



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 24TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. OYONO (United Republic of Cameroon)
(Vice-Chairman)

DISARMAMENT ITEMS

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

- General debate

Statements were made by

Mr. Elfaki (Sudan)
Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt)
Mr. Kirca (Turkey)
Mr. Al-Hamzah (Democratic Yemen)
Mr. Coumbassa (Guinea)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ELFAKI (Sudan): It is a special pleasure for me personally and for my delegation to see Ambassador Naik presiding over the work and deliberations of this Committee. The wide experience, skill, and talent for which he is known ensure us of the success of the work of this very important body. To him and to the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur of this Committee we extend our sincere felicitations on their unanimous election, and would like to assure them of our full support and co-operation.

My delegation also wishes to express its gratitude and appreciation to United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim and to all his aides in the field of disarmament for the arduous work and painstaking efforts which they have exerted in order to prepare the many reports which we have before us now on the different aspects of disarmament.

Last year, while addressing the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, Mr. Abel Alier, Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, described the world situation in the following terms:

We live in a very unhappy world; a world which has witnessed more than 150 wars, both civil and international, since 1945; a world which has suffered and is still suffering from hunger, even starvation, and shortage of resources, and a lack of health equipment and educational facilities; and yet this same world allocates over \$400 billion to stockpiling, producing and developing weapons of mass destruction - the mass destruction of civilizations, of mankind and of the very planet on which we live and have our being.

The arms race and armaments production can in no way be separated from the problems of development. We urge that appropriate measures be taken immediately to divert some of the resources allocated for armaments production and procurement to socio-economic development, for that is the only guarantee that we may live in a world which is rational, fair and secure." (A/34/PV.25, p. 22)

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

Mr. Alier's remarks and appeals - indeed, worries - were by no means new. They had been reiterated several times before and are echoed today by a great number of States, particularly the poor nations. The message and call are very clear and need no more emphasis: complete disarmament is an urgent imperative if the human species is to continue and enjoy living, and if human achievement, heritage and civilization are not to be demolished. However, as we are painfully aware and as has been reflected by the many speakers who have preceded me the present condition of world security is even dimmer and more horrifying. Civil strife and inter-State wars are rife and constantly on the increase. It is true that no world war has occurred for more than three decades, but it is equally true that there has never been real peace during the last three decades, for peace is not merely the absence of war.

In the present international atmosphere of uncertainty and distrust, the world is faced not only with an increased number of civil and inter-State wars, as is the case today, but with the very real possibility of nuclear confrontation and holocaust, either as a deliberate measure or as the result of error. My delegation notes with dismay and abhorrence that man's very survival on this planet is being increasingly jeopardized and threatened by the rapidly-growing quantitative and qualitative accumulation of nuclear and conventional arsenals. Strategic reports and studies, including those prepared for this session, leave us in no doubt as to the magnitude of the danger to which we are willingly or unwillingly exposed. Available information about developing capabilities of limited nuclear war - if nuclear wars could be conducted and contained that way at all - is of very serious and dangerous consequence to all of us, particularly to non-nuclear nations and nuclear weapon-free regions.

The report of the Committee on Disarmament (A/35/27) submitted for the consideration of this session reveals the disappointing failure to establish a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. It is certainly more disappointing to note that that failure has been recorded even though all the technical and scientific aspects of this question, which has always been regarded as

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

a matter of the highest priority in the field of disarmament, are said to have been studied and sufficiently prepared. The failure of the Second Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), held in Geneva between 11 August and 7 September 1980 is also a matter of grief and great concern to my delegation. It is perhaps equally alarming and distressing to note that in a world characterized mainly by scarce resources, economic difficulties, hunger and disease, enormous material and human resources are still consistently being diverted and allocated to armaments. The annual figure today, at the end of the First Disarmament Decade, stands at \$500 billion, compared with \$180 billion at the inauguration of the Decade in 1970. The disparity may perhaps be more clear and the disappointment more understandable when it is realized that official development assistance does not as yet exceed \$US 20 billion, or 4 per cent of annual military expenditures, and that as much as 5 or 6 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries is devoted to armaments, while the poor third world countries are denied the 0.7 per cent target. Moreover, the fact that about 70 per cent of the resources of third world countries go to armaments is very serious and adds much to the present common anxiety regarding the future socio-economic development of those countries. We believe that the international community has an urgent duty to see to it that the prevailing insecure and turbulent world conditions that induce these poor countries to divert such badly needed resources to obtain armaments are done away with.

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

Those appalling developments in the international climate and conditions have to be reversed and discontinued, since it is in no one's interest that they be sustained. It is true that all nations of the world have a real stake in such endeavours and, hence, they should participate effectively and genuinely. However, the greatest responsibility in this crucial effort rests with the big nuclear Powers and their allies. We trust that they will face up to their responsibility and give it due priority. Lengthy speeches, lip-service and unheeded resolutions will lead us nowhere. What is necessary is understanding of these stark realities, appreciation of our common destiny, mutual trust and the necessary political will and determination. It is very saddening to realize that the First Disarmament Decade, the 1970s, in reality turned out to be a decade for armaments. Let us spare no effort to ensure that this Second Disarmament Decade is not doomed to the same fate and that we are no longer exposed to the hazardous and horrendous prospects of a nuclear or any other kind of war. It is high time for us to realize that on our planet, which has become so small today, there is no longer room for any confrontation whatsoever, not only because the costs are extremely high but also because modern history has shown us that only through co-operation and conciliation, not the use of force, can all differences and disputes be equitably and justly resolved.

It is in that spirit and with that hope that we view the recent positive, though minor, developments along the road towards disarmament. My delegation welcomes the dialogue initiated by the United States and the USSR in order to work out ground rules for future negotiations on tactical nuclear weapons as part of the SALT negotiations. We hope that that step will generate further steps that could remove all obstacles in the way of the ratification of SALT II, redress the recent failure of the Second Review Conference on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and result in effective measures that would outlaw nuclear tests and war, reverse the nuclear arms race and progressively reduce nuclear stockpiles until they are totally eliminated.

We also welcome the success scored by the United Nations Conference on specific conventional weapons, which met in Geneva from 15 September to 10 October 1980. The adoption by that Conference of a Convention on Prohibitions

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and three Protocols on non-detectable fragments, mines and booby-traps and incendiaries is a great success and a step forward that augurs well for the future.

We all know that the world community commenced its efforts to prohibit or restrict the use of conventional weapons of that nature in 1974, when the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts was convened under the auspices of the Government of Switzerland. That such enormous success should have been scored after almost seven years of arduous work and negotiations is a clear demonstration that what is really needed in the whole process of disarmament is political will and determination to rid the world of the spectre of war and annihilation. That positive step also shows clearly that with determination, persistence and patience all seemingly insurmountable obstacles can be gradually overcome.

In speaking about nuclear arsenals and the untold danger they entail for all peoples of the world, my delegation would like once more to bring to the attention of this world gathering the very real dangers to which Africa and the Middle East, and indeed the entire world, are exposed by the secret and criminal designs of the two racial régimes in South Africa and Israel. The General Assembly has over the years repeatedly expressed its anxiety and concern at South Africa's policy of apartheid and its nuclear activities. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, contained in document A/35/402, which my delegation wishes to commend, reveals clearly that such world concern stems from the situation in South Africa resulting from the policies and actions of the apartheid régime, in particular its efforts to consolidate and perpetuate racist domination of the country, its repression of the opponents of apartheid and its repeated hostile acts against neighbouring States. It is against that background of international condemnation and rejection of apartheid and the consequent isolation of the racist régime of South Africa that its nuclear policy should be viewed and the threat it poses to world peace considered.

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

South Africa, which is said to be a party to the partial test-ban Treaty, has utterly refused to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Similarly, the racist minority régime has refused to accept the application of safeguards to South Africa's so-called peaceful nuclear activities and is totally against the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. South Africa's ability to manufacture nuclear weapons, as stated in the Secretary-General's report, is beyond doubt, and my delegation shares the fears of other African delegations that South Africa in fact has nuclear-weapon capability. The discovery of an underground nuclear-weapon test site in the Kalahari Desert in 1977 and the detection by a United States VELA reconnaissance satellite in the area of the South Atlantic on 22 September 1979 of a double flash of light resembling the signals from an atmospheric nuclear explosion point clearly to the plans and nuclear preparations of South Africa in order to impose its notorious apartheid policies on Africa and the world.

Oblivious of the strong winds of change and facing enormous condemnation and total isolation because of its policies of apartheid, the white minority régime in South Africa is quite capable of any irrational act, including the threat or use of nuclear weapons, to protect its criminal policy of apartheid. The international community as a whole, particularly the big Powers and those States that have assisted South Africa to develop its nuclear programme, must face its responsibility. We call upon all States to ensure the implementation of paragraph 63 (c) of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, which reads:

"In Africa, where the Organization of African Unity has affirmed a decision for the denuclearization of the region, the Security Council of the United Nations shall take appropriate effective steps whenever necessary to prevent the frustration of this objective." (resolution S-10/2)

In the Middle East, Israel, faced with the same world condemnation and isolation as South Africa, is acting similarly. The intimate relations existing between those two racist minority régimes and their close co-operation and co-ordination in the nuclear field are no longer a secret to be exposed.

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

Like South Africa, Israel is adamantly opposed to signing the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or accepting safeguards on so-called peaceful nuclear systems. The assertions of the representative of the Zionist entity, contained in document A/C.1/35/8, that Israel stands for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and that it will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Arab-Israeli dispute do not hold water, nor do they accord with its policies of racism, expansion, aggression, occupation and atrocities against the Arabs, in complete defiance of the United Nations Charter and all relevant resolutions of its principal organs, the General Assembly and the Security Council.

My delegation wishes to add its voice to those of speakers who have preceded me in emphasizing the pressing need to continue the study of this question and prepare a comprehensive report on Israel's nuclear armament and the dangers inherent therein, and agrees that this report should be submitted to the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

I have dwelt at length on this question because my delegation, like many others, believes that the establishment of nuclear-free zones in many parts of the world is essential and of fundamental importance in curbing the spread of nuclear weapons. We fully share the views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on general and complete disarmament that

"The idea of nuclear-weapon-free zones antedates by many years the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. From the outset the establishment of such zones was conceived in the context of world-wide non-proliferation efforts. At the same time, the zones would contribute to regional stability and security and diminish the prospect of nuclear weapons being used against countries of the zone. Active consideration of specific areas has been prompted in many cases by particular regional developments, such as the prospect of introduction of nuclear weapons in some regions, inter alia, in Europe, or the apprehensions caused by the nuclear programmes of some regional Powers." (A/35/416, annex, para. 85)

Obviously, the Middle East, Africa and the entire region of the Indian Ocean among those specific areas that need to be kept free of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

As a littoral State, the Sudan naturally fully supports and attaches great importance to the question of the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region. As rightly stated in the Secretary-General's report on general and complete disarmament, this question

"... has been a recurrent theme at the United Nations and among the non-aligned countries throughout the 1970s. Efforts to implement such a concept were prompted in large measure by the prospect of increasing great-Power involvement and military presence in the Indian Ocean. Indeed, there has been in the course of the 1970s a renewed expansion in the naval forces and facilities of extra-regional Powers. Apprehensions about the growing military, including naval, capabilities of some of the littoral States added to the fears that short of early preventive measures the region of the Indian Ocean could become a zone of confrontation with grave implications for the security of the countries in the region and for world peace". (ibid., para. 69)

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

My delegation notes with regret the very dangerous situation that has been developing in different parts of that region of the Indian Ocean since the beginning of this decade. We have on many occasions appealed, as we appeal today, to all big Powers, maritime users as well as all littoral and hinterland States, to co-operate fully and positively in order to maintain peace and stability in that region which is economically and strategically very crucial for all mankind. The entire region of the Indian Ocean, including the Arab Gulf and the Red Sea, has to be maintained as a real zone of peace. My delegation, while commending all efforts to that effect, sincerely hopes that some improvement in the political climate of the region will occur and that the proposed Colombo conference on the Indian Ocean scheduled to be convened in 1981 will be a complete success. We appeal to all countries concerned, particularly the two super-Powers and their allies, to spare no effort to make that event a success and a turning point in the history of the entire region and a landmark in its progress towards real peace, stability and socio-economic development. We hope that the still talks between the two super-Powers on the limitation of force in the Indian Ocean, still suspended, will be reconvened soon and concluded successfully.

Before concluding this short statement, my delegation wishes to avail itself of this opportunity to commend the intensive efforts and painstaking work of the Committee on Disarmament. We are gratified that that Committee has been able to achieve significant progress with respect to the improvement of its organization and method of work. The formation and setting up of four ad hoc groups which are holding substantive negotiations on various disarmament issues is an important step forward. It is our hope that that Committee, being the only multilateral body in the field of disarmament, will soon be able also to set up a working group to negotiate all questions and aspects of nuclear disarmament and a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. My delegation also hopes that the present thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly will be able to initiate the first steps in the preparations for the second special session on disarmament scheduled for 1982.

(Mr. Elfaki, Sudan)

Speaking as I do now, on the last day of the third disarmament week, I should like to express the hope of my delegation that this occasion would be utilized by all States, organizations and individuals to highlight the very important and urgent issues involved in this important question of disarmament, particularly the fact that it is not only the maintenance of international peace and security that is in jeopardy or at stake, but the very survival of mankind itself.

Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): Before I begin my statement, I should like to extend to Ambassador Naik the heartfelt congratulations of my delegation on his election as Chairman of the First Committee. His outstanding diplomatic experience and personal qualities are well known to us all. We should also like to congratulate the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur on their election.

We are meeting today in extremely difficult and complicated conditions, over which pessimism, mistrust and tension weigh heavily. Those conditions are due to the situation which is similar to the one that prevailed during the period before the Second World War. They could lead some to lose control over the various aspects which govern international relations and the present international system.

We witness today an escalation of the use of force in international relations and of interference in the internal affairs of States through the use of armed forces in order to establish puppet régimes in the service of occupation or invasion forces or in the service of foreign Powers. We also note the continuation of the doctrine of the balance of power based on the arms race, which leads to the acquisition of a more sophisticated capacity for deterrence. We also note competition between the two great Powers to obtain new spheres of influence or to consolidate established positions.

This situation raises questions regarding the fate of problems concerning disarmament and the strengthening of international peace and security.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Some of us felt somewhat optimistic after the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, because we thought that the international community would accelerate its efforts to adopt measures for general and complete disarmament. However, today, after almost two years, we note with great regret that we have not yet arrived at a single effective disarmament agreement, and we do not expect to achieve any true progress in that area so long as the present situation continues and until the next special session devoted to disarmament takes place. All that we have been able to do as we approach that second special session is to use our time to define the procedures for the Committee on Disarmament, while strengthening the negotiating body, preparing studies on the question of disarmament adopting resolutions on the second Disarmament Decade, and elaborating and defining the elements for a comprehensive disarmament programme. These matters appear to be of secondary importance because negotiations on disarmament take pride of place. However, they cannot lead to tangible progress in the field of nuclear disarmament in particular, and disarmament in general.

My delegation will no longer put forward its position on disarmament questions since that position has already been given in many previous statements. However, today I should like to define our views with respect to the responsibilities of the nuclear and non-nuclear States.

The facts call for common action within the framework of mutual responsibilities and commitments between the nuclear and non-nuclear States because we have reached a stage where we must stop and make new estimates before we clearly define our practical action for the future.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Present stockpiles of nuclear warheads have reached the figure of over 50,000 according to the study carried out by the Group of Experts on a Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons (A/35/392). That study clearly indicates the dangers inherent in the existence of arsenals of nuclear weapons capable of destroying mankind several times over. There is at present an international debate in progress on the fact that certain nuclear Powers rely on the balance of deterrence in relations between States. The position of the majority, in particular the non-aligned group, is to reject that doctrine, for its continuance can only be to the detriment of mankind and civilization.

The fate of mankind can no longer depend on the nuclear Powers. That dependence carries with it the elements of its own destruction. I wonder therefore what logic there is in the persistence of the nuclear States in increasing and developing their nuclear stockpiles when those they possess are already capable of destroying their adversaries and even the whole world. What use would there be, after the annihilation of mankind and the transformation of the world into a mass grave, in leaving behind an enormous surplus of nuclear weapons? The only explanation for this is that man carries within himself the seeds of his own destruction as well as that of his enemies, and that man has learnt nothing from history.

If the non-nuclear States today stand firm against that destructive trend, it is because they are aware of the fact that a nuclear war will know no geographic boundaries and will represent suicide for the whole of mankind; there will be no victors; no one will escape no matter how far he may be from the theatre of operations.

Common action in the context of reciprocal responsibility and commitments between nuclear and non-nuclear States demands that nuclear States recognize the importance of collective action and respond appropriately so that effective measures of disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament may be adopted. There must also be the necessary political will to replace the doctrine of mutual deterrence by that of peaceful co-operation based on respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter and the commitment thereto. This would not only put an end to armed conflict, but lead to the establishment of an effective system based on international peace and security.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

The responsibility of non-nuclear States should be expressed in a practical development of their action, without regard to the position of each State, in order to ensure that our role is truly that of reconciling the needs and demands of each party and the parallel reduction of armaments.

At the last session of the Disarmament Commission my delegation submitted a proposal concerning the necessity of putting an end to the qualitative and quantitative nuclear arms race and to the race for weapons of mass destruction as a first stage. We suggested that we should then proceed to the gradual and parallel reduction of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and of the military capacity in conventional weapons and armed forces of the nuclear Powers and other militarily important States. The levels of reduction should be acceptable and balanced and within a limit of 5 per cent a year, which would not affect the principle of the right of States to maintain and defend their security.

Ratification of the SALT II agreement has become a matter of urgency. Although that agreement does not deal effectively with the question of disarmament itself, agreement on the limitation of strategic weapons is a step which must be followed by further steps in order to reach agreement on the limitation of strategic weapons, in terms both of quantity and of their qualitative development. The ending of the arms race should be accompanied by collateral measures reflecting the need to arrive at the adoption of a comprehensive nuclear test ban and a treaty prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons, as well as other treaties and conventions aimed at strengthening the guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States, which is an integral part of the disarmament process.

My delegation attaches particular importance to the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. We have repeatedly in the past spoken of the need to speed up the preparation of security guarantees without the restrictions which prevent the Security Council from fulfilling its responsibilities and taking preventive measures before nuclear aggression takes place rather than after. My delegation also proposed during the thirty-third session of the General Assembly that pending the ratification of such a treaty the nuclear States should submit to the Security Council instruments embodying their commitment. This would be a significant and vital step towards the consolidation of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

It is regrettable that the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva was unable to undertake negotiations on the text of a convention on the total prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. It is also unacceptable that that position should continue in the Committee while it awaits the final results of the tripartite negotiations between the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom, which prevents the Committee from carrying out its task of drafting the final text of the convention.

I should like to mention the proposal of the Group of 77 concerning a moratorium on nuclear testing and the establishment of a working group within the Committee on Disarmament to work out a convention on the total prohibition of nuclear tests. We hope that a working group will be established at the next session of the Committee on Disarmament and that it will prepare the final text of the convention.

The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is one of the essential foundations of efforts made to limit the arms race and reduce stocks of nuclear weapons until they are totally eliminated. It is not enough to prevent the emergence of new nuclear-weapon States because we cannot maintain a system that is based on the existence of States which have nuclear weapons and States which have not. At the Second Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Group of 77 attempted to draw a balance of responsibilities and obligations as between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States in order to ensure the universality of the Treaty.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

It is certain that the non-nuclear-weapon States have fulfilled their obligations as regards horizontal non-proliferation, but it seems that the nuclear-weapon States have not fulfilled their responsibilities under article VI of the Treaty with respect to vertical non-proliferation. Unfortunately, the attempts to amend that article did not make it possible to adapt it to the present situation. Among the other fundamental questions considered by the Conference should be mentioned the efforts made by the non-nuclear-weapon States to obtain from the Conference a guarantee of their inalienable right to benefit from nuclear technology and use it for peaceful purposes. This is a vitally important issue for the developing countries, in particular those countries which lack sources of energy.

But that request encountered many obstacles, including the insistence of the developed countries of the East and the West on imposing a comprehensive system of guarantees. These were supplementary conditions which were not provided for in article III of the Treaty. In spite of the atmosphere that reigned during the Conference and that prevented agreement on a declaration, we emphasized that the Conference should give particular importance to the principle of the inalienable right of all States to benefit from the advantages of the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Furthermore, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should consider the establishment of a special fund to assist developing countries which have acceded to the Treaty.

Egypt was among the first countries to call for security and disarmament measures at the regional level because it believes that such measures would supplement general and complete disarmament. These measures would also constitute practical action with a view to encouraging confidence at the regional and international levels if they were adopted in a climate of just and lasting solutions to political problems.

The important report (A/35/416) prepared by the Group of Experts on the various aspects of regional disarmament, in the preparation of which an Egyptian expert, Mr. Mohamed Shaker, participated, stressed the general guidelines from which States could draw inspiration in order to reach agreement at the regional level while benefiting from the experience already gained, particularly in the field of nuclear disarmament. That report also mentioned measures relating to the guarantees offered by extra-regional countries, particularly the great Powers. It emphasized the importance of the role that United Nations bodies can play in the attainment of that objective.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

It is in this spirit that in the course of the last six sessions of the General Assembly Egypt has supported the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We have dealt with certain obstacles in stages, advocating that the States of the region, while awaiting the attainment of that objective, declare officially that they are in favour of the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East within the framework of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and in accordance with paragraph 63 (d) of the Final Document of the special session devoted to disarmament. The States of the region should submit their declaration to the Security Council so that the latter may take the necessary action.

The measures provided for in General Assembly resolution 34/77, which was supported by all States except Israel, is sufficient proof that the international community fully appreciates the importance of the region and the need to prevent its taking part in the nuclear arms race. We wish to emphasize here that if any State in the region were to possess nuclear weapons this would reduce all our efforts to nothing since it would lead to that region entering the nuclear arms race and would expose it to incalculable dangers.

Among the studies to which we must devote attention is that submitted by the Group of Experts concerning the nuclear capacity of South Africa - document A/35/402. That study clearly indicates that South Africa possesses the necessary capacity to produce a certain number of nuclear bombs and the means of launching them, and that the purpose of the racist régime of South Africa in developing its nuclear capacity is to use those weapons as a last recourse to ensure the supremacy of the white race, to intimidate their neighbours and to undermine the morale of the indigenous black majority in South Africa. We support the conclusions of the Group of Experts according to which the possession of nuclear weapons by the racist South African régime must be regarded as a very serious danger, threatening the security of the African States and world peace. Efforts must therefore be made to ensure that South Africa adheres to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and places all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. Therefore our efforts aimed at making Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone must go hand in hand with the adoption of responsible measures by the nuclear States to put an end to their collaboration with South Africa in all fields.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

In dealing with the question of disarmament at the regional level, we wish to state that European security is an integral part of world security and that it is linked very closely with the security of the Mediterranean and the Middle East. We support all efforts aimed at ensuring that the European parties reach agreement on putting into effect the measures necessary to reduce their military potential, particularly their nuclear potential. Such action would lead to true disarmament under effective control. We support the French proposal concerning the convening of a disarmament conference in Europe, which would undoubtedly contribute to the reduction of tension and to the establishment of confidence among States. We hope that the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe that will be held next month in Madrid will adopt specific practical measures in this connexion.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

The question of conventional disarmament is among those on which progress should be achieved within the field of general and complete disarmament. We must envisage this question from the regional standpoint while taking into account the requirements and characteristics of each geographic region. It is quite clear that conventional weapons safeguard the sovereignty and security of non-nuclear States. Any attempt to reduce their use or their supply will be doomed to failure so long as the international bodies concerned, particularly the Security Council, do not effectively carry out their responsibility to protect world peace and security.

The achievement of conventional disarmament, in the view of my delegation, is organically linked to the revival of the system of collective security laid down in the Charter. This does not impede an agreement on the prohibition of the development and stockpiling of new conventional weapons. At the last meeting of the Disarmament Commission the delegations of Norway and Spain submitted two working papers relating to conventional disarmament and the transfer of conventional weapons. Those documents contain very interesting and significant proposals.

We supported the carrying out of studies on the question while indicating in detail our own position concerning some of the points included in those proposals which did not deal in a balanced way with responsibilities and obligations. We also spoke of the need to find just and durable solutions to existing political problems. In this connexion we welcome the results of the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and we hope that efforts will continue to limit the use of other types of conventional weapons and their transfer to other countries, particularly to countries that carry out aggressive policies.

The participation of all the nuclear States in the Committee on Disarmament and the fact that the Committee was able to set up four working groups to deal with certain aspects of disarmament represent an important step forward towards the strengthening of the negotiating role of the Committee on Disarmament. Therefore, it is desirable that practical negotiations

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

on all aspects of disarmament go forward so as not to hinder other negotiations that are under way outside the Committee. Those other negotiations should in fact supplement and strengthen the negotiations taking place in the Committee.

Before concluding, I should like to refer to an important question relating to measures designed to strengthen international confidence through effective international control in the field of disarmament. These simply give a further incentive to the whole process of disarmament. Confidence among States cannot be imposed as a fait accompli or through the use of force or even through declarations of intent unless they are implemented. Confidence among States can come about only from our wisdom and our political will to solve problems that are our common responsibility.

Mr. KIRCA (Turkey) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, my delegation, anxious as it is to see our work proceed efficiently, would prefer in principle to comply with rule 110 of our rules of procedure. However, I shall take the liberty of saying to Ambassador Naik, through you, that, recalling our close co-operation in Geneva, we are extremely pleased to have him preside over the work of this important Committee. His wisdom and his great experience and ability as a diplomat constitute the best hope for ensuring the success of our work. My congratulations also go to the other officers of the Committee.

At the present time a fratricidal war is, to our great concern, going on, just to the south of Turkey, between our two Moslem neighbours, Iran and Iraq, to both of which we are linked by traditional ties of friendship and a common heritage.

The situation created in Afghanistan late last year, which so seriously jeopardizes the process of détente, remains unchanged. The tragedy being experienced by some of the peoples in South-East Asia also continues. The dangerous situation in the Middle East has been exacerbated by recent actions and faits accomplis concerning Jerusalem, by the establishment of Israeli settlements in Arab lands and by Israeli raids against Lebanon. Rumours abound concerning the surreptitious manufacture of nuclear weapons by certain countries and also about the use of chemical weapons in some regions of the world.

(Mr. Kirca, Turkey)

The world economic order is still severely disrupted by a far-reaching crisis, and a wave of criminal terrorism is being experienced in several countries. In these circumstances the temptation to give in to pessimism, which would certainly have a harmful effect, because it would simply mean resigned indifference, is with us every day.

In spite of this bleak and discouraging picture, Turkey intends to carry out its policy which can be summed up in a sentence from the programme of the new Turkish Government:

"We shall support the process of détente, which in the present international circumstances becomes truly necessary."

Of course, we do not view détente as a panacea or as an end in itself; quite simply, we believe that there is no alternative to it. While there may be a consensus on this rather minimal approach, we nevertheless must say that the States parties to the Final Act of Helsinki, which is regarded as the charter of the process of détente, must strictly abide, in Europe and elsewhere, by the 10 interdependent principles contained in that document. Any serious derogation of that code of conduct in any part of the world whatsoever could only give rise to distrust and anxiety and thus jeopardize détente.

(Mr. Kirca, Turkey)

In this context, I should like to make a comment that bears closely on the efficient conduct of our proceedings and on their successful outcome. Since disarmament is in the interest of all of us, its most ardent defenders must realize that a rhetorical approach is the worst possible one and that it will only yield the opposite of the results so solemnly stated and apparently taken for granted.

Moreover, such an approach can mislead no one in today's world, where there are no longer two distinct blocs, where the main confrontations arise for the most part outside the regions covered by the two main alliances and where the underlying causes of wars cannot be reduced to rigid concepts and to the clandestine and malevolent, almost occult, forces to which they give rise.

At the threshold of this new decade which, as no one will deny, promises further dangers and vicissitudes for all nations, a more pragmatic but more realistic and sincere approach becomes essential.

The Turkish Government maintains a guarded optimism, and a certain degree of realistic idealism towards the gradual success of efforts aimed at promoting the cause of peace, security and disarmament in our region and in the world as a whole. A basically peaceful foreign policy initiated by Ataturk, the founder of our Republic, is our source of inspiration.

Continuing a tradition that he started and faithful to his humanistic vision, we sincerely hope that the process of arms control will go forward, and that the existing balance on which our security to a large extent depends will be established at a lower level of armaments so that we can devote most of our resources to our economic and social development.

However, from our centuries-old experience and because of our very long, uninterrupted tradition as a sovereign and independent State, we know that in a world where injustice and violence hold sway, we must always be prepared to face any eventuality. This is the underlying logic that determines our ever-positive and balanced approach to disarmament issues.

(Mr. Kirca , Turkey)

It is against this background and guided by the considerations I have just set forth that I shall now turn to the actual substance of the items before us. I shall cite the very words of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament and point out that:

"In the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, all the nuclear-weapon States, in particular those among them which possess the most important nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility."

(resolution S-10/2, para. 48)

That important document, adopted by consensus, faithfully reflects the unanimous opinion of the international community when it states that

"Nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization." (Ibid., para. 47)

The Turkish Government is of the opinion that negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation of strategic arms, usually called the "SALT process," are of paramount importance in efforts to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race.

That is why the signing by the United States and the Soviet Union of the SALT II agreement at Vienna last year represented a real source of satisfaction and hope for Turkey.

I should therefore like to repeat our sincere appeal for the rapid ratification of the SALT II treaty in order to facilitate negotiations as soon as possible on SALT III which, in our opinion, can represent a decisive turning point in efforts to ensure military stabilization on the European continent between East and West and, consequently, a reduction in nuclear weapons arsenals and their delivery systems.

In the framework of their special responsibility to the international community, the United States and the Soviet Union must thus spare no effort to proceed to this crucial stage in their negotiations as quickly as possible.

(Mr. Kirca, Turkey)

In this connexion, we welcome the joint statement issued on 25 September of this year following the meeting between the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Muskie, and the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gromyko, on the agreement reached to open a new series of discussions in Geneva on the question of nuclear arms limitation.

In the first half of the 1970s, which is now looked on as the halcyon period of détente, three almost concurrent events stand out in particular.

First, the Nixon-Brezhnev agreements of May 1972 on the limitation of the strategic arms race, namely, the official opening of the SALT process.

Secondly, the commencement of informal multilateral talks in Helsinki in that same year, during which the agenda and rules of procedure of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe were drawn up.

Thirdly, the talks begun in Vienna on the mutual and balanced reduction of armed forces and weapons in Central Europe.

Here I should like to refer to a wise statement contained in the Final Document of the General Assembly's first special session on disarmament:

"Together with negotiations on nuclear disarmament measures, the limitation and gradual reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons should be resolutely pursued within the framework of progress towards general and complete disarmament. ...

"In particular the achievement of a more stable situation in Europe at a lower level of military potential on the basis of approximate equality and parity...by agreement on appropriate mutual reductions and limitations would contribute to the strengthening of security in Europe and constitute a significant step towards enhancing international peace and security." (Ibid., paras. 81 and 82)

The Final Document therefore endorses the functional relationship that exists between nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament, giving a certain priority to the European continent.

(Mr. Kirca, Turkey)

Indeed, that was the case during the halcyon days of détente, and it is and will continue to be the case today and for the foreseeable future.

Who remembers today that the Vienna Conference, a very important initiative in the field of disarmament, was convened at the request of the Atlantic Alliance, which is sometimes described as the source of all ills and as the group creating an obstacle to progress in that Conference that it itself requested.

At the beginning of the 1970s our partners in the East favoured where European security was concerned, an exclusively political and normative approach. Whereas today's concept of military détente was then strongly supported by the West.

The political phase of the process of détente was crowned with success, following lengthy discussions, by the signing at the 1975 summit at Helsinki of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe by the heads of State and Government of the participating States. Unfortunately, the Vienna negotiations are still dragging on, for it has never been possible to reach agreement on the basic elements that should form the subject of reductions. However, alongside these delays in the Vienna negotiations, we should note the prospects for a new and very important development in the area of disarmament in Europe.

(Mr. Kirca, Turkey)

The Madrid Conference, which will really be a meeting to consider the implementation of the principles and provisions of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, will have the delicate task of reviving the process of détente by giving it a military dimension.

Turkey firmly hopes that, in the context of East-West relations and in the perspective of a regional approach including all of Europe as a geopolitical entity in which the two world wars began, it will be possible to proceed as soon as possible to substantive negotiations on medium-range missiles and also to convene a European conference on disarmament that in a first stage would deal with confidence-building measures among the participating States, on the basis of the experience acquired through the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act of Helsinki, in order to prepare the ground for real negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and armaments.

We also hope that the negotiations now under way in Vienna will be continued more energetically and in a spirit of conciliation and that they will soon be successfully concluded on the basis of the principle contained in paragraph 29 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, namely that

"The adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage. At each stage the objective should be undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces." (resolution S-10/2, para. 29)

At the political level, and within the context of East-West relations, Turkey is an integral part of the West. That is why developments and problems relating to Europe, to which we are tied by very organic links, are of such concern to us.

However, for historical and geographical reasons Turkey is also tied to the Middle East region. In addition, as a developing country and as one of the direct inheritors of the common glorious heritage of Islamic civilization, it has a special relationship and particular affinities with countries of the third world.

(Mr. Kirca, Turkey)

Accordingly we follow the evolution of political and military events in the Middle East region with the closest possible attention and with growing concern. In that connexion, we are particularly sensitive to rumours about the possibility of the clandestine manufacture in that region of nuclear weapons that could be used as blackmail in current or future conflicts.

If such a horrible prospect becomes even more likely in the early 1980s, then our reaction will certainly be extremely firm and resolute. Such an evolution could change the face of the world and the nature of international relations.

Turkey, in adhering to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, made a deliberate political choice, although we were well aware of the discriminatory nature of that instrument. We continue to hope that common sense will prevail over madness and that awareness of the common interest will prevail over selfish and irresponsible calculations.

It is that context that we call for the rapid conclusion of a treaty on the complete cessation of nuclear tests. Early this month the Foreign Minister of Turkey told the General Assembly that

"As long as that treaty is not completed, efforts aimed at ensuring the non-proliferation of nuclear arms will not carry the weight and credibility necessary to persuade all countries to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty." (A/35/PV.19, p.4-5)

I shall certainly not dwell on that question in this Committee that is so familiar with it, and indeed a very broad consensus has existed on it for a long time now.

We have studied carefully the report of the Committee on Disarmament, which promises once again, at its session next year, to deal with the question of a ban on nuclear tests as a matter of top priority. We have also taken due note of the report of the three nuclear Powers in document CD/139, Appendix II, Volume II, on the actual status of their negotiations. This latter report is more detailed than those of the past and gives us grounds for hoping that this vital issue can be resolved without further delay, or at least before the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

(Mr. Kirca, Turkey)

It would probably be very difficult for me to pass any value judgement on the over-all work of the Committee on Disarmament during the year 1980. I must say that we have noted quite a few positive elements, for example the setting up of special working groups. However, the report taken as a whole reminded us of a statement made by our Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, in his recent annual report on the work of the Organization:

"Indeed, disarmament activities seem to remain largely confined to organizational and procedural matters rather than substantive ones." (A/35/1, p.12)

The report of the special working group charged with studying the possible content of a treaty banning chemical weapons was a cause of particular satisfaction to us. We hope that, on the basis of that very encouraging work, divergent views on the mechanism for verification of the future treaty can be reconciled at the next session of the Committee. There is no need to overemphasize the importance of a rapid drafting of a treaty banning chemical weapons, which is a question that has been discussed as a top priority issue in the Committee on Disarmament. In that area also the United States and the Soviet Union should swiftly conclude their bilateral negotiations.

The European dimension of disarmament, including the SALT process on the one hand and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and, within that context, a complete halting of nuclear tests on the other hand, and, lastly, the conclusion of a convention on chemical weapons, are all in our view the areas of action that have the highest priority at this time.

Rather than embarking on a general survey of all the agenda items before us, I simply wanted in this statement to present to the Committee my Government's analysis of the main issues that are going to determine the future of disarmament efforts. My delegation will certainly state its views in more detail on all the other points when draft resolutions are discussed.

Mr AL-HAMZAH (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like on behalf of my country to express to the Chairman and the other officers of the Committee our sincere congratulations on the occasion of their unanimous election. We are convinced that Ambassador Naik's competence and wide experience will lead to the successful conclusion of our work.

The First Committee once again is considering questions relating to disarmament within the context of a series of new events the world is witnessing in the field of international relations. Crises and problems are increasing throughout the world and are nourished by the presence of colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism and racism.

(Mr. Al-Hamzah, Democratic Yemen)

The gap between the levels of development continues to widen. In addition, enormous sums are allocated to military expenditures and to the development and production of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, even though part of those expenditures might well be earmarked for social and economic development - in particular, in the developing countries - and despite international efforts to establish a new international economic order.

World-wide imperialism continues to violate the national rights of peoples and to threaten their security and stability, while disrupting détente in international relations and co-existence among peoples. Moreover, imperialism continues to drive the world towards another cold war.

Despite all that, this year has witnessed certain developments in the disarmament field which hold out the promise of more positive results in the future. For example, the Committee on Disarmament gave new impetus to the negotiations aimed at reaching binding agreements on the total prohibition of chemical and radiological weapons so as to strengthen the security of non-nuclear weapon States. It has set up ad hoc groups, which, we hope, will soon complete their work successfully. In addition, negotiations in that Committee have shown that there is a possibility of agreement on the text of a comprehensive test ban treaty. In this connexion, we must emphasize the importance that the international community attaches to rapid ratification of the SALT II accords and to the opening of bilateral negotiations with a view to concluding a SALT III agreement, which will be a very important achievement.

The Disarmament Commission had its mandate revitalized at the first special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament and a decision was taken to declare the 1980s as the second Disarmament Decade - one of the most important tasks before the Assembly at the current session.

(Mr. Al-Hamzah, Democratic Yemen)

Nevertheless, greater progress could have been achieved on these and many other issues if the nuclear-weapon States had shown the necessary political will and if confidence-building measures had been implemented. We have taken note of the role played by the Geneva Committee on Disarmament after its expansion in accordance with the decision of the tenth special session of the Assembly. Thus all the nuclear Powers participated in its work.

We cannot fail to mention the work of the second Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, which completed its work last August.

By the same token, we wish to recall the success of the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

However, none of those achievements met our expectations concerning cessation of the arms race and elimination of all types of sophisticated weapons, the development of which has far exceeded rational bounds and poses a constant threat to world peace and security. The greatest danger stems from the stepped up production and sophistication of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear-weapon States must discharge their responsibility to ban the proliferation and use of such weapons in order to prevent a nuclear war.

My delegation welcomes the new proposal put forward by the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union for the immediate adoption of urgent measures to reduce the danger of war. That initiative follows other peace initiatives by the Soviet Union, which seeks to achieve greater progress in the disarmament field.

In connexion with the danger posed by nuclear weapons, it is noteworthy that the racist régimes in occupied Palestine and in South Africa may acquire such weapons. That would run counter to the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Africa and in the Middle East and poses a threat not only to the two regions but to international peace and security as well.

(Mr. Al-Hamzah, Democratic Yemen)

Despite the opposition of many countries as reflected in earlier resolutions of the General Assembly, we hope that those countries will refrain from assisting those régimes and from helping them acquire nuclear weapons.

Among the questions to which my delegation attaches particular importance is that of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. We have long supported the idea that the Indian Ocean and its natural prolongation should be declared a zone of peace and stability, in accordance with the relevant resolution of the General Assembly adopted at its twenty-sixth session.

United Nations efforts and those of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean over the years have been directed towards elaboration of arrangements for the holding of an international conference. Those efforts are reflected in General Assembly resolution 34/38 B, adopted at the last session, which advocates the convening of a conference in 1981. The enlarged Committee on Disarmament, with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council and the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, supported the holding of that conference, despite the barriers placed in the way of the preparations for that conference by certain parties. Nevertheless, we hope the conference will be held.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, the Committee arrived at an agreement on the text of the draft resolution submitted at this session which confirms the date and venue of the forthcoming conference.

The First Committee, for its part, has considered questions discussed by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, but the imperialist forces have concealed their aggressive actions in various parts of the world and their continued assistance to racist régimes, as well as their violation of peoples' right to self-determination. Moreover, they continue to plunder the wealth and economic resources of the developing countries.

(Mr. Al-Hamzah, Democratic Yemen)

Those activities have not been confined to one particular part of the world: the imperialists have threatened to use force and to interfere in the internal affairs of our region, combat the national liberation movements and establish new military bases above and beyond those already in existence.

My country supports the convening of an international conference in Sri Lanka because, if it is successful, we should be able to settle other issues that have appeared on our agenda in past years.

(Mr. Al-Hamzah, Democratic Yemen)

The world today is witnessing preparations for the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to be held in 1982. We consider that the session should be carefully and thoroughly prepared, for its success will represent an outstanding achievement in United Nations efforts to establish peace and to foster international co-operation in order to protect mankind from the danger of war.

In conclusion, my delegation reserves the right to speak later on the other items to be discussed by the First Committee when we come to consider the draft resolutions.

Mr. COUMBASSA (Guinea) (interpretation from French): Before taking up the major issue of disarmament and the strengthening of peace and security in the world, I should like first of all to say to the Chairman and the other officers of the Committee how pleased we are to have them guide the work of the First Committee with such wisdom, competence and efficiency.

We welcome the fact that the representative of a friendly country, Pakistan, has been elected by acclamation as Chairman of this important Committee at this time of uncertainty and anguish when there are so many challenges to international peace and security. In assuring them of the full co-operation of our delegation for the success of these deliberations, we should like also to pay a well-deserved tribute to the current Chairman of the Islamic Conference, our Chairman's illustrious Head of State, President Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, for the commendable efforts he has made on behalf of Islamic solidarity for the restoration of peace in the Persian Gulf area.

We have every hope that these efforts will succeed and ensure the well-being of the peoples of the region, while strengthening the unity of the Islamic community which has been so severely tested.

Preceding speakers have eloquently dealt with disarmament in all its political, economic, social and other aspects. My delegation will confine itself to some brief observations on certain aspects of this extremely broad issue of such exceptional importance.

(Mr. Coumbassa, Guinea)

Immediately following the accession of my country to independence and national sovereignty, the President of the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea, comrade Ahmed Sekou Touré, in the important statement he made at the fourteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly, said, among other things:

"Disarmament is of primary concern to the African continent. Our young and undeveloped States most urgently need peace in order to cope with the many problems which beset them. We have the burdensome legacy of several centuries of colonization to eradicate. We are obliged to do this by mobilizing all our resources under urgent pressure from our people, who crave more than ever for freedom and who legitimately aspire to a better life." (A/PV.896, para. 83)

That concern has not lessened, for at the beginning of the third United Nations Development Decade the prospect of general and complete disarmament still appears extremely bleak and remains a matter of great concern.

Indeed, new and extremely serious conflicts, fomented and supported from outside, have just erupted in strategic regions, in addition to the extremely explosive situations already prevailing in the Middle East and southern Africa, while the military Powers are vying with one another to expand the areas of their nuclear arsenals.

It is regrettable and very distressing to note that, far from committing themselves to a serious disarmament policy, the nuclear Powers prefer to over-arm themselves in an unbridled race. When one considers that the principal Powers in this unrestrained arms race are among the main Founding Members of the United Nations, one can rightly ask whether the signatories of the San Francisco Charter have lived up to their commitments and promises under Articles 11, 26 and 47 of that historic document.

The increasing stockpiles of nuclear weapons of mass destruction and the state of great anxiety this situation causes must be viewed as a pressing appeal from mankind as a whole to the military Powers to abide strictly by the limitations and restrictions that have already been accepted by common consent under SALT II.

(Mr. Coumbassa, Guinea)

In our view, it is of the greatest importance to consider forthwith adequate measures to freeze the arms race at its present level, so that the truly terrifying prospect of a nuclear confrontation will become less likely. The obligation of States to disarm flows from the Charter, from international treaties and from resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. It flows from the principle of mutual non-aggression, which is one of the hallowed principles to which all States Members of the United Nations have subscribed.

If the further development and deployment of new systems of nuclear weapons continues, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at agreements on the gradual reduction and complete elimination of the arsenals of the military Powers scattered throughout the world.

The slow pace of disarmament negotiations, the mistrust and suspicion that are a feature of relations between the Powers themselves have prevented us from dealing with the acceleration of the arms race, in spite of the recommendations of the Committee on Disarmament and the fundamental decisions of the special session devoted to disarmament.

Besides its binding nature, general and complete disarmament has since the end of the Second World War been the most urgent problem to be resolved in so far as it concerns the maintenance of peace and the safeguarding of the well-being of the international community. This noble and generous ideal has not always been respected in the Security Council, mainly because the permanent members have not consistently lived up to their commitments. Indeed, instead of proceeding to the regulation of armaments, as the Charter requires, the major Powers, far from abandoning their prerogatives of bygone days, are arrogating to themselves the right to arm themselves as they see fit without worrying about the fact that this plethora of conventional weapons is in itself a permanent threat to peace. This state of affairs is the prelude that almost inevitably will lead to a war of aggression. Meanwhile, the arms race remains its deadly consequence. The medium-sized and small States have had to follow this negative trend and, in a praiseworthy effort to preserve their territorial integrity and political independence, have had to sacrifice financial resources which are already barely adequate to meet their most urgent needs.

(Mir. Coumbassa, Guinea)

In 1970, at the start of the first Disarmament Decade, the cost of the arms race had reached \$250 billion. In 1980, when the second Disarmament Decade was proclaimed, expenditures on various arms had risen to \$500 billion. What does that mean, if not that the world seems to be accepting, certainly without realizing it, the inevitability of a nuclear holocaust?

The arms race is seriously disrupting the world economy. We do not believe we are exaggerating when we say that the enormous military expenditures are at the root of the deep economic crisis prevailing in the world today. It has created harmful spheres of interest and zones of influence and enabled the rich countries and the nuclear Powers to exert pressure on other countries and to interfere in their internal affairs.

Racist South Africa's entry into the nuclear club last year has aggravated the threat posed by apartheid to independent Africa, which duly alerted international public opinion to this situation. In our delegation's view, despite negotiations at various levels, we have made little progress towards general and complete disarmament. An in-depth analysis of the problem would show that the process has hardly been started.

(Mr. Coumbassa, Guinea)

We can even say that it is in a state of stagnation, if not in fact regression. Increasingly large amounts of arms have been introduced into zones of tension and rivalry. The concentration of naval and other forces in the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean is greater than ever before. Europe has been transformed into a veritable proving ground, where people are striving to install increasingly sophisticated devices and weapons. There is the accelerated development of new systems in the form of new and more sophisticated missiles and naval and air weapons. All of that means that the system established under the Non-Proliferation Treaty may be compromised and jeopardized. Military intervention in crisis areas and the proclaiming of entire regions made up of independent and sovereign States as "vital zones" for the security of Powers whose frontiers are located thousands of kilometres from those zones, the establishment of new military bases and the expansion of old ones, and the extension of arrangements for special facilities - all of this aggravates the problems of international security and stability.

A characteristic of the situation in this field is the absence of any real effort in disarmament matters, and thus of any actual progress towards general and complete disarmament. The interruption of negotiations on the limitation of strategic nuclear weapons is one of the more disturbing illustrations of this. The super-Powers are acting as though the special session of the General Assembly had not expressed, in its Final Document, the political will of the international community to try to resolve this extremely burning problem. That is why all the initiatives basically have degenerated into pure propaganda and why, in practice, there is an obstinate attempt to obtain a transitory supremacy.

Therefore, our Organization is faced with a real dilemma: how do we react? How should we contribute, on both the political and practical levels, by defining everyone's responsibilities and the methods to be followed to remedy the present stagnation? How do we manage to eliminate such negative trends as those that we are witnessing today? Needless to say, it calls for a general effort to improve the international situation, for the negative evolution that we observe in the field of disarmament is but one aspect of the present state of international relations.

(Mr. Coumbassa, Guinea)

In conclusion, the delegation of the People's Revolutionary Republic of Guinea is ready to consider sympathetically all specific proposals on disarmament, including those calling for the convening of a world disarmament conference. However, the convening of such a conference should not be an end in itself, but must be motivated by serious considerations so that the conference may establish for itself real goals and a specific content making it possible to enlist the international community in general and the nuclear weapon States in particular in a genuine effort for general and complete disarmament.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.