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Chairman: Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. STEPHANOU (Greece) (interpretation from French): I wish first, to associate myself with your expressions of condolences to Miss Solesby on the death of our deeply mourned colleague, Ian Cromartie, a friend and devoted servant of his country in the cause of disarmament and non-proliferation.

On behalf of my country and on my own behalf, I warmly congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee. Your long diplomatic experience and your qualifications in disarmament matters are the best guarantee of the success of your mission.

We also congratulate the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Akashi, the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat.

On 13 October the Permanent Representative of Denmark stated in detail on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community the Community's position on disarmament. While fully subscribing to what Mr. Ole Bierring said, I wish to present several additional views of the Greek Government on certain items.

In your introductory statement, Sir, you rightly stated:

"It is ... imperative not to return to old polemics or to the terrible confrontations of the past, but, rather, resolutely to try to open up new paths that can lead to better and better prospects for peace."

(A/C.1/42/PV.3, p. 6)

In that regard, allow me to congratulate you on your efforts yesterday that led to the decision reached by the Committee, which you will be communicating to the super-Powers.

.r. Stephanou, Greece)

The work of our Committee began auspiciously this year and in this context it is always a pleasure for me to repeat that my country, Greece, which has traditionally been firmly dedicated to peace and to procedures for attaining the peaceful settlement of disputes, can only welcome any effort or initiative aimed at accelerating the process of disarmament. On the other hand, it is opposed to any act or omission that would make the disarmament process more difficult, thus increasing reasons to have recourse to the use or threat of the use of force, military intervention, occupation of territory by foreign armies, and faits accomplis.

It is in that spirit that the Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Andreas Papandreou, has taken an active and continuing part in the initiative of the Six for peace and nuclear disarmament, the objective of which is to co-operate with the Governments of the nuclear-weapon States - and particularly the two super-Powers - in order to deploy all possible efforts to bring about the security of all mankind and peace.

Thus, the agreement in principle between Secretary of State Shultz of the United States of America and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR on the elimination of medium- and short-range nuclear missiles is a source of gratification to us because it is a first step towards the achievement of nuclear disarmament in the near future - an achievement the international community fervently desires.

We hope that the new talks envisaged between the two super-Powers will result in other agreements, particularly regarding a 50 per cent reduction in strategic arms. This is a further step towards the objective of stability and security in the nuclear field at lower levels.

Moreover, we also welcome the progress made in the area of verification, both

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within the bilateral United States-Soviet negotiations and at the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva, where tangible progress was also made this year for the conclusion of an agreement banning chemical weapons. We hope that the accelerated tempo of the work of this multilateral forum in this area will result in an agreement next year. I should like at this time to mention the visit of the representatives of 46 countries to establish confidence-building measures in this area, organized by the Government of the Soviet Union at Shikhan - a positive and encouraging gesture.

Greece is always ready to participate with good will and an open mind in all efforts aimed at disarmament. Greece, while recognizing that those States with the largest military arsenals bear a particular responsibility, considers that this does not diminish the responsibility of other States to participate in maintaining stability at all levels, whether global or regional, and thereby to contribute directly or indirectly to efforts at arms reductions.

Disarmament is a multidimensional process and the danger of a nuclear war is only one aspect of the problem. Loss of human life is caused primarily by conventional weapons. The destructive capacity of these weapons continues to grow. Thus, as we have solemnly declared on numerous occasions, Greece subscribes to all efforts to reduce conventional weapons to the lowest possible level, while taking into account the security interests of all States. Moreover, it shares the conviction that the essential reduction of the present level of conventional weapons would reduce the risk of a nuclear conflict. Thus, progress in the area of conventional disarmament would represent a decisive step towards a lessening of tension and the prevention of war at all levels of hostility.

The positive results of the Stockholm Conference in strengthening confidence among European States and its encouraging aspects in regard to the diminution of

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

the risk of war in Europe give us reason to hope that the fourth stage of the Vienna meeting that has just begun will be marked by tangible progress. At a time when the two super-Powers have reached an agreement in principle on the total elimination of intermediate- and short-range weapons, the circumstances in which the Vienna meeting is taking place are conducive to promoting security and co-operation in Europe.

On the other hand, the Greek Government, firmly dedicated to promoting confidence at the regional level, continues to make every effort to develop the closest possible relations with most of its neighbours. The Balkans are today a model of regional co-operation among countries with different political and economic systems. In that same spirit, the Greek Government consistently and firmly supports the proposal to make the Balkans a nuclear- and chemical-weapon-free zone.

Sharing the conviction that nuclear-weapon-free zones can make an important contribution to effective disarmament, Greece has always voted in favour of any resolution aimed at the concluding of agreements for the creation of such zones.

On the other hand, Greece considers that nuclear-weapon-free zones also serve to strengthen the non-proliferation régime. Opposed to the proliferation of these weapons, and without disregarding the fact that little progress has been made in implementing article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which stipulates that each of the parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament, the Greek delegation considers as encouraging the agreement in principle of 18 September 1987 between the Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Shultz, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. Shevardnadze, which points out, inter alia, that

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"the two parties reached agreement to begin step-by-step negotiations before 1 December 1987, to take place in a separate forum, on questions relating to nuclear tests."

In their joint communiqué of 7 October 1987, the Heads of six Governments on five continents repeated their decision to continue their efforts and to exert pressure through all possible means to achieve a safer and nuclear-free world and particularly stressed the urgent need to conclude agreements to reduce strategic weapons, completely halt nuclear-weapon tests and prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space.

Greece is particularly sensitive to developments in the Mediterranean. Our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Karolos Papoulias, has stated this on several occasions and stated it again this year at the General Assembly, stressing that

"the Mediterranean should become a sea of peace, friendship and co-operation among its peoples." (A/42/PV.17, p. 7)

Greece, by supporting efforts to strengthen peace in the region, is thus ready to participate in initiatives that could lead to expanded co-operation and the unhindered development of all peoples of the Mediterranean.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

Greece is fully aware of the problems of disarmament and welcomes the results of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. In fact, the consensus adoption of that Conference's Final Document is an encouraging indication that the international community has the political will to face the problems of the developing countries by making tangible progress in the field of disarmament. We hope that the Programme of Action will be implemented in such a way that the relationship between development and disarmament can be concretely demonstrated.

My delegation would also like to stress that it is prepared to support initiatives aimed at promoting and tightening the functioning and productivity of the First Committee. The successive, persevering efforts of our Committee's Chairmen are beginning to yield positive results. This goes hand in hand with the considerably broader initiative put forward by Cameroon to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the disarmament sphere, which we fully support.

The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will take place next year. Greece attaches particular importance to that session, which will afford us an opportunity for the substantive consideration and promotion of solutions to the vast range of the disarmament problems with which we are faced.

I have confined myself to listing certain points. Let us hope that our Governments, with the appropriate sense of responsibility, will find in our work inspiration and the will to achieve the goals we have set ourselves.

Mr. CAMPORA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the delegation of Argentina, on your election and to tell you that we are ready to co-operate with you so that you may be successful in carrying out your functions. The experience in the disarmament field gained during your tenure of office at the Conference on Disarmament, in

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

Geneva, clearly guarantees the success of the work you will carry out here in the First Committee.

I wish to convey to the delegation of the United Kingdom my personal grief and that of my delegation at the death of Ambassador Cromartie, who represented that country at the Conference on Disarmament.

It has been eight years since the United Nations General Assembly last met in a climate of optimism such as that which prevails this year with regard to disarmament issues. It will be recalled that in June 1979 the United States of America and the Soviet Union signed in Vienna the agreement on strategic arms limitations, but that its ratification was interrupted by developments in the Middle East at the end of that same year and, in particular, by the situation that arose in Afghanistan.

From the beginning of 1980 the arms race continued to gain greater speed, until this year the international community has begun to perceive specific signs of possibility of a slowing down of arms production.

In order to explain the reasons for our satisfaction with these events, which herald a new age of international détente, we believe it necessary to answer the following question: what has happened in the past few years to bring us to the present moment of optimism?

As we know, the arms race is the effect of deeper causes. It feeds on conflicts based on national interest and differing ideologies. These combine and become blurred, and it is often impossible to distinguish between ideological clashes and clashes of interest.

At present the great Powers are apparently drawing closer together on the fundamental principles that characterize their thinking and policy. This is a time when we can claim that the major Powers, which confront each other ideologically

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because of their different political and social systems, have begun to perceive each other in the light of significant changes that have occurred or are about to occur within their respective national societies.

In particular, it is recognized that the countries of the Western group have become egalitarian societies in which there prevail an equitable distribution of national wealth and enjoyment of political freedoms, as well as respect for fundamental human rights. The intermediate strata of those Western societies account for more than 60 per cent of the total population. This shows that the stereotypes denouncing the capitalist system as man's exploitation by man with which past propaganda was replete have been superseded. An egalitarian society is the paradigm of a democracy with freedom and justice.

On the other hand, socialist countries have entered into a period of change exemplified by statements of members of their Governments and by the adoption of measures designed to shape a society that enjoys and exercises political and economic rights and freedoms. The rigid collectivist tenets of yesteryear are being modified and are giving way to experiments that allow for free initiative in the economic sphere and for the exercise of individual rights in the political and cultural fields.

That trend, which favours soft-peddling the ideological components in the relations between the major Powers, also affords a great opportunity to reduce the world's armaments. There are promising signs of increased compliance with the 1975 Helsinki agreements, whose influence on political, economic and human-rights issues show the inextricable interrelationship of each of those areas with peace and security.

We are certain that the existence of democratic rights and freedoms promotes peace and disarmament among nations.

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

The opportunity in this decade to reverse the arms race first came to light with the birth of the spirit of Geneva on the occasion of the summit meeting, held in November 1985, which acknowledged that there would be no victors in a nuclear war.

Since that time, work in the various bilateral and multilateral disarmament forums has proceeded swiftly, particularly between the United States and the Soviet Union from a global point of view, and between the two military alliances in the European regional sphere. The bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union which, since March 1985, have been taking place in Geneva in three working groups on the reduction of intermediate-range missiles, strategic weapons and issues related to outer space are about to bear fruit through an agreement on intermediate-range missiles.

By their very nature such missiles have regional applications, and their destruction in the region would ease the situation to the extent that it is accompanied by a reduction in conventional weapons and forces. In this connection, we appreciate European concerns about the need for any agreement on intermediate-range missiles to be duly complemented by effective progress in the Vienna negotiations, about which, regrettably, the General Assembly does not receive any direct information.

As regards strategic weapons, bilateral negotiations have not yet produced concrete results, although at the Reykjavik Summit, held on 11-12 October 1986, it was announced that both super-Powers would reduce their long-range missiles by 50 per cent and limit their arsenals to 6,000 nuclear warheads each.

These negotiations cover weapon systems that penetrate outer space; hence they create a problem whose solution is complex and linked to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Besides, strategic weapons have stimulated the development of military technology which strives to achieve their operation from outer space.

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

This year, an interesting exchange of views took place at the Conference on Disarmament which, in our view, has made clear several aspects of the legal framework established on disarmament by current multilateral treaties on outer space. In the first place, it is accepted that, according to that legal framework, celestial bodies can be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. Furthermore, this framework precludes the military use of celestial bodies and the testing and deployment on them of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as conventional weapons.

Unfortunately, there is no agreement on a multilateral legal framework of outer space concerning the testing and deployment of non-nuclear weapons or weapons other than those of mass destruction. We must point out that we are concerned when we hear from time to time that the legal framework of outer space should find inspiration in that of the law of the sea. Rather we believe that this item, which is on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament and aims at preventing an arms race in outer space, responds to the basic objective of preventing the legal framework on the use of outer space from in any way resembling that of the law of the sea.

We believe that if a framework similar to that of the law of the sea were established in outer space, we would have failed completely in our goal of preventing an arms race in outer space.

Suffice it to observe the situation of seas and oceans permanently crossed by military fleets equipped with all types of weapons to conclude that there would not be a more regrettable image of outer space than that of presupposing it invaded by space objects of a military or defensive nature, such as those which sail the high seas. The phenomenon characterizing the naval arms race must not be duplicated in outer space.

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

We hope that the General Assembly will this year adopt a consensus resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space - one that will faithfully reflect the common interest of all countries in ensuring the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

Among the significant opportunities contributing to the creation of a climate of optimism on disarmament, we wish to mention in particular the convention on chemical weapons. Negotiations on this item, which has been on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament since its very beginning in 1978, have acquired new impetus in the last two years.

The convention on chemical weapons, as we know it to date, would be a non-discriminatory treaty, since all the States parties would be on an equal footing once the process of destruction of chemical weapons and existing production facilities had been completed. At that time, the treaty would set an example, since it would differ from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which legally consecrates the existence of two categories of States - nuclear and non-nuclear.

In the future convention there will be only one category of States with the same rights and duties. It will establish the same verification mechanism for all States and it will not, as is the case with the NPT, distribute power in the world but be an egalitarian instrument.

We are therefore working on a non-discriminatory treaty from the political and military standpoints. It must be non-discriminatory also from the economic and technological standpoints. In this respect the future convention must not be conceived so as to have it used to preserve commercial or technological imbalances or to prevent the development or transfer of chemical substances, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

Beyond its military significance, the future convention on chemical weapons will have political significance since the super-Powers have begun considering with decreasing interest the use of chemical weapons in future theatres of war.

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

However, from a political standpoint its meaning is all important, since the existence of the convention will bring into operation a systematic mechanism for control so as to ensure compliance with it. Such a mechanism will entail inspections within each member State, including nuclear-weapon Powers, and from that point of view will be an unprecedented milestone in the history of international relations.

In effect, control of the production of aggressive chemical substances will require the opening up of national frontiers to the scrutiny of an international authority to verify that the convention is not violated within each State party.

We can well imagine the impact of such a mechanism operating between the two military alliances as a means of deterrence and confidence-building. From then on chemical facilities would be opened up to regular inspections and those military or civilian sites suspected of storing prohibited chemical substances could be subject to challenge inspections.

We hope that the General Assembly will adopt by consensus a resolution with respect to the convention on chemical weapons in which it will request the Conference on Disarmament to do its utmost to ensure that that convention is concluded within the coming year.

The question of disarmament is ripening in a climate of détente. At the outset we pointed out that the ideological competition is taking on a new role because of the emphasis on co-operation and leaving behind confrontation. We have also stressed the intensity of the negotiations on disarmament which have taken place this year. We are paying close attention to developments in regional conflicts, are following with great expectations relations between the United States of America and the Soviet Union and are hopeful regarding the dialogue within Europe.

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

With those trends in international life becoming more positive, if the arms race is halted and relations between the major Powers are improved, there will be a greater likelihood that the economic problems of the developing world and the inequalities in the distribution of wealth between poor and rich countries will receive the attention they deserve in the international community.

Mr. TOBAR ZALDUMBIDE (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation is pleased to congratulate you, Sir, on your designation as Chairman of the First Committee, with your great experience and knowledge of disarmament, your presence in the Chair assures the success of our work.

I also wish to congratulate the other officers of the Committee, to whom we pledge our firm co-operation.

Without a doubt, the most significant event of recent times in the field of disarmament is the agreement in principle reached by the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States of America to reduce an important category of nuclear weapons, that is, intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles. We hope that talks on this important matter will continue so that in the near future they may develop further and lead to the conclusion of real and practical mechanisms encompassing other nuclear weapons more dangerous to the survival of the human race. We welcome that agreement but regret that the enormous arsenals of nuclear weapons held by the two major Powers have not yet been subjected to agreements that would lead to their reduction and consequent elimination. Deterrence should not become an oft-invoked pretext for spurring on the horrible arms escalation.

However, we again note and commend the political will that has been displayed by both Powers to reduce the ominous nuclear arsenal. The spirit reflected in recent negotiations is one of hope for the international peace and security that is so fervently desired. It is to be hoped that other producing States or

(Mr. Tobar Zaldumbide, Ecuador)

nuclear-weapon States will be imbued with the same spirit and adopt agreements on general disarmament.

Ecuador, a peace-loving country, is extremely interested in all action aimed at conventional disarmament at the regional and international levels. For that reason it hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will firmly press on with its work, leading to the formulation of measures to strengthen security and peace.

We should endeavour to see that the military expenditures of States do not go beyond what is essential to preserve their security at the expense of the pressing needs of development - an argument reflected at the recently held International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

The present world crisis, especially in the developing world, with galloping inflation and the unforeseeable results of indebtedness in a vast majority of countries - to which we should add the natural disasters that have afflicted many of them, such as Ecuador - makes it increasingly urgent to analyse and discuss our agenda items which relate to the economic and social implications of the arms race and its threat to the peace and security of the planet. Thus the interrelationship between disarmament and development is of singular importance in terms of releasing part of the resources now devoted to arms - \$1 trillion - for use to win the fight against hunger, poverty, ignorance and fear.

The use of force should be banned from international relations. Ecuador firmly believes that the strengthening of means for the peaceful settlement of conflicts and nuclear disarmament are necessary steps that will lead to general disarmament and the reinforcing of peace and security among peoples. Thus we attach special importance to negotiations between the super-Powers.

The numerous resolutions adopted at the previous session of the General Assembly and those to be discussed at this session of the Committee confirm the

(Mr. Tobaz Zaldumbide, Ecuador)

concern of the whole world over disarmament problems, which cannot be separated from the problems caused by the sad underdevelopment to be found in a large part of the world and its attendant injustice. All of these - disarmament, development and justice at the national and international levels - are the goals human co-operation should seek to achieve.

(Mr. Tobar Zaldumbide, Ecuador)

The delegation of Ecuador is also concerned about the nuclear explosions carried out by various States, which cause alarming damage to important regions of the planet, such as the South Pacific, compromising the environment, the health and the economy of the peoples of the region. We call on the nuclear Powers that have been carrying out these explosions to consider the final cessation of such tests.

I also wish to express Ecuador's concern about the arms race in outer space. Space should be kept as a zone of peace and co-operation, and should not be used for weapons purposes, to the detriment of the vast majority of countries, especially those geographically beneath the geostationary orbit of satellites. There should be regulation to provide for the rational and just use of that orbit, a limited natural resource that should be used for the benefit of all peoples and, above all, for exclusively peaceful purposes.

I express my best wishes for the success of the third session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. I also hope that the deliberations of this Committee will take place with the dedication that characterizes it, with special emphasis on the quality, and not the quantity, of the draft resolutions to be considered. It would be wise to avoid repetition and duplication, thus saving time and money needed by the United Nations, given the present financial crisis.

Above all, we express our fervent hope that resolutions and decisions full of words and good intentions will not end up in the Organization's archives, sleeping the sleep of the just, but will be turned into tangible realities in the interest of the hopes, well-being and peace of men.

Mr. McDOWELL (New Zealand): In beginning my statement I cannot do otherwise than note the meeting to take place tomorrow in Moscow between the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Shultz, and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. They will be discussing matters of importance in their bilateral relations, but also issues of great concern to the international community.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

In particular, the outcome of their discussions on the global elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter-range nuclear missiles is anxiously awaited. The New Zealand delegation joins the many others that have spoken here to convey best wishes for good progress towards that goal. We were pleased to support the draft decision of the General Assembly that you offered to us yesterday evening, Mr. Chairman, urging the two Governments to spare no effort to conclude the arms reduction and elimination treaties on which they have worked with such dedication. Final agreement to be rid of this entire class of nuclear weapons would be without historical precedent. It would be testimony to the conviction shared by the United States and the Soviet Union that their security and that of their allies can be maintained - indeed, enhanced - at lower levels of weaponry.

An agreement between Mr. Shultz and Mr. Shevardnadze should also enable the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union to meet in a further summit meeting before the year is out. President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev will have the opportunity, we trust, to sign an intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) agreement. They will, in the context of their agreement that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, look for a way forward towards an agreement to reduce drastically the levels of their strategic nuclear weaponry.

This summit meeting, should it take place, will put the seal on 1987 as a year of dramatic advance in relations between the super-Powers and in the disarmament field.

For too many years Members of the United Nations have had cause to complain in the First Committee that negotiations on disarmament were deadlocked. Some among us have blamed the intransigence of one State or another, or of one group of State or another, as preventing progress on the many vital issues of disarmament and international security.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

Our grounds for complaint this year are not so numerous. Instead, we can highlight many encouraging developments over the past 12 months. Apart from the progress in the INF talks, we have seen the first stages of the implementation of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe process. We have read with interest recently that North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) officers were well satisfied with the co-operation they were shown as they observed Warsaw Pact troop manoeuvres, in accordance with the Stockholm agreement.

We also witnessed the signing of an important agreement in Washington last month on the establishment of risk-reduction centres. There have been indications of future progress in the negotiations on the elimination of imbalances in conventional forces in Europe. The United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to begin negotiations on limitations on nuclear testing. In the Conference on Disarmament, work is progressing on the negotiation of an agreement to ban chemical weapons. In the biological weapons field, we have seen steps taken to enhance confidence in compliance with the biological weapons Convention.

In New Zealand's own region, the South Pacific, we have welcomed the entry into force of the South Pacific Nuclear-Free-Zone Treaty, the Treaty of Rarotonga. And at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held here a few weeks ago, a broad international consensus was achieved on a Final Document that explores the way in which disarmament and development might enhance the security of us all.

That is a pretty good harvest in only 12 months. It looks especially good by comparison with the crop from the previous decade. It proves - if proof were needed - that the path to a less militarized and more secure future is open to us. We may hope that events in 1988 will build upon the progress achieved this year. If the momentum is not to be lost, concrete measures will have to be agreed in a number of areas.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

New Zealanders hope that progress in the bilateral and multilateral negotiations in their various forums will lead towards a less nuclear and more stable world - a world in which the risk of nuclear war does not threaten to wipe out the achievements of centuries; a world in which the elimination of conventional force disparities will lead to a balance of such forces at significantly reduced levels; a world in which, as my Foreign Minister said in the general debate in the General Assembly a few weeks ago,

"no country can claim to have to rely on nuclear weapons as a guarantor of its security". (A/42/PV.28, p. 38)

One step towards a less nuclear and more stable world was taken by the New Zealand Parliament earlier this year when it passed legislation which provides that no nuclear weapons shall be allowed into New Zealand. The legislation was enacted only after extensive reviews had been undertaken of New Zealand's defence and security needs and following a protracted public debate. There is widespread agreement that the presence of nuclear weapons anywhere in New Zealand territory would not contribute to our security; that New Zealand should, therefore, be nuclear free.

New Zealand has also joined with other countries of the South Pacific region in adopting a nuclear-free-zone Treaty that, among its provisions, legally prohibits the stationing of nuclear weapons on their land territory. The South Pacific Nuclear-Free-Zone Treaty, known as the Rarotonga Treaty, is an expression of the determination of countries of the region that it should remain free of nuclear rivalry between the nuclear-weapon States.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

The Treaty is a further piece in the jigsaw of denuclearized zones in the southern hemisphere, abutting on two sides the Antarctic Treaty and the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which applies to the Latin American continent. Earlier this month, my Foreign Minister received a proposal to enhance co-operation between parties to the Treaties of Tlatelolco and Rarotonga. That proposal, made by the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (OPANAL), and by the Foreign Minister of Mexico, is for an agreement between OPANAL and the South Pacific Bureau of Economic Co-operation, the organization that administers the Treaty of Rarotonga. The draft agreement proposed to my Foreign Minister provides for regular consultations, exchanges of observers and scientific co-operation - the sort of practical and realistic measures from which both organizations will benefit.

New Zealand sees this proposal as a useful step forward in respect of disarmament. We have undertaken to convey it, with a supporting recommendation, to other members of the South Pacific Forum.

A specific aim of the Treaty of Rarotonga is that discordant nuclear activities, such as the testing by France of its nuclear weapons at Mururoa Atoll, should cease. South Pacific countries have repeatedly affirmed their opposition to those tests. We deeply regret that France nevertheless continues to conduct its nuclear-testing programme in our region. If New Zealand's objections to French nuclear testing are voiced in particularly strong terms, it is precisely because those tests do take place in our region. But we are opposed to testing by all countries - we repeat, all countries.

As an observer of the Conference on Disarmament, New Zealand has paid close attention to its attempts to reach agreement on a basis for getting work under way on the priority item of its agenda - item 1, on a nuclear-test ban. We have

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

observed the failure of those efforts again this year with growing concern and disappointment.

New Zealand firmly believes that the negotiation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty is the most urgent; practicable nuclear-arms control measure that could be taken by the international community. Such a treaty would ban all testing by all nations in all environments and for all time. It is the single step that would do more than any other to slow the remorseless advance of nuclear weapons development and reduce the prospect of other countries acquiring nuclear weapons. Even the most far-reaching of arms reductions agreements would be of limited net effect if the ability to experiment and to develop and refine exotic nuclear technologies remained unimpeded.

In the joint statement issued at Washington on 17 September, Mr. Shultz and Mr. Shevardnadze announced that they had agreed to negotiate on nuclear-testing issues. New Zealand welcomes that announcement. Finally, the two States with the largest nuclear arsenals are to resume negotiations on the single most important way in which the nuclear competition between them can be curtailed.

But we must say that the agenda and schedule envisaged in the joint statement for those talks fall short of what New Zealand believes to be necessary. The statement did not affirm a comprehensive test-ban treaty as the necessary first step in the process leading to a more secure, denuclearized world. Rather, the United States of America and the Soviet Union agreed to negotiations that would lead to the complete cessation of nuclear testing only "as part of the effective disarmament process", which would have as its first priority the goal of reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons. In other words, it seems that a test ban will follow the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons rather than help facilitate that process. It will be a consequence of other moves rather than an instrumental move itself.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

What concerns the New Zealand Government is that the goal of reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons - a goal of the very greatest importance - will only be delayed if it is seen as a necessary pre-condition to, rather than the result of, a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We fear that so long as testing continues to be permitted, destabilizing pressures resulting from developments in weaponry facilitated by nuclear testing will serve to impede the arms reduction process. We would also be concerned at the application of nuclear technology to space-based defensive or offensive strategies.

It is sometimes claimed that nuclear testing is necessary to ensure confidence in the reliability of existing nuclear weapons. We have doubts about the validity of that claim, for there is evidence that until comparatively recently, no nuclear tests were carried out to prove reliability alone.

Sometimes the claim is made that with existing technology it would not be possible for a comprehensive test-ban treaty to be monitored with the necessary degree of confidence. New Zealand believes this claim should be put to the test. We believe that the technology and techniques upon which verification of a test-ban treaty would depend are available now. What has been absent is the political will to deploy them.

According to the joint statement by Mr. Shultz and Mr. Shevardnadze, the United States and the Soviet Union would begin their negotiations on testing issues before 1 December of this year. We urge the two sides to accept the premise that the difficult process of reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons will be made easier in the stable climate engendered by a halt in the development of more exotic nuclear technologies and to negotiate accordingly. Otherwise, as in the past, we may find that efforts to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons are overtaken by the development and application of new technologies, leading to a new spiral in the nuclear-arms race.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

At the same time as we call for progress in bilateral negotiations, we urge all States members of the Conference on Disarmament to allow substantive work to begin on a multilateral treaty. That work has been delayed too long. Now, as the United States and the Soviet Union commence negotiations, the Conference on Disarmament should keep pace or even lead the way, particularly in the important area of verification. New Zealand strongly urges the other nuclear-weapon States to take an active and constructive part in that process.

We shall also be looking to the Conference on Disarmament to bring its negotiations on a chemical-weapons treaty to a successful conclusion. The use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq conflict has shaken us all. Recent reports that chemical weapons may have been used in civilian centres in the area of conflict, and that their use and possession may be spreading, are alarming. These weapons are abhorrent. The violation of international legal prohibitions occasioned by their use is totally unacceptable. We must all insist that the use, development and manufacture of those weapons stop.

The end of the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a convention on a comprehensive ban on the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, transfer and use of nuclear weapons is tantalizingly close. But much difficult work remains to be done before that goal is reached.

Some sections of the draft convention are difficult in a technical sense, such as the question of lists of, and régimes for, different categories of chemicals in connection with draft article VI. Some sections are difficult primarily because of political or commercial sensitivities. In this regard, New Zealand has been pleased to see that such a difficult issue as challenge inspection has for the first time received substantive treatment in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

There have been other developments that have helped to improve the negotiating climate and fill in some of the gaps in the knowledge of those negotiating the chemical weapons convention. For example, last year negotiators were invited to visit a chemical facility in the Netherlands, and the United States provided details to the Conference on Disarmament on its chemical weapons stockpile sites.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

Just this month a large number of States that are members or observers of the Conference took up an invitation from the Soviet Union to send representatives to visit its chemical-weapon facility at Shikhan. This was a development welcomed by New Zealand. It provided an opportunity to receive information on Soviet chemical munitions and toxic agents and on methods of destruction of chemical weaponry. This is an important process which must continue, for less seems to be known about the composition, size and location of chemical-weapon stocks than is the case with nuclear arsenals. Only two countries have declared that they have them. To some extent, therefore, negotiators are working in the dark on the weapons that they are trying to ban. The Assembly might consider whether there is anything that it can do to encourage States that have chemical weapons to provide details on their stockpiles. Those States should also consider their responsibilities to facilitate the negotiations.

While we welcome the progress that has been made, we emphasize the need for continued flexibility before final treaty language will be found for inclusion in the so-called rolling text of the draft convention.

With continued goodwill, difficult issues can be transformed from policy problems to mere drafting problems. There should be no let-up during the additional meetings that have been scheduled for later this year and next January.

The overall goal must remain the elimination of all chemical weapons as rapidly as is practicable. A convention banning chemical weapons would break new ground and be of enormous significance to the broader disarmament and arms-control process.

Earlier this year we saw the successful conclusion of the meeting of scientific and technical experts on biological weapons, which agreed on data and information-exchange measures. That should help to build confidence in compliance with the biological weapons Convention. The New Zealand Government recently

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

submitted information to the Secretary-General in accordance with the recommendation of the meeting of experts.

The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is scheduled to convene in New York next year. Many of us will be present then. We will be able to evaluate the progress made in implementing the recommendations adopted by the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament in 1978. More important, we will be able to consider our future goals and the procedures and institutions in which we will pursue them.

At the Preparatory Committee meeting held in May and June of this year, States Members adopted an agenda for the special session. Much more work will be required of us if we are to stand any chance of reaching meaningful agreement next year. We have already outlined New Zealand's priorities at the special session. The arms race, in its nuclear and conventional dimensions, as well as its prevention in outer space, nuclear non-proliferation, the ban on nuclear testing, nuclear-free zones and confidence-building measures are among the substantive items that New Zealand will pursue.

We will want to see improvements and changes in certain aspects of the way in which the United Nations considers disarmament issues, in the United Nations Disarmament Commission and in the First Committee in particular. We will want attention to be paid to the current impediments in the way of many countries which would wish to participate fully in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. And we will want the special session to give close attention to the Final Document recently adopted by the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

That Conference was a major event in the history of the United Nations involvement in the disarmament process. Not only did it provide a needed forum for a debate on the interrelated problems of disarmament, development and international

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

security, but it also enabled the negotiation and adoption of an international consensus on the way in which those problems interact, and we thereby broadened our understanding of them. We agreed on the means by which we might begin to confront them in a logical and practical manner. The Conference also demonstrated the ability of Member States to reach agreement on important disarmament and disarmament-related issues.

I began by noting that New Zealand had welcomed the recent advances towards a major arms-control agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union. I conclude by confirming that New Zealand welcomes the successful outcome of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. Both are hopeful indications that progress can be made in the bilateral and multilateral attack on the problems of disarmament. New Zealand hopes that the next 12 months will bring other, even more welcome, bilateral and multilateral agreements.

Mr. AL-ALFI (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): At the outset I am pleased to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are sure that you will contribute to the success of the Committee's work. I should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee. We assure you of our co-operation as you discharge your tasks.

The discussions in the First Committee at this session indicate that there is hope of positive and realistic steps towards eliminating the risk of nuclear war and the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race. With each year, we become more hopeful and encouraged because we may at last be on the path that will lead to the attainment of the objectives so hoped for by the international community, as reflected in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which outlined an international strategy for

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

disarmament. In saying this, we hope we are not being over-optimistic. At the same time, we must not underestimate the importance of any progress made or step taken towards disarmament that can also improve international relations, particularly when it responds to the aspirations of all our peoples to security and peace.

In this connection, we believe that the agreement in principle between the United States and the USSR to proceed to the elimination of intermediate- and shorter-range missiles has given a new impetus to international efforts to achieve progress towards a goal to which there is no alternative. The choice facing us today is disarmament or annihilation. In his statement in the General Assembly this year, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of my country said:

"Such an agreement would represent the first possibility of eliminating a category of nuclear weapons and would be a historic event reflecting a new and increasing awareness of the realities of our nuclear age and a step towards meeting the will of the international community to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control."

(A/42/PV.23, p. 23)

That agreement, as well as the prospective summit meeting between the Soviet Union and the United States - particularly after the disappointment of the Reykjavik summit meeting - could also be considered to be

"the embodiment of a new realistic attitude in dealing with international problems of our time. This approach, initiated by the Soviet Union, and deserving of our high appreciation, is based on relations of dialogue and co-operation in international affairs and on replacing lack of trust and confrontation with mutual co-operation and common interest. It is a living expression of the new way of thinking that is needed by our interdependent world and indispensable to common peace efforts". (A/42/PV.23, p. 24)

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

The fact that we welcome the results of the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union does not at all in any way change the fact that disarmament is the shared responsibility of the international community, as it affects all mankind. Hence we stress the importance of dealing with disarmament issues in multilateral international forums. We hope that the agreement will put an end to the current stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament where no agreement has been reached on any of the pressing questions on its agenda regardless of the priorities unanimously agreed in the tenth special session of the General Assembly.

We hope that practical measures will be adopted with the aim of putting an end to the risk of nuclear war, achieving nuclear disarmament, declaring a complete test ban, preventing the militarization of outer space, elaborating an overall disarmament programme, concluding a treaty on the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States as well as a complete ban on chemical weapons.

In this respect, we commend the constructive, positive initiatives of the Soviet Union towards the elimination of nuclear arsenals and hope that the other nuclear-weapon States, particularly the United States will respond positively.

The reality which the international community has come to recognize is that the issue of disarmament is a matter of survival for all mankind. It is the line between being and extinction, progress and backwardness. Hence, the awareness that progress in the field of disarmament is closely linked with the world's ability to face up to the socio-economic challenges in the field of development. It was neither new nor strange that the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development affirmed the intrinsic relationship between the two.

(Mr. Al-Alti, Democratic Yemen)

If the Conference fell short of expectations, particularly with regard to the question of creating a fund to channel the resources released by disarmament to the development of developing countries, the fact remains that the final document of the Conference was a step in the right direction. Our task is to co-operate in translating the action programme adopted by the Conference into tangible measures that would benefit all mankind and promote the development of all, especially the developing countries.

A lot has been said in recent years on the necessity for achieving conventional disarmament. We wish to state categorically that we do not disagree with any sincere, genuine effort to achieve that objective, but we cannot accept that this slogan may be used to divert attention from the priorities agreed upon by consensus in the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament - namely the achievement of nuclear disarmament and thus avert the more serious threat to mankind and civilization. We cannot go along with the attempt to put nuclear and conventional on par.

We need not reiterate our support for the efforts of the United Nations aimed at establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones as a step towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control. There is no alternative to this ultimate goal which we hope will be achieved in the field of disarmament.

In that connection, we support efforts aimed at the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We believe, however, that that requires three basic conditions which have been set out in United Nations resolutions. The situation is crystal clear and so are the prerequisites: Israel has to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, place all its nuclear activities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency and desist from developing nuclear weapons, produce them, test them, or acquire them by any means;

(Mr. Al-Atti, Democratic Yemen)

it must not place nuclear weapons or explosive devices, either in Israel or in any of the territories currently under its occupation.

While we affirm the importance of the fulfilment of those conditions, we wish to warn at the same time of the grave risk of the acquisition by Israel of nuclear weapons. This acquisition by Israel of nuclear weapons is an established fact to which some of the countries that support Israel tend to turn a blind eye, while they make a great commotion about unconfirmed reports that other countries intend to acquire such weapons. Israel's record in defying the will of the international community, added to the fact that its nuclear activities are not subject to the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, are cause enough for the international community to take tangible measures to put an end to any form of co-operation with Israel in the nuclear field.

Once again, we wish to point out the validity of the conclusions reached in the report of the Secretary-General presented to the thirty-seventh session on Israeli nuclear armaments. Those conclusions have been confirmed by other, more recent, international reports and indeed by Israeli sources.

Equally, we view with concern the development of the nuclear capability of the racist régime in south Africa and consider it a threat to international peace and security. This nuclear capability, in the hands of Pretoria, will only perpetuate the policy of apartheid - a policy whose elimination is sought by the international community. It is our belief that the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted by Heads of State and Governments of the Organization of African Unity in 1964, will be a very important step towards the realization of the aspirations of the peoples of the African continent, in general, and the peoples of southern Africa, in particular. The acquisition by the racist régimes in South Africa and Israel of the capability for the production and

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

acquisition of nuclear weapons and the collaboration between the two régimes in this field pose a grave threat, not only to the Arab and African peoples in the Middle East and Africa, but also to international peace and security. The international community should take immediate and urgent steps to face up to this grave development, to ensure that some Western States should cease the practice of supplying both racist régimes with the necessary technology that helps them develop their ability to produce nuclear weapons, at a time when they refuse adamantly to collaborate with countries which place their peaceful nuclear installations to the safeguards of the IAEA.

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

In his statement in the General Assembly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country highlighted the risks besetting our region, which is part of the Indian Ocean region, and pointed out the consequences of a situation that involves the intensification of military presence and imperialist interference and has heightened tension in the region. The glaring proof is the massive build up of naval and land forces and the United States "Bright Star" military manoeuvres in the area.

We stress our intention to end those threats, promote the efforts of the countries of the region to bring peace and security to the area, and we believe that the adoption of tangible measures to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace will make a great contribution towards the elimination of those threats and the promotion of stability and security.

In this direction, we believe that the Conference on the Indian Ocean is a necessary, practical step to bring about the early achievement of the declaration's objectives. Therefore we call for renewed constructive efforts and the necessary political will to achieve those goals.

As one of the countries on the Indian Ocean, we are concerned that some circles continue to obstruct the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean in preparing for the Conference, contrary to the wishes of the majority of its members. We appeal for further constructive efforts to ensure the holding of the Conference on the Indian Ocean. We express our regret and concern that the draft resolution recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee has postponed the Conference to 1990. We ask for further co-operation and participation of the permanent members of the Security Council, the major maritime users, and the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to ensure the early conclusion of the preparatory work for the Conference, to convene the Conference and achieve positive results.

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

We hope that this session will witness a qualitative step towards the adoption of measures aimed at the realization of the aspirations of our peoples for prosperity and progress. We are aware that our collective responsibilities demand concerted efforts and the adoption of specific measures in the face of the dangers that beset us. We earnestly hope that the positive statements made will be translated into tangible action in the service of all mankind.

Mr. THINLEY (Bhutan): Allow me to begin by extending the warm congratulations of my delegation to you, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the Committee. I should also like to felicitate the other officers of the Committee on their election. I am confident that, under your wise and able stewardship, our deliberations will reach fruitful conclusions.

I should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate your predecessor, Ambassador Zachmann of the German Democratic Republic, for the judicious manner in which he presided over the Committee during the previous session of the General Assembly.

In our statement in the Committee during the forty-first session of the General Assembly we expressed our sadness over the fact that the promise held out by the Reykjavik summit remained unfulfilled. Nevertheless, we also expressed the hope that the two super-Powers would in the near future come together to share a common vision and political will to remove the awesome spectre of a nuclear holocaust that has haunted mankind with an ever-growing threat to its very survival. Such optimism was founded in our abiding faith that the same genius, wisdom and courage that had engendered the two super-Powers would prevail over the insanity and futility of their nuclear-arms race.

For the first time in decades the increasingly apathetic and despairing world has been shaken. It has been shaken not by the fear of an imminent disaster, war or any form of human tragedy, but by the belief in the dawning of a new era - a

(Mr. Thinley, Bhutan)

beginning towards a safe and secure world for us and for posterity. Indeed, the recent agreement in principle between the two super-Powers to dismantle their intermediate nuclear forces has inspired in us the resurgence of the familiar but dying hope for a world free of the threat of a thermonuclear war from which can emerge no victor or vanquished. In the general debate, on 6 October, the Foreign Minister of my country, Bhutan, Mr. Lyonpo Dawa Tsering, spoke of the Bhutanese conviction that

"the two super-Powers, imbued with purpose and vision, have embarked on an undertaking of heroic proportions, an undertaking which seeks to ensure the very survival of the human race.

"... we hope that the summit meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev later in the fall will become a real turning-point in the history of East-West relations and will herald the beginning of the process of eliminating all ... nuclear weapons as well as other disarmament measures. The world will then become an infinitely safer place in which to live and the two leaders, through their contribution to the disarmament process, would have carved out for themselves honoured niches in the history of mankind."

(A/42/PV.27, p. 47)

We began this year's deliberations in a more favourable and stimulating climate generated by the agreement between the two super-Powers. We hope that that action will inspire other nuclear Powers of the world to exercise self-restraint and control in the testing and development of nuclear weapons and in adding to their stockpiles. It is also hoped that those countries which have developed the capability to produce nuclear weapons, particularly developing countries, will desist from taking the futile path and instead devote their scarce resources and energies to meeting the more basic human needs of their peoples.

(Mr. Thinley, Bhutan)

Although recent events have been encouraging, they have unfortunately not altered some of the basic realities facing the international community. The global military expenditure is fast approaching the staggering amount of \$1 trillion per annum. While we are heartened by the ray of hope that has been shed on nuclear disarmament, we see no comforting signs in the area of the conventional arms race, which consumes a major portion of global military expenditure and thus directly or indirectly hinders development.

In this context, my Government is pleased to note that the recent International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development established a close and multidimensional link between disarmament and development. The Final Document, which was adopted by consensus, provides guidelines for further international efforts on the two interrelated questions. We hope that this important subject will receive due priority on the international agenda.

Both as a member of the world community committed to the goals set out in the United Nations Charter and as a Buddhist State deeply entrenched in the values of non-violence and brotherhood, Bhutan supports all measures aimed at any form of disarmament. In this connection, we believe that a comprehensive-nuclear-test ban is of paramount importance on the international disarmament agenda. Such a ban would be a fundamental and practical step in preventing further research on and development of these weapons.

(Mr. Thinley, Bhutan)

Bhutan acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May 1985, convinced that the Treaty was essential to international peace and security. We also believe that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at between the States of the region concerned is an important step towards global disarmament. Similarly, we welcome the coming into force of the Karotonga Treaty for a South Pacific nuclear-free zone.

While nuclear-weapon States must shoulder the biggest responsibility in contributing to the disarmament process, we must stress the importance of multilateral negotiations. The very nature of the subject and its destructive capacity transcend geographical and political boundaries. Therefore, all issues of international concern should be ultimately expressed or resolved in the multilateral context. In this regard, my delegation is of the view that the role of the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, should be made more effective.

An issue which demands our serious attention is the use of chemical weapons. It has been pointed out that chemical weapons can be developed and produced with relative ease, and at low cost, by any country that has reached an appreciable level of industrial and technological progress. We hope that the drafting of a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons will be successfully concluded by next year.

As a hinterland State of the Indian Ocean region, we view the heightening of tension in that region with serious concern. In an effort to reduce tension and eliminate the threat of war, countries of the region have sought to declare it a zone of peace, free of any foreign bases. We believe that the quest for peace should prevail over certain selfish interests. Once again, we express our hope that an international conference on the Indian Ocean will be convened so that the issues concerning the Indian Ocean can be satisfactorily resolved.

(Mr. Thinley, Bhutan)

My delegation is of the view that the work of the General Assembly at this session is of crucial importance in ensuring the success of the third special session devoted to disarmament, scheduled for 1988. To this end, the momentum generated by recent initiatives should not be allowed to dissipate. Rather, we must nurture our renewed hope and, with regained strength and vitality, endeavour to realize the vision of lasting peace on earth, to which we all stand committed.

Mr. NASHASHIBI (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): Many people believe that in the past four decades nuclear deterrence has saved humanity from the outbreak of a new world war. That may be true. However, the balance of terror which reigned supreme in military strategy has in the mean time done away with our common humanity, because it is devoid of any ethical meaning. Few of us realize, for example, that more than 150 armed conflicts have taken place since the end of the Second World War, with grave and painful implications for most of the peoples of the world. A total of 20 million people have lost their lives as a result. Most of them were innocent victims of the power game and the barbarism of man.

There are still more than 40 military conflicts raging inside certain States or between States. For example, the Middle East region, to which my country belongs, is the arena for three military conflicts, the most ferocious known in the history of man. They are a blot on man's history, but I do not want to go into that now.

Jordan, like many other peace-loving countries, welcomed and pinned great hopes on the Reykjavik meeting last year between the leaders of the United States of America and the Soviet Union. We consider that its results, including at the very least the breaking of the stalemate between the two super-Powers, represent a positive step towards understanding and constructive dialogue, which may lead to narrowing the big gap between the Soviet Union and the United States on the outstanding complicated problems of curbing and halting the arms race in all fields.

(Mr. Nashashibi, Jordan)

Jordan also welcomed the agreement in principle between the United States and the Soviet Union on the elimination of intermediate- and shorter-range nuclear missiles in Europe. We regard the agreement as a first step on the long road towards the goal of eliminating all strategic nuclear weapons. Jordan hopes that the summit meeting between the leaders of the United States of America and the Soviet Union will take place and that the agreement in principle between them will become a reality so that the dialogue may continue with a view to building confidence and continuing to solve the outstanding problems between them.

We consider the United Nations to be the body in which conflicts and disputes should be solved peacefully, thus avoiding exposing the world to more dreadful competition in regard to the possession and development of weapons of mass destruction. Certain States would then no longer feel the need to allocate a major part of their resources to developing their military power instead of meeting the requirements of social and economic development.

My country participated in the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held in New York from 24 August to 11 September this year to review all aspects of the link between disarmament and development, and we support its goals. It was held to study the results of the stupendous military expenditures, especially by the States possessing nuclear weapons, and the results of such expenditures on the world economy and on the world economic and social situation. The Conference also considered ways and means of saving more resources for development through disarmament measures, especially for the developing countries.

(Mr. Nashashibi, Jordan)

My country also supports the request to the General Assembly to keep under periodic review the relationship between disarmament and development, including giving consideration to the matter at the third special session devoted to disarmament, which we hope will be held at a suitable time next year. My delegation looks forward to participating effectively in that session.

(Mr. Nashashibi, Jordan)

The arms race, especially the nuclear-arms race, has reached disquieting levels. Humanity faces the danger of self-annihilation because of the huge nuclear arsenals. In order to eliminate the danger of nuclear war, we must halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race. The countries with the largest nuclear arsenals should assume their responsibility vis-à-vis the international community and reverse the nuclear-arms race and achieve nuclear disarmament. They should also cease forthwith the threat of the use of such arms.

I wish to refer here to the note by the Secretary-General on Israeli nuclear armament, contained in document A/40/520, where it is stated:

"States Members of the United Nations have over the years shown increasing concern regarding the danger of the introduction of nuclear weapons into the Middle East, particularly in view of reports that Israel may have developed a nuclear weapon capability." (A/40/520, para. 7)

This development has been confirmed by the Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu, who worked at a nuclear-bomb plant for over 10 years and is at present on trial in Israel. His statements have been substantiated by a technical investigating team that included both American and British experts. It proved that Israel today is in possession of many nuclear weapons and its nuclear-weapon plant is situated underground, below the Negev Desert, or next to the Dimona nuclear reactor.

Moreover, Israel has the capability to transfer such weapons to targets deep within neighbouring countries. Israel has had recourse to a smokescreen policy regarding its nuclear installations. Since the late 1950s, it has illegitimately acquired nuclear technology and nuclear substances; and in this respect it is co-operating with the racist régime in South Africa.

I also wish to refer to the fact that the General Assembly noted with concern at its thirty-ninth session Israel's persistent refusal to commit itself not

(Mr. Nashashibi, Jordan)

to produce or possess nuclear weapons, despite repeated calls by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as well as its refusal to place its nuclear installations under IAEA safeguards.

The General Assembly also condemned Israel for its continuous refusal to implement Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and requested the Security Council to investigate Israel's nuclear activities, as well as collaboration on the part of certain States, corporations and individuals in these activities. Moreover, it reiterated its request to the IAEA to cease any scientific co-operation with Israel that might enhance Israel's nuclear capability. It reaffirmed its condemnation of the continuous collaboration between Israel and racist South Africa, which jeopardizes the African continent in its entirety.

The incessant aggressiveness of Israel's approach is not confined to its occupation of Arab territories or the displacement of their inhabitants. It went so far as to attack economic installations, as reflected in the attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor established for peaceful purposes under complete IAEA safeguards.

Jordan has always supported the General Assembly resolutions calling for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in South Asia, Africa, the Pacific - as in the Treaty of Rarotonga - Latin America - as in the Treaty of Tlatelolco - the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Among these resolutions are 41/48 of 3 December 1986, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East". That resolution

"Invites the nuclear-weapon States and all other States to render their assistance in the establishment of the zone and at the same time to refrain from any action that runs counter to both the letter and spirit of the present resolution." (resolution 41/48, para. 5)

(Mr. Nashashibi, Jordan)

Jordan has also supported the principle of strict adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and strict respect for the obligations contained in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which called in particular for confidence-building measures and for compliance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as reflected in desisting from the use or threat of the use of force against the sovereignty or political independence of any State, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Disarmament cannot take place in the midst of problems and disagreements causing disruption in the international arena. Certain arrangements should be taken to resolve those problems in a spirit of equality, taking into account the achievement of security for all.

The two super-Powers bear a special responsibility in this respect. They must set the example, such as agreeing to start genuine disarmament, reinforce the role of the United Nations and respect the Charter, as well as to deter aggressive States from persisting in their behaviour, so that confidence and stability might prevail in relations between States.

I wish to conclude my statement by quoting from the statement made by His Highness Prince Hassan ibn Talal, Crown Prince of Jordan, to the forty-second session of the General Assembly:

"It has been said that since war begins in the minds of men it is in the minds of men that the defences for peace must be constructed. The time has come for all of us to adjust our thinking to contemporary realities and to recognize that all our efforts to promote human welfare will be in vain if a just and durable peace remains elusive." (A/42/PV.11, p. 7)

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): As representatives will have noted in today's Journal, the General Assembly has planned consideration of the report of the First Committee on item 62 of the agenda, entitled "General and complete disarmament". In order to enable members of the Committee to participate in that debate in the plenary meeting, I am proposing that the work of our Committee begin this afternoon at 3.30 this afternoon rather than at 3.00.

If there are no objections, I shall consider that the Committee accepts this suggestion.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.