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Chairman: Mr. Roche (Canada)

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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. BURWIN (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation is very pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over this important Committee. Your well-known talents and experience, together with those of the other officers of the Committee, will undoubtedly contribute to the Committee's success in fulfilling its tasks.

The First Committee is meeting at a time when there is a glimmer of hope for détente in international relations and movement towards the solution of certain international problems, such as the termination of the Gulf war, the recognition of the rights of the people of Namibia and the developments in relations between the two super-Powers and the resultant preliminary step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Notwithstanding all those positive developments, tension, hegemonism and racism continue to loom large in certain parts of the world. The Middle East continues to suffer from racist intransigence, supported by one of the States responsible for international security, a State that claims to champion human rights. The Palestinian people - whose only sin is their aspiration to freedom and self-determination - face Zionist racist terrorism. In southern Africa, racist acts continue to be the norm. So long as those two problems remain unsolved, international peace and security will continue to be threatened.

My country supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The nuclear activities of the two racist regimes - in Palestine and South Africa - are common knowledge. Both régimes have refused to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and have not placed their nuclear facilities

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under the inspection and safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). All this poses a serious threat to the Middle East and Africa, and above all impedes the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. It is imperative that the nuclear-weapon States and the relevant international organizations desist from co-operating with those two régimes. The non-nuclear-weapon States in the two regions to which I am referring must not be allowed to fall victim to the use or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons. The wishes of the peoples and the States of the two regions to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones there must be respected, in the interests of international peace and security, the relaxation of tension, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and, consequently, the cessation of the arms race.

The dumping of toxic or nuclear wastes by some nuclear-weapon States or their corporations in the territories of other States - as has happened in Africa - is an immoral act that poses a serious threat to both the environment and mankind. In this connection, we support the measures called for by the Organization of African Unity, the condemnation of such acts by the IAEA, and the programmes of other international bodies in this sphere. We call upon the Committee to take specific, practical measures to deal with such acts.

My country is in favour of the total destruction of all nuclear and chemical weapons and a comprehensive test ban in all environments. In this regard, we support the efforts of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

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We also support the search for ways and means to halt the extension of the arms race into outer space and second the call for the setting up of an international organization to deal with space matters. We view with great concern the halting pace of the bilateral negotiations between the two super-Powers on the question of space. We also note with grave concern the new space activities recently embarked on by certain régimes that are notorious for their aggression and racist practices. It is to be feared that those activities will focus on the promotion of destructive designs that are definitely prejudicial to international peace and security and conducive to the stepping-up of the arms race.

My delegation notes that there is now an increasing preoccupation with chemical weapons. This is happening at a time when the greatest attention should be focused on those armaments of mass destruction that are most injurious to human beings, namely, nuclear and other overkill weapons. While we support the proposals made with regard to chemical weapons, we believe it is the duty of those States that possess such weapons to take the initiative by halting their nuclear testing, ridding the world of their nuclear weapons and refraining from threatening the security, safety and environments of others with such weapons.

In this regard, I should like to declare the support of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for the initiative concerning the convening of an international conference to reaffirm the Geneva Protocol of 1925. The Jamahiriya signed that Protocol on 29 December 1971, and has no intention of producing any chemical weapons. It completely rejects all that is being said by certain hostile powers concerning the production of chemical weapons. The whole world now knows how such campaigns of distortion and misinformation have been waged and continue to be used against my country. This latest campaign is nothing new.

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My country also believes that military bases and military activities in other countries pose a threat to the security and safety of neighbouring countries. Naval military activities, in particular in narrow seas, are bound to create tension, impede civil navigation and negatively affect world trade and the world economy. In this context, my delegation fully supports the statement made by the representative of Sweden on 17 October 1988, particularly with regard to negotiating the adoption of measures to curb the naval activities of vessels equipped with nuclear weapons in instances where nuclear-weapon States fail to divulge the existence or declare the absence of nuclear weapons on board their vessels at any given time. This is a cause of major concern to many States, particularly when nuclear-weapon States exploit international law and invoke the right of innocent passage through the territorial waters of other States, or enter their ports. Such a course of action can lead only to loss of confidence. It is high time to renounce such policies of provocation which are definitely out of tune with this day and age.

My delegation would also like to support what was said by the representative of Sweden regarding the fact that the aim of confidence-building measures in the naval field is to enhance security through minimizing the risk of incidents and confrontations at sea and to ensure the safety of non-military activities such as navigation and fishing and, may I add, communications, prospecting for minerals, world trade and maritime transport.

Despite the welcome nature of the efforts of the two super-Powers in the area of nuclear disarmament, such efforts remain rather limited in the face of the huge threats posed by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. It is also a fact that peace and security are the concern of all the peoples of the world, and therefore the interests of those peoples should be taken into account. That is to

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say, agreement between the two super-Powers should not be focused on their own interests and nobody else's.

On the other hand, there is the important role of the United Nations and its agencies in dealing with the question of disarmament; that role must be consolidated through the renunciation of the narrow parochial attitudes which impede the exercise of the collective will of the overwhelming majority of the international community, as was the case with the third special session devoted to disarmament.

The future of mankind is interdependent and intertwined. Wars, especially nuclear wars, have no boundaries and therefore collective action, emanating from collective responsibility to maintain international peace and security has become an imperative necessity.

Finally, I should like to refer to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, which states that:

"Disarmament, relaxation of international tension, respect for the right to self-determination and national independence, the peaceful settlement of disputes ... and the strengthening of international peace and security are directly related to each other. Progress in any of these spheres has a beneficial effect on all of them; in turn, failure in one sphere has negative effects on others." (CD/867, p. 6)

Mr. TEEHANKKEE (Philippines): Mr. Chairman, the Philippine delegation congratulates you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. It is our hope that under your wise and able leadership, and with the co-operation and support of the Member States, the Committee will fulfil its task of resolving the outstanding issues which were left pending from the third special session devoted to disarmament held last June (SSOD III).

(Mr. Teehankee, Philippines)

For most of us assembled here in the cool of autumn, it had been a long, hot summer indeed. Excessive heat, drought, parched crops and weather imbalance the world over have produced flash floods, pollution, unprecedented waste on many shores, and gigantic forest fires. Nature seemed to be sending us alarm signals and warnings that the continued degradation of the environment and tampering with nature may bring irreversible devastation. But the more ominous message may be that nations with their continued production and storage of arsenals of super-destructive nuclear arms - enough to kill every man, woman and child on our planet 25 times over - must redress this form of nuclear terrorism, wherein only one miscalculation on the part of a single political leader or one small computer error could bring about world catastrophe.

And yet, many hopeful signs fill the air. The United Nations peace initiatives, which long eluded resolution, have begun to produce results in Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, in Namibia and in Angola. Elsewhere, nations and peoples - through their delegations in these halls - are moderating their rhetoric and seriously exploring ways of resolving long-standing conflicts in Kampuchea, in Central America, in the two Koreas and in Western Sahara.

For these we have to thank the unrelenting efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, as well as the improved relations between the two super-Powers in the wake of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF agreement.

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In the light of those events, it was all the more regrettable that the third special session devoted to disarmament did not produce a conclusive final document. The Philippines was an active participant in that special session. Like the greater majority of Member States assembled at the conference, we had great hopes that many of the outstanding issues on disarmament would be resolved, issues such as zones of peace, nuclear-weapon-free zones, the naval arms race, the arms race in outer space and a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The third special session on disarmament might have provided the multilateral response to the successful conclusion last June of the agreement between the super-Powers on the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty. But we may still look at the forty-third session of the General Assembly as providing the opportunity to carry forward some of the laudable and worthy ideas and proposals submitted at that special session.

One of the most important ideas brought up in past sessions of the General Assembly is that of common security. After 43 years of striving for disarmament, it has become conventional wisdom that the efforts of nations should be devoted to the broader goal of common security; but nations will be reluctant to disarm unless it is perceived that common security is assured. From the birth of the United Nations, common security has been a major preoccupation of all Member States. The Security Council, the International Court of Justice, the Economic and Social Council and other bodies of the United Nations were specifically conceived and created with the aim of achieving common security.

While the world has vastly changed during the past 40 years - indeed the majority of today's 159 United Nations Members were not present at its inception - the Philippines, as one of the original 50 signatories of the United Nations Charter, maintains its abiding faith and belief in the viability and relevance of

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the Charter. Accordingly, the Philippine delegation fully supports the efforts aimed at reinforcing or improving the system of collective security as provided for in the present Charter.

As was stressed by the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues headed by the late Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Olof Palme,

"Only through co-operative efforts and policies of interlocking national restraint will all the world's citizens be able to live without fear of war and devastation."

We submit that the concept of common security can be realized by pursuing three strategies.

To begin with, there must be decreased reliance on nuclear arms as a deterrent. Officially, there are only five countries which possess nuclear weapons. The present efforts of the world community to prevent an increase in that number and the proliferation of nuclear weaponry must be intensified.

With the successful completion and ratification of the INF agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, which reduces the world's nuclear arsenal by a mere 4 per cent, we can now urge the pursuit of negotiations for a greater cut - a cut of 50 per cent - in strategic offensive weapons.

In Europe, we support the parallel process of the mutual balanced force reduction. As the continent where two world wars began, as well as the most heavily armed today, Europe's role in disarmament cannot be over-emphasized. Undoubtedly there has been progress in security and confidence-building measures, but much still needs to be done about reducing levels of conventional and nuclear forces there. We agree with the view that short-range tactical or battlefield

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nuclear weapons should be eliminated as soon as possible. Modernization of these weapons should not be the undesirable consequence of a reduction of intermediate-range nuclear forces.

Globally, we see the reinforcement of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the final negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty as crucial to the achievement of common security. Thus, the Philippines has joined other countries in working for the inclusion of an agenda item on holding the Fourth Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1990. We also support the early negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty.

We should caution, however, against a situation where cut-downs in the nuclear arsenal in areas of the Northern Hemisphere, such as Europe up to the Urals and in America, would result in a shift in the arms race to the seas or to certain strategic regions such as the Pacific, South-East Asia or outer space. The stability of these regions, which should be free of nuclear weapons, must be maintained. We consider that the future of the world lies in the seas and in outer space - the two last frontiers of our environment. They must be kept free of nuclear weapons. The sea-bed Treaty, the Treaty on outer space and the Antarctic Treaty should show us the way in which these regions can be kept nuclear-free under United Nations control and surveillance.

The second strategy would call for a more vigorous implementation of programmes and resolutions which have originated in the United Nations.

While nuclear arms remain a perennial threat, the present use of conventional, chemical and biological weapons remains a grave threat to the achievement of common security. These weapons have been the subject of countless resolutions in the United Nations General Assembly. Chemical weapons in particular were banned in the

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1925 Geneva Protocol and are at present the subject of further negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. In this connection, we welcome the offer by the French Government to convene in Paris from 7 to 11 January 1989 a conference of States parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and of other interested States.

The routine use of chemical weapons in recent wars is a serious violation of the Geneva Protocol. There ought to be tighter controls in the implementation of such accords, and we encourage the efforts of the Secretary-General to promote verification in this area. It may be noted that the Philippines, in answer to the Secretary-General's request, has submitted a list of experts whose services are available for purposes of enforcing the ban on chemical weapons.

As for conventional arms, my delegation supports tighter controls on international arms sales, which have served to aggravate local conflicts. We recall that there was a proposal at the third special session devoted to disarmament calling for a scheme to chart or to register the flow of conventional weapons, as a way of instituting accountability for weapon systems. This is already standard practice in some nations, and we urge that it be also implemented internationally.

With the inclusion of a new agenda item on the dumping of nuclear and toxin wastes, the attention of the international community is also drawn to this severe problem. Indeed it deserves the highest priority.

We propose greater openness in the aforementioned measures. As an earnest expression of our concern, the Philippines has for the first time complied with the request for the filling out of the United Nations formula on military budgets for its defence establishment. We urge those countries which have not done so similarly to comply with this request by the Secretary-General, in accordance with the United Nations resolution.

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The third strategy calls for the further strengthening of the role of the United Nations in verification, monitoring, compliance and peace-keeping.

It is imperative that the United Nations be provided with the structures necessary for the fulfilment of this role. We thus support the proposal of France for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency. Nations equipped with or having access to satellites are already aware of the manifold benefits that this technology can bring them. Such a facility would enable the United Nations effectively to monitor arms testing, production and deployment, as well as facilitate peace-keeping operations and crisis management.

We would also support a system of sharing world-wide seismological information for monitoring nuclear tests. In this connection, we laud the joint efforts of the Soviet Union and the United States in recent tests to determine limits of nuclear testing. We naturally hope that the greater aim is to conclude a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty.

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The Philippines has been unwavering in its support of disarmament since the inception of the United Nations. Any genuine initiative towards that end will always have our support. Thus we view with interest the proposal of General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union to abolish foreign military bases by the year 2000, given the premises of good faith and sincerity to establish a climate of trust and confidence and non-aggression and non-subversion. The achievement of such a move would not only ensure stability world-wide, but also, especially, enable countries of South-East Asia and the Pacific Basin to proceed unimpeded in their economic development thrusts. It is time that the arts of peace, and not war, be embraced by all countries of our region.

We believe that the ideal of disarmament has already taken root. The Member States of the United Nations now have the opportunity to exercise in solidarity their collective will and achieve its full flowering.

Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, I should like to reiterate my congratulations and wishes for every success in the work of the Committee to you and to the other members of the Bureau.

The geographical situation of a nation affects not only its character, as Montesquieu argued, but also, to a considerable degree, its destiny. Life in Byelorussia has always been closely linked with the history of Europe because it is located virtually in the centre of that continent. The wars of the past centuries, the burden of the First World War and foreign intervention, and, above all, the horrors of the Second World War have put our fortitude and courage to a severe test, placing their crushing weight on our land and its people. That is why we view issues of European security with such interest.

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The concept of Europe as a common peaceful home of nations living there is consonant with our aspirations. It gives us satisfaction to see that, under the influence of new political thinking, it is gradually taking root in various areas of life and co-operation. Today we intend to dwell on the military and political sphere, focusing on what needs to be done to make a contribution towards building a common European home. The challenge here is not to build it over a powder keg but on a solid basis of security and multifaceted co-operation.

Only a short while ago Europe became the place where, for the first time in history, a genuine nuclear disarmament measure was achieved - the Treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty. There is historic justice and an objective pattern in this.

The prospects of this breakthrough highlight even more the need to reduce conventional armaments and armed forces, since the excessive nature of the threat they pose becomes particularly visible as the shadow cast by the nuclear factor partially contracts.

How can we reduce this threat? How can we achieve a radical nature for disarmament in Europe that would fundamentally strengthen security on the continent? In conducting their peace-loving foreign policies, the socialist countries are trying extremely hard to find answers to these undoubtedly complex issues and to translate them into specific practical proposals and measures.

The statement on the negotiations on reductions in armed forces and conventional arms in Europe, adopted last July at the Warsaw meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, develops and elaborates the programme drafted in Budapest and supplemented a year later in Berlin. It contains concrete suggestions on how to conduct the process of

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negotiations on disarmament problems in the all-European context. The objective is to bring about a radical reduction in the level of military confrontation on the entire territory from the Atlantic to the Urals.

A clear task has already been set for the first phase of the negotiations - to eliminate imbalances and asymmetries that currently exist in the armed forces and armaments of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty, and thereby to reach balanced, equal levels that would be lower than the present level of either side.

Furthermore, measures would be undertaken all along to prevent any surprise attack. Effective verification would be instituted that in itself would be an indication of the degree of mutual trust among States. An exchange of sufficiently full and reliable information would be ensured.

Are the objectives set out in that statement really feasible? Yes, indeed they are. Given goodwill, a sense of responsibility and realism on both sides, these objectives could be achieved very quickly - in one to two years. As a follow-up to the agreements reached, it would be possible to move on to further significant cuts in the forces and armaments, on a mutual basis of course.

The problem of base line data, the starting points in calculations, proceeding from which it would be possible to address the central issue, a reduction of the armed forces and armaments in Europe, is also quite soluble. The proposal of the Political Consultative Committee provides for the possibility of an exchange of data before negotiations get under way and verifying them at this stage or in the course of the negotiations. It appears that this approach would preclude a repetition of the unfortunate experience of the Vienna talks on the reduction of armaments in central Europe, where no progress has been registered for 14 years already due to the diverging views on base line data.

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The second problem is how to go about eliminating the imbalances and asymmetries and how to ensure a radical reduction of armaments in Europe. The socialist countries have a three-phase proposal: it is proposed that immediately following an exchange of base line data and their verification, imbalances and asymmetries be determined and then eliminated in the course of one to two years, that is to say relatively quickly. With these new, equalized levels, the idea is to begin reducing by 500,000 for each side the forces of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty. Furthermore, the programme also contains a provision relating to the elimination of the offensive character of military units of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty. The socialist countries do not designate all these measures for the third phase only, which provides for further reductions in forces and armaments in Europe. They are prepared from the very beginning to work to impart a non-offensive character to NATO and the Warsaw Treaty forces, reducing the most dangerous types of offensive weapons. In this context the question arises of tactical nuclear weapons, which are the most dangerous form of offensive systems. It could be possible to reach agreement to cut them right away, thus making headway towards their total elimination. It is also possible to consider that question outside the framework of the talks on the reduction of forces and armaments in Europe, whose mandate is currently being elaborated in Vienna. This problem is closely related to the delivery vehicles for these systems which can be used to carry both nuclear and conventional, non-nuclear warheads - that is, the so-called dual-capability purpose systems.

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There is every reason to believe that early agreement will be reached in Vienna with regard to the mandate for the negotiations, which might make it possible to launch the talks this year.

A summit meeting of all countries participating in the European process, including, of course, the United States and Canada, to consider how to move from words to actions in the field of nuclear-arms reductions could be an important factor in helping to speed up the task of laying the groundwork for credible security in Europe. As has been aptly pointed out, Europe needs its own Geneva and Reykjavik.

In our view, reduction of conventional armaments must be accompanied by an appropriate reduction of military expenditures.

Action to strengthen stability on the European continent should be supplemented by measures to reduce military activities on the seas and oceans, reduce military confrontations in northern Europe and the Arctic and transform the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and co-operation. In this respect, various proposals by various countries are available.

The establishment of a European centre for the reduction of the military threat and the prevention of surprise attack, as proposed by the Soviet Union, would contribute to increased stability in Europe and the greater confidence of Europeans in the future. The need for this is recognized in many proposals put forward in both the East and the West. We are convinced that if effect were given to this initiative it would help in setting up a useful structure to increase the reliability of peace in Europe. With the combined efforts of all countries participating in the European process it should be possible to establish an international centre in one of the European countries, in whose work all 35 States participating in the European process, without exception, would participate.

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Among its functions would be the co-ordination of efforts to gather and verify information relating to the numerical strength of armed forces and armaments on the European continent. It would monitor the situation, above all, along the border between the NATO countries and Warsaw Pact countries. If necessary, the centre could dispatch teams to inspect a situation that began to give rise to concern. It would dispatch inspection teams to verify base-line data relating to forces and armaments in Europe. It could also have regional affiliates or national centres, in addition to the European centre.

The idea of a European centre is in keeping with the Secretary-General's proposal on a multilateral nuclear-risk-reduction centre. The creative potential of these proposals could also extend to other regions. Our imagination - without which, incidentally, it is impossible to build the future of the world - paints a picture of a multilateral centre at the United Nations linked by a modern communications system with a network of regional military-risk-reduction centres. This would significantly enhance stability and promote the emergence of material, practical bases for multilateral preventive diplomacy.

Europe is the continent with the greatest concentration of arms. It seems clear, however, that other regions of the world too would stand to gain by launching a process of reducing conventional armament to the levels of reasonable sufficiency. This, of course, should be done taking into account the specifics of each situation, as provided for in General Assembly resolutions 42/38 G and 42/38 N.

In the European context, a preference is frequently voiced for a gradual and phased progression towards the goal of strengthening security and reducing arms. It would appear that the set of proposals on zones providing for special régimes in respect of certain types of arms is in line with this approach. These zones could very well become the embryos capable of developing gradually into broader measures on a wider scale encompassing the entire continent. The proposals of the German

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Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free and chemical-weapon-free zones in Central Europe and the Balkans, as well as the proposal of the Nordic countries for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Northern Europe, are aimed at this objective.

There are also specific proposals by the socialist countries on: reducing to a minimum agreed level the concentration of armed forces and armaments in the NATO/Warsaw Treaty face-off zone and the withdrawal from that zone of the most dangerous types of offensive armaments; establishing a nuclear-free corridor along the NATO/Warsaw Treaty face-off line; a plan put forward by Poland, to reduce arms and increase confidence in Central Europe; and ideas concerning the eventual establishment along the face-off line between the two alliances of a zone of confidence, co-operation and good-neighbourly relations.

If a common European home is to be built together, a home of peace and co-operation, this implies an atmosphere of good-neighbourliness, confidence and openness. In this connection, the Byelorussian SSR notes with satisfaction the successful development of the process of strengthening confidence and security as a result of the implementation of agreements under the 1986 Stockholm Declaration. We would note in passing that it is our conviction that regional processes promoting openness and confidence are necessary to promote trust on an even broader international scale. Progress is needed in the process of increasing openness and building confidence. Essentially new measures to build confidence and increase openness are called for, and active contacts, joint research and negotiations are required to promote this process, which is an important element of comprehensive security.

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It is urgently necessary to draw up a set of confidence-building measures which, inter alia, would preclude a surprise attack. In this context, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation has proposed a group of measures for the European region. It is also important to develop and expand existing confidence-building measures and extend them to spheres as yet outside their scope. Among other things, the socialist countries have expressed support for the preparation of confidence-building measures in connection with the seas and oceans, including, as proposed in the context of the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, a number of initiatives to expand confidence-building measures and extend them to cover the independent activities of air and naval forces on the seas, oceans and air space contiguous to Europe.

Such measures as contacts between military personnel and meetings between Ministers of Defence and Commanders-in-Chief of the military alliances to consider urgent issues would also promote mutual understanding, confidence and openness in the military sphere. Recent meetings between the Ministers of Defence of the Soviet Union and the United States have demonstrated the feasibility of such new approaches.

A major question with a great potential for the future in the area of disarmament is that of reasonable sufficiency of arms. In our view, an understanding of this principle and of the purely defensive nature of military doctrine must encompass parity and equal security, a change in the nature of military activities, the structure of the armed forces, the deployment of troops, the mandatory reduction of armaments and armed forces, and strict mutual verification.

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These questions are not easy. Joint international effort is called for to deepen the understanding of them and to reach agreement on them. In particular, the Byelorussian SSR has already proposed multilateral consideration of and agreement on parameters and criteria for the strictly defensive nature of military doctrines and a purely defensive structure for armed forces. This could be achieved at the United Nations for example, with the help of the Security Council, the Military Staff Committee and other bodies.

It is important that the processes leading to a reduction of military confrontation unfold concurrently, covering all possible directions, without let-ups or let-downs, so that efforts on the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels flow together into one single stream leading towards the establishment of credible security. Ultimately, this security must be determined largely not by military factors, but by factors pertaining to co-operation among States and nations.

Peace in Europe and comprehensive international security is a realistic, attainable objective. It will be achieved if new political thinking gains ground universally, if each proposal made by either side is received without prejudice and stimulates counterproposals in the interests of peace and co-operation for the benefit of mankind. In other words, we call upon all to think and act with universal human interests in mind.

Mr. JAYA (Brunei Darussalam): It is a great pleasure, Sir, for my delegation to see you in the Chair. You come from a country with which we have warm and cordial relations. We are confident you will guide the work of this Committee to a successful conclusion. I also wish to express my delegation's confidence in the other members of the Bureau.

At the very outset I wish to congratulate the United Nations peace-keeping forces on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It is a source of pride for those

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gallant men in blue, the contributing countries and other Members of the United Nations that the work of the United Nations peace-keeping forces is deservedly recognized at the highest level.

This year's meetings of the First Committee take place against the backdrop of improved super-Power relations. This improvement is manifested in the signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Nuclear Missiles - (INF Treaty)- which requires substantial reductions in nuclear weapons, involving the destruction of 859 United States and 1,752 Soviet missiles over three years. We hope the Treaty will pave the way towards nuclear disarmament and have a substantial influence on progress in the implementation of multilateral resolutions, such as those on chemical weapons, conventional disarmament and various regional measures.

The historic agreement between the two super-Powers has indeed contributed to the easing of international tension and is very much in consonance with the confidence-building measures about which this Committee talks so much. We hope that the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union will continue to improve, not only further to ameliorate international tension but also to allay the fears of many nations that the continued arms race and hostility may one day trigger a nuclear war. Although the dictum "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" (A/40/1070, p. 3) is all too familiar to both parties, an intensification of the arms race would deepen suspicion on both sides. For this reason we heartily welcome the signing of the Treaty and applaud the logical and sensible decision on the part of the United States and the Soviet Union to diminish the danger of a nuclear war.

However, we are still far away from the total elimination of all nuclear weapons. The destruction of all deployed and non-deployed intermediate- and shorter-range missiles will not be sufficient if we do not ensure the end of their

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production. In this endeavour, Brunei Darussalam shares with the majority of the delegations present here the deep concern over the absence of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. It is only practical to ban nuclear tests if we do not want nuclear arms to be continually produced. Bilateral agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union could, therefore, encourage others to consider banning nuclear tests and would contribute significantly to the elimination of the nuclear arms race. We are confident that both the United States and the Soviet Union will again show their leadership by taking appropriate steps that will move in the direction of a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. We hope that this Committee will intensify its effort in this area during the current session.

My delegation also hopes that adequate verification measures will be instituted to verify non-production of new nuclear weapons. We believe adequate verification of compliance is important, as a matter not only of confidence-building but also of assuring legitimate security interests on both sides.

Another area to which Brunei Darussalam pays particular attention is that of chemical weapons. We believe that now is the time to consider a chemical-weapons convention. We are encouraged by the substantive and constructive results of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference on Disarmament. We hope a convention can be agreed upon that will deal with such issues as notification of chemical weapons, international systematic monitoring of storage facilities, methods and organization of destruction procedures, national implementation and international verification measures.

It is, perhaps, appropriate to remind ourselves at this juncture of the conclusion of the Secretary-General's report entitled "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use", which states, among other things, that chemical agents are potentially unconfined in their effects, in

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both space and time, and that their large-scale use could conceivably have deleterious and irreversible effects on the balance of nature.

It therefore goes without saying that serious effort must be undertaken to ban all chemical weapons. The continued accumulation of chemical weapons means a growing threat to international peace and security and even to the very survival of mankind.

While we are engrossed in the question of nuclear and chemical weapons, we should not be complacent in our effort to reduce conventional weapons. This is because the potential destructiveness of such weapons is becoming greater and greater with the development of more powerful conventional arms. Alarming, too, is the increase in global annual military expenditures, which account for over 80 per cent of total annual military expenditures.

Brunei Darussalam supports enthusiastically the establishment of zones of peace in various regions of the world, not least South-East Asia. Together with other members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Brunei Darussalam has been working towards the realization of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia incorporating all States in the region. We believe the establishment of such a zone would constitute a step forward in lessening rivalry and tension in the region and contribute to regional peace and stability.

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However, it is our contention that the present obstacle to the realization of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality must first be removed. We hope that countries in the region will work towards removing that obstacle. We believe that only when the element of threat is removed from the region can the countries have confidence in one another and concentrate their resources to improve the economic well-being of the people.

We fully subscribe to the views contained in the Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held in New York from 24 August to 11 September 1987, which stated:

"Considering the present resource constraints of both developed and developing countries, reduced world military spending could contribute significantly to development. Disarmament can assist the process of development not only by releasing additional resources but also by positively affecting the global economy. It can create conditions conducive to promoting equitable economic and technological co-operation and to pursuing the objectives of a new international economic order.

Real economic growth as well as just and equitable development, and particularly the elimination of poverty, are necessary for a secure and stable environment at the national, regional and international levels. They can reduce tensions and conflict and the need for armament." (A/CONF.130/39, paras. 11, 12)

My delegation has no doubts about the validity of those views, but non-adherence to the spirit and intent of the Final Document renders meaningless the adoption of that document. We appeal to all countries, both developed and developing, not only to adopt the Final Document but to make it as action-oriented as possible.

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

Disarmament is a serious matter and as such it needs serious attention. We have made great strides in some areas but we are still under a real threat of a nuclear holocaust. The arms race continues to grow and numerous deadly nuclear weapons are still being produced. It is said that between 1960 and 1980 world expenditures for military purposes almost doubled in real terms. Today they are estimated to be in excess of \$900 billion a year. In the view of my delegation it is time that our obsession with the arms race was halted. Instead, we should focus our energy, expertise and technology on the elimination of world-wide poverty and economic deprivation. If all countries were to co-operate on this we believe that we could succeed and would do justice to present and future generations.

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning I should like again to draw attention to an important issue on which the First Committee must decide before the end of the first week of November.

On 12 October the President of the General Assembly, in a letter addressed to me, transmitted the text of a communiqué from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee which has been circulated as document A/C.1/43/4. As I said in my brief statement at the 12th meeting of the Committee, on Monday, 24 October, the letter concerns the request to the Main Committees, including this body, to communicate their views to the Fifth Committee on the relevant chapters of the provisions of the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989, which has been extended to 1991, and on the Secretary-General's note containing the draft introduction to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997.

After an extensive exchange of views on the matter with the officers of the committee, I have concluded that I should seek the co-operation of the members of the Group of Friends of the Chairman in formulating a text which could contain a common position of the members of the First Committee. Accordingly, the question

(The Chairman)

was put to the open-ended meeting of the Group of Friends of the Chairman on Friday, 28 October, and it was understood that a joint effort would be made by the Group to produce a paper by 2 November which will reflect the common position of the Committee as a whole. If the Group of Friends of the Chairman is not able to produce such a formulation by that date, I invite members of the Committee to submit their comments in writing to the Chairman by Friday, 4 November, at 12 noon, so that I may thereafter forward them to the Fifth Committee for its consideration as requested.

Finally, I should like to remind members that, in accordance with the decision of the Committee, the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under the disarmament agenda items, that is items 51 to 69, 139, 141 and 145, will expire at 6 p.m., Monday, 31 October.

I call on the Secretary, who wishes to make an announcement.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I should like to inform the members of the Committee that the delegations of Costa Rica, the German Democratic Republic, Portugal and Samoa have become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.1.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.