutions and an earlier start to the session, we believe that a more fundamental change is required. There has to be a new attitude and approach to the multiple

(Mr. Granderson, Trinidad and Tobago)

and complex problems of disarmament and international security. The First Committee has to cease being a forum for scoring political and ideological points and to become a vehicle for real multilateral co-operation in an area of primordial importance to the entire world. We believe that the small non-aligned States, which have no ambitions or pretensions, can play an essential role in this reordering by urging and demonstrating objectivity and by encouraging the convergence of views and interests. We hope that the sentiment of cautious optimism alluded to by many delegations at the outset of our deliberations will be reflected in the work of the Committee at its conclusion.

Mr. LAUREL (Philippines): On behalf of my delegation let me congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this Committee. I am confident that under your able leadership we will be able to perform our tasks constructively. I also extend through you my congratulations to the other officers of the Committee, whose co-operation will help us in our work. My delegation is committed to support all efforts towards the achievement of our common goal.

In his poem, "Dover Beach", the English poet Matthew Arnold aptly mirrored the spirit of the era of the First World War in the following words:

"... the world, which seems
to lie before us, like a land of dreams
so various, so beautiful, so new
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain. And we
are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight
Where ignorant armies clash by night".

(Mr. Laurel, Philippines)

Seventy years separate us from the time those lines were written. Yet their tone of cynicism and melancholy reflect the spirit of our times.

It is true that in the past 42 years we have managed to avoid a war of global dimensions. However, we continue to live in a world full of tension, confrontation and violence. Our times are witness to internecine conflicts in the Middle East, Central America, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, South Africa and other regions. The report by the World Commission on Environment and Development, "Our Common Future", cites over 40 such current conflicts. It is indeed disturbing to reflect on the fact that more people have perished in local wars in the past four decades than in the two world wars.

The focus of the work of the Committee and the bulk of the draft resolutions we adopt are on the many aspects of disarmament. All of these are directed towards the attainment of the real goals of establishing international peace and security - the peace and security that peoples all over the world have yearned and worked for throughout history.

If humanity has so far not realized concrete achievements in the field of disarmament, people all over the world - individually and collectively - have not been discouraged; they persist in their attempt to achieve this goal in different forms and forums. They have organized peace marches, collected signatures, written their representatives and discussed ways to achieve a nuclear freeze or to stop nuclear testing - in fact, they have resorted to nearly every measure available to manifest their will. We in Government cannot and should not ignore all this.

Recently, the President of Costa Rica, His Excellency Mr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his key role in formulating a regional peace plan for the Central American region. We extend to him and the Costa Rican people our heartfelt felicitations.

(Mr. Laurel, Philippines)

The honour should extend to the peoples and the leaders of the Central American region. The Guatemala Accord mirrors the statesmanship of the leaders of Central America in their search for peace and security in the region.

The very achievements in science and technology that should be directed to mankind's enrichment and well-being are ironically the means by which it has developed the capacity for self-annihilation. Five countries are now recognized as nuclear-weapon States, six others have a nuclear-weapon capability and a dozen others are not far behind, according to the Brundtland report, "Our Common Future". Mankind seems to be held hostage to nuclear weapons, as the world's military expenditures continue to escalate, having reached \$14 trillion since 1960.

Fortunately, mankind's own sense of sanity enables it to see its own folly and a reverse process has noticeably been set in motion.

It is a source of encouragement that the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development last September established for the first time the close and multi-dimensional relationship between disarmament and development and reaffirmed the urgency to devise measures or mechanisms to reallocate resources liberated through disarmament efforts into development objectives.

The Declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 issued during their annual meeting in New York last month underscored the concept that "development can be attained only in an atmosphere of international peace and co-operation and stressed the direct relationship between peace, disarmament and development. The Ministers reiterated their appeal for the immediate halting of the arms race and an urgent adoption of disarmament measures that would release human, material, technological and financial resources badly needed for development." (A/42/604, para. 40)

(Mr. Laurel, Philippines)

The trend towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is cause for optimism. In Latin America, the desire to remain free from nuclear conflicts has been crystallized in the historic Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first inhabited nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world.

In the South Pacific, the Treaty of Rarotonga also reflects a popular consensus to live in a world free from nuclear weapons. Indeed, the countries of the region, as well as its neighbours, including the Philippines, support efforts to keep the region nuclear-free. We view efforts to subvert the popular will as contrary to the spirit of the Treaty of Rarotonga.

In South-East Asia, the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are studying the possibility of a draft treaty on the establishment of a South-East Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone. This is in furtherance of the idea of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia, which was endorsed by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Other treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones deal mostly with uninhabited regions of the world, such as Antarctica, the sea-bed and outer space.

The Philippines Constitution, recently ratified by an overwhelming majority of the people, mandates the adoption and pursuance of a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons on Philippine territory. The Philippines supports efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in all areas.

We welcome the agreement in principle of a treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) between the United States and the Soviet Union which seeks to achieve a double-zero option in Europe. Certainly, progress in this area would go a long way towards reducing the formidable stocks of nuclear weapons now in the arsenals of the major Powers. We also welcome the agreement between the two super-Powers that a similarly intensive effort should be made to achieve a treaty on a 50-per-cent reduction in their strategic offensive arms.

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The Ministerial Conference of the Group of 77, in its Declaration of 1 October 1987, said that nuclear weapons posed the "main risk" to the environment and to life on Earth. Therefore, it would not be overly ambitious if the international community were to aim at a global zero option for implementation on or before the turn of the century. The world would then be that much closer to the goal of general and complete disarmament.

My delegation believes that the INF agreement in principle between the two super-Powers is a much-needed impetus to the Vienna negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR). The meeting of two important members of the alliance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and of the Warsaw Pact, through the visit of General Secretary Erich Honecker of the German Democratic Republic to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the Federal Republic of Germany, is another welcome development. Perhaps that visit will be the starting-point for renewed and more vigorous negotiations among the parties of the MBFR talks in Vienna. Progress in negotiations on nuclear arms could thus be matched by progress in negotiations on conventional arms in Europe, there already being a precedent to this in the successful conclusion of an accord in the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe in 1986.

(Mr. Laurel, Philippines)

Chemical weapons are reportedly being used in present-day conflicts and research and tests on the development of those weapons are ongoing. While the progress of negotiations on the issue is encouraging, we regard the early conclusion of a treaty banning chemical weapons as imperative. Such a treaty, if concluded, could serve as a model for other treaties on weapons of mass destruction, including the concomitant issues of verification, destruction and the placing of production facilities under international surveillance.

Now is the propitious time to be resolute in seeking agreements on nuclear, chemical and conventional arms. A pervasive new spirit of openness prevails among many nations. The time has come to take concrete confidence-building measures. Questions as to good faith could well be dispelled through effectively designed measures of verification.

We wish to add a cautionary note to our expressions of optimism on the present status of multilateral and bilateral talks on disarmament. While the arms race may be halted or reversed in Europe, we would not want to see the field of confrontation shifted to other areas. We refer here not only to other land areas of our globe, but also to outer space and the open seas. Because of the new weapons technology it will soon be possible to station weapons of mass destruction on a mobile basis anywhere.

Outer space is one of man's last frontiers, a heritage of mankind that must be reserved for peaceful purposes and for the mutual benefit of the peoples of the world. We marvel at the technologies of outer space which allow us to survey our terrains, to speed up our communications, to predict weather patterns and natural catastrophes and to conduct exotic scientific experiments. It will be to mankind's benefit if outer space is kept free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, outer space should be a laboratory for peace instead of a battlefield for war. We would therefore urge those with scientific and

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technological capacities to desist from devoting their energies to belligerent purposes which serve no one.

The high seas represent yet another frontier. According to predictions, cities will one day be built on deep ocean floors. With burgeoning populations and dwindling food resources we may indeed have to turn more and more to oceans and seas for our nourishment. It is all the more necessary, therefore, that we devote our knowledge to tapping the seas as a source for mankind's survival and do not allow their use as an arena for conflict. For the Philippines, as an archipelago of 7,107 islands close to important global sea routes, the peaceful uses of the sea, the sea-bed and the sea lanes are of paramount concern.

It has been predicted that the twenty-first century will be the era of the Pacific region. Towards the middle of the last century the American Secretary of State William Henry Seward prophesied:

"The Mediterranean is the sea of the past, the Atlantic the sea of the present and the Pacific the ocean of the future."

The British historian Arnold Toynbee spoke of a blossoming of Asian-Pacific civilization that would last from the twenty-first to the twenty-eighth centuries. Indeed, the Pacific region, with its human and natural resources, has great potential for development. It is here that newly industrialized countries are located. China and Japan, Australia and New Zealand, the Latin American countries and the South-East Asian nations gird its rim.

It is pertinent to cite one of the conclusions of the recent International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. Its Final Document reads, in part:

"The world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed towards a

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more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order; it cannot do both."

(A/CONF.130/39, Final Document, para. 4)

In the Pacific region the choice is clear. With the majority of its populace living in marginal subsistence, the peoples of the region must meet the challenge of development. The arms race is the way to disaster, and they will not stand for it.

As we look forward to the third special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, in 1988, let us bear that popular mandate in mind. The third special session will be an occasion not merely to reiterate the principles of disarmament laid down in the first and second special sessions on disarmament, but also to carry forward a programme of action based on the heightened awareness of peoples and on recent developments in the field of disarmament. What we see today in terms of the new political activism towards disarmament may in part be attributed to the World Disarmament Campaign, itself a product of the two special sessions on disarmament. The peoples of the world are tired of rhetoric about disarmament. They want to live in peace and security in a world free of weapons of destruction.

Let me conclude by quoting again from "Our common future":

"Nations must turn away from the destructive logic of an 'arms culture' and focus instead on their common future... Nations must not become prisoners of their own arms race... They must face the common challenge for providing for sustainable development and act in concert to remove the growing environmental sources of conflict." (A/42/427, 299)

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): Pursuant to the programme of work and the schedule adopted by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday,

(The Chairman)

1 October 1987, on Friday, 23 October, the Committee will enter into the second phase of its work, namely, statements on specific disarmament agenda items and continuation of general debate, if necessary.

As members are aware, this procedural flexibility was adopted by consensus and is designed to create a necessary and appropriate structure for the Committee's work and deliberations. Delegations will thus be able to make general statements if they have not yet done so in the initial phase of the Committee's work. Some delegations have already put their names on the list of speakers for the next phase of our work. In order to make proper use of the time available, I invite delegations who wish to speak to specific items on the agenda to put their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

Similarly, I request delegations that intend to submit draft resolutions to do so as soon as possible, and if possible during the second phase of the Committee's work, which will begin on Friday, 23 October, so that the Committee may hear comments on the draft resolutions.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.