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Chairman: Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mrs. MASON (Canada): Mr. Chairman, in my first statement here, on 13 October, I had the privilege of extending my congratulations to you and to the other officers of the Committee. In doing so, I had the pleasure of outlining your considerable achievements, which I understand have since been augmented.

I should also like to take this opportunity to say how much Canada regrets the absence of Ambassador Garcia Robles and the wise counsel he has so long provided.

One year ago, in his address to the First Committee, Canada's Ambassador Yves Fortier remarked on the degree of hopefulness being exhibited in the First Committee and in the General Assembly. This hopefulness reflected the dramatic improvement in relations between the two leading military Powers, the painstaking, but real, progress in negotiations towards arms-control agreements, and the amelioration of regional conflicts.

Today, when we look back at what has happened since that time, we have even stronger grounds for the expectation and the desire that characterize hope. Progress has continued on many fronts: in the resolution of regional conflicts in southern Africa, Indo-China and Central America; in the general climate of East-West relations; and, most particularly - reflecting and in turn encouraging the East-West improvement - in arms control and disarmament, the province of the First Committee.

Who would have predicted just a few short years ago that the member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact would be sitting down in March of this year to begin a new set of negotiations aimed at enhancing stability at lower levels of conventional forces in Europe, encompassing all of

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Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, and that these negotiations would have an excellent prospect of coming to a successful conclusion within the next year? Who would have predicted, in those early, dark days of the Stockholm Conference, that the 35 States members of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe would soon be negotiating a second round of confidence- and security-building measures, building on those which were eventually agreed on at Stockholm and which continue to be so successfully implemented? These two sets of negotiations in Vienna have the potential of bring about a remarkable, positive and, we hope, lasting transformation of East-West security relations.

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On the issue of nuclear weapons, the United States and the Soviet Union continue to make significant progress. Canada was particularly encouraged by the movement last month towards abandonment of the linkage between research on strategic defence and progress on strategic nuclear arms control. Canada also welcomes the advances the two countries are making towards ratification of the threshold test-ban Treaty and peaceful-nuclear-explosions Treaty.

In addition, in their bilateral negotiations, the United States and the Soviet Union have made strides towards the elimination of chemical weapons, strides that Canada hopes will accelerate progress in the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

In East-West negotiations, including negotiations between the two super-Powers, progress over this past year has been sizeable and rapid. However, we should not assume that it has been easy or foreordained. It has been, rather, a reflection of that recipe for success that the Canadian representative suggested in his address to this Committee last year: patience, persistence and realism. It has been the result of pragmatic approaches, a willingness to be flexible and a willingness to seriously entertain ideas previously considered unthinkable. There is perhaps no better example of this than the readiness now to begin negotiations to create open skies over the territories of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact, an idea that was rejected out-of-hand when it was first put forward by President Eisenhower 34 years ago.

The open-skies concept, if agreed to, would have the effect of opening the territory of North America, Europe and the Soviet Union to virtually unrestricted aerial surveillance. It would mark an unprecedented openness in military relations. It would symbolize a nation's commitment to transparency and provide a

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clear, unequivocal sign that its intentions were not aggressive. An open-skies régime could lead to an important increase in confidence between East and West. It could also contribute to the verification of specific arms control agreements, including an eventual agreement on conventional forces in Europe. Canada is looking forward to hosting the first stage of a conference to address the issues related to open skies.

I referred a moment ago to the essential ingredients for success in arms control: patience, persistence and realism. On the East-West front it appears that this combination has begun to show results. However, on other fronts, the multilateral process, including the work of the United Nations, often gives the appearance of lagging behind.

Canada was disappointed, like many of you, at the inability of the General Assembly last year, at its third special session devoted to disarmament, to arrive at a final document. We were also disappointed this year when the United Nations Disarmament Commission failed to reach agreement on any of its agenda items. In the Conference on Disarmament, we very much regret that it has not yet proved possible to reach agreement on the basis for a mandate that would allow the establishment of an ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban. There is much constructive work that can be done there. As East-West negotiations move forward so clearly, some multilateral forums risk acquiring the epithet of "too much talk and too little action".

If it were only a question of uncomplimentary labels, we could perhaps continue unperturbed. Unfortunately, East-West negotiations do not operate in a vacuum. A secure and peaceful world, at greatly reduced levels of armaments, cannot be realized until all are prepared to participate in the process of

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achieving it. The multilateral arms control process can work. We see that in the negotiations related to conventional arms control in Europe. The United Nations forums should take heed. We must look closely at that recipe for success.

We will have the opportunity to do so in the days ahead, here at the First Committee. We are meeting at an auspicious time. The improved East-West negotiating climate has provided positive momentum across the full range of arms control and disarmament issues. Our record from last year is good. An unprecedented number of resolutions were adopted by consensus. Work was conducted in a businesslike fashion. The atmosphere was co-operative and productive. Let us continue in that mode, so that we can go forward to next year's Disarmament Commission, to the Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and to the other items on the multilateral agenda with renewed energy. Our objectives at this session must be to build on the progress we made last year, to reflect the progress happening outside this chamber and to arrive at consensus on resolutions that will contribute to future progress.

There are going to be differences of opinion. There is no point in trying to hide them. But we should not view the First Committee as an occasion merely to restate those differences. We should view it as an occasion to explore our differences with a view to narrowing them, with a view to finding common ground, with a view to reaching consensus. But it must be a genuine consensus, not a consensus of convenience. We should not view this as a forum for grand-sounding statements that we are not prepared to put into practice. If we want to keep pace with developments taking place in other forums, we must be pragmatic in seeking common ground. With this in mind, Canada will be concentrating on a number of areas over the coming weeks.

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Progress in the chemical weapons negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament has not been as dramatic as some may have hoped, given the expectations generated at the Paris Conference earlier this year. These expectations must be tempered, however, by recognition of the fact that questions of considerable complexity are now before the Ad Hoc Committee. The working groups established by this year's able Chairman had many difficult technical and legal issues to consider, and they responded with extraordinary diligence and perseverance. We hope that a strengthened sense of purpose will be conveyed to the representatives in Geneva as a result of the highly successful Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, recently concluded at Canberra, Australia.

It has been suggested by some that convincing States to adhere to a chemical-weapons convention, once concluded, might be a lengthy process. In fact, for many years States have indicated in this Committee that they not only support a chemical-weapons convention, but that they eagerly await its conclusion. Their votes in favour of resolutions calling for this agreement should be regarded as promises to be kept. The Canadian delegation, in close co-operation with the delegation of Poland, will aim to ensure that this Committee again registers, by consensus, its view on the urgency of concluding the negotiations for a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable ban on chemical weapons.

The conclusion of a verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty has long been, and remains, a fundamental Canadian objective. The progress being made in this area by the United States and the Soviet Union is welcome and should be energetically pursued. With other delegations, we will again be sponsoring a draft resolution urging steps towards the earliest achievement of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing.

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Because of its strong support for treaty-specific verification measures and in the light of the procedures that regulate amendments to the partial test-ban Treaty, Canada did not view the initiative for an amendment conference as likely to be either helpful or productive. However, now that the conference is to take place, we will, of course, participate constructively.

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The verification of compliance with arms-control and disarmament agreements continues to be a major focus of Canada's efforts in the multilateral field. Without provision for assurances that parties will abide by their treaty obligations, countries will be hesitant to sign arms control and disarmament agreements. Verification is the essential means by which confidence in compliance is created. Canada was particularly pleased last year with the strong support given to our verification resolution which endorsed the verification principles agreed upon by the Disarmament Commission and called on the Secretary-General to carry out an expert study on verification. Canada was honoured to be chosen to chair the group of experts carrying out the study and is pleased to report that the study is proceeding in an effective manner. We look forward to receiving the group's report at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. To avoid prejudging the experts' report, and in view of our continued desire to rationalize the activities of this Committee, we do not think it necessary or appropriate to propose a resolution on verification at this session.

As we enter the final decade of the century, the relative prominence of the United States and the Soviet Union as the two major Powers in space is lessening. More and more States are developing the capability to conduct space research and to use outer space for legitimate commercial purposes. Such developments are welcome, as long as they do not contribute in any way to the development of an arms race in outer space. For this reason, the Canadian delegation will pay particular attention to the agenda item dealing with the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is Canada's strong conviction that outer space is an area of legitimate multilateral concern, and that the question whether additional legal measures may be required in this area is of broad international interest.

Canada continues to believe that a verifiable agreement on the cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes should

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be negotiated by the Conference on Disarmament at an appropriate stage of its work on the item "Nuclear weapons in all aspects". To promote this objective, the Canadian delegation will be introducing, as it has in past years, a draft resolution calling for such a ban.

The agenda before us is a full one. The way in which we address it - constructively or not - will set the tone for one of the major events on next year's multilateral calendar: the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Not only is this Treaty the linchpin of the nuclear non-proliferation régime, it is the point on which all arms-control and disarmament progress rests. If we allow that agreement to be damaged, we may undermine the entire arms-control process. States will be willing to sign agreements limiting conventional or chemical arms only if they know that parties to those agreements will be inhibited from acquiring nuclear weapons by a strong non-proliferation régime. Commitment to arms control and disarmament must, almost by definition, mean commitment to the non-proliferation Treaty.

Canada was an active participant in past Review Conferences and looks forward to working closely with all non-proliferation Treaty parties to help ensure the success of the 1990 Review Conference. We believe that its outcome will be of critical importance in setting the stage for the role of the Treaty beyond 1995.

Patience, persistence and realism - the formula that has begun to yield results must continue to be followed. Only with these ingredients can effective and lasting progress in arms control and disarmament be achieved.

Mr. SHARMA (India): Mr. President, let me express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you chairing the work of the First Committee at this session of the General Assembly and also extend our congratulations to the other officers of the Committee. Your personal skills and long experience in the field of

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disarmament qualify you eminently for this position and you can be assured of the full co-operation of our delegation.

The First Committee is meeting this year on the fiftieth anniversary of the most violent convulsion our world has experienced. It engulfed four continents, left tens of millions dead and maimed, caused unparalleled destruction and unspeakable suffering. It also ushered in the nuclear age, which brought humanity itself to a watershed in its evolution, facing it with the transition from the mortality of man to the mortality of mankind itself. What is more, the instrument for the destruction of mankind as a species came into the hands of man. Thus 1945 can be said to mark the beginning of a new era, a doomsday calendar in which only 45 years have passed. Never in the history of mankind has the choice between wisdom and folly been so apocalyptic as it is now. We have no choice but to adopt the course of wisdom. The follies and attitudes which led to the global conflict 50 years ago did not destroy the world, despite its unprecedented trail of devastation. If repeated, nothing will rise again from the ashes.

However, the same conflict also gave birth to new hope for the global community in the form of the birth of the United Nations. This was to become the instrument for transforming the very nature and quality of inter-State relations on the basis of the equality of all sovereign States, the prohibition of the threat or use of force and expressed the aspiration towards a system of collective security away from notions of balance of power and exploitation and domination by the strong of the weak. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries gave its full weight to the strengthening of international security, to disarmament and enlightened globalism, although the cold war cast its inevitable shadow on the functioning of the United Nations.

It is to be welcomed that during the last two years we have begun to witness signs of change. This was acknowledged at the recently concluded Ninth Summit

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Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries held in Belgrade. The Final Document issued at the Summit Conference noted that:

"... significant events have taken place, with bearing on international security, establishing new trends in international relations".

Progress has been registered in bringing peace to areas which have been ravaged by war in recent times. Today, conflicts are gradually giving way to negotiations and rhetoric is being replaced with dialogue. It is no small reassurance to the non-aligned countries that the two major military alliances have commenced the search for a stable peace. Many of these conflicts need to be resolved in the multilateral framework on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter. Lasting peace and security can be achieved only with the participation of the international community, on the basis of the principles of the Charter.

While the momentum in resolving regional conflicts is heartening, progress in the field of disarmament has been limited. Except for the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, which will eliminate approximately 4,000 warheads - a very small fraction of the nuclear arsenals stockpiled by the two sides - no other disarmament negotiations have been concluded. Some new negotiations have begun and efforts are being made to speed up ongoing negotiations. Persistence and considerable political will are needed to ensure success. An air of cautious optimism and hope is all that we can allow ourselves at this stage. We cannot afford to be either complacent or euphoric, for much remains to be done. Even with the proposed reductions in nuclear weapons that are foreseen under the United States-USSR bilateral strategic arms reduction talks (START), there would still remain more than 20,000 warheads, enough to destroy our planet 25 times over. The conviction has to emerge not only that lasting peace

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cannot be ensured by nuclear disarmament but that security doctrines based on nuclear deterrence have also to be laid conclusively to rest in keeping with an international order based on democratic and universal principles and one in which the global community is as one in its determination to eliminate for ever that which divides us and causes conflict.

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Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi stated in Belgrade at the summit of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries,

"A world without war can be sustained only by a world order that sees the world as one, that sees all humanity as one. International security rests not only on arms reduction and confidence building. Ultimately, it must rest on the elimination of the real scourges of humankind: hunger, disease, illiteracy, poverty and exploitation."

The recent signs of hope that we have perceived are vulnerable. They cannot be nurtured in a world order based on any form of domination or divisiveness, whether political, economic or military. They can take root only in a world order based on equality, justice and non-violence. Coexistence is the only form of existence. At the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament India presented the outline of such a world order in the form of an action plan that calls upon the international community to negotiate a binding commitment to general and complete disarmament under effective international control. While nuclear disarmament constitutes the central motif in each stage of the plan, it is supported by collateral and other measures to further the process in a comprehensive manner that would enhance global security. The plan includes proposals for banning chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, bringing to a halt and reversing the arms race, using scientific and technological developments for the benefit of mankind and reducing conventional arms and forces to the minimum levels required for defence purposes; and it provides principles for the conduct of international relations in a world free of nuclear weapons. The action plan was also tabled at the Conference on Disarmament, in Geneva, as a basis for further discussions with other States. The preliminary reaction of a number of States has been encouraging; it demonstrates that people all over the world are looking for an alternative structure for inter-State relations.

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More than anything else, technology has played the primary role in materially shaping human civilization by transforming the world in which we live. It has been the main engine of growth throughout history, but its present dimension of universal impact in the context of global interdependence has made it a central and unique vehicle for human welfare or its opposite. Modern technology has given us a world system of communication and interaction, a world economy, a security apparatus with global reach. To accept and manage technology's global role we need also to develop a world view. Today the issues of poverty, population and environment have been made global. The perspective of politics also has to expand if we are to tackle these issues conclusively. The nuclear age, the growth of science and technology and the globalization of our lives and problems have rendered past mechanisms and habits of thought in inter-State relations obsolete. Only enlightened globalism can provide the answer, and our future approach has to be directed by the full weight of multilateral endeavour. Bilateralism and multilateralism cannot be mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they must complement, facilitate and reinforce each other. The new bridges to be built have to be supported on more than one pillar if progress is to be lasting. Nowhere is this more pertinent than in the field of disarmament. The impact of bilateral progress should be felt in the multilateral field, but it has yet to be registered in concrete terms or to make a qualitative impact on multilateral forums.

Let us examine developments on the nuclear issues that have been the highest priorities in the field of disarmament. In 1978 the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament unequivocally stated that removal of the danger of nuclear war was the most acute and important task of the present day. In subsequent years the General Assembly adopted, by overwhelming majorities, resolutions on the most pressing areas relating to nuclear disarmament, such as prevention of nuclear war, a freeze on nuclear-weapon production and a ban

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on nuclear-weapon testing. Unfortunately, the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body, in which all five nuclear-weapon States are represented, has been prevented from fulfilling its mandate.

For many years India has proposed, both at the Conference on Disarmament and at the General Assembly, that, while the most effective guarantee against nuclear war is nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the immediate measure has to be negotiations on a convention which would outlaw the use or threat of use of such weapons. The same truth was summed up in the joint Reagan-Gorbachev statement that

"a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought". (A/40/1070, p. 3)

Why then have we not been able to translate this expression of political will into concrete agreements? The contradiction arises because of its incompatibility with security doctrines that reserve the right to resort to nuclear weapons. The concept of nuclear deterrence, irrespective of the kind of targeting strategies that are structured around it, is ultimately predicated on the use of nuclear weapons. As long as nuclear weapons exist, it will be impossible to control or limit escalation. A nuclear war cannot de-escalate into a conventional war. If nuclear weapons are ever fired, it will not matter who fired first. It is therefore clear that nuclear weapons cannot be used for any kind of defence.

Against this, some strategic thinkers maintain that nuclear weapons have prevented a global war during the past 45 years and that therefore, although they may not be good for defence, they are good for deterrence. Fortunately, this assertion has not been tested. But, on the other hand, nuclear-weapon States themselves have visualized a failure of deterrence and have undertaken steps to prevent an accidental outbreak of nuclear war. Human beings are imperfect and prone to panic and folly: the technological systems on which we rely are far from being immune to error; our institutional and interactive mechanisms are imperfect.

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The only wise course is to regard eventual failure in some form as the probable prospect - a numbing thought given the unremitting absolutism of the power of the atom. The sentiment that a nuclear war must not be fought needs therefore to be formalized as a multilateral commitment. The bilateral agreement of the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on nuclear-risk-reduction centres should be multilateralized under the security umbrella of a non-use convention.

Closely linked to the idea of a convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the appeal to nuclear-weapon States to apply an immediate freeze on production of these weapons and intended fissile material. The fissile material to be released from the dismantling of nuclear missiles should be placed under international supervision and not recycled into the arms race. The argument that a freeze would perpetuate existing imbalances cannot be sustained. The concept of parity is often misused, sometimes as a pre-condition, sometimes as a goal. The dilemma of parity can be resolved only by accepting its total irrelevance to the nuclear issue, whether politically, militarily or operationally. The political momentum that will be created by a successful strategic arms reduction agreement can be carried to its logical conclusion only if the arms race is capped and the negotiations are multilateralized to bring in the other nuclear-weapon States that have so far remained outside the process.

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The third related nuclear issue is the nuclear-weapon-test ban. For over three decades nuclear-weapon States have ignored the appeal of the world community to end nuclear-weapon testing, thus halting the ongoing process of modernization and development of nuclear weapons. These attempts undermine the limited gains of disarmament agreements as they fuel the qualitative arms race. For instance, following the INF Treaty some strategists suggested modernization of the existing Lance missile. If modernization is intended to compensate for the removal of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, this is contrary to the basic thesis behind the INF Treaty that the removal of the missiles concerned has enhanced security. The idea of compensation for missiles eliminated reflects apprehensions, born of the old mind-set and responses, which are fearful of replacing mutual destruction by mutual survival.

Continued testing at lower levels only perpetuates the arms race. This is amply borne out by plotting the number of tests on a graph. To take an example, in 1961, 143 tests were carried out; in 1963, the partial test-ban Treaty drove testing underground; and in 1964, 40 tests were carried out. This was a significant drop, but it did not slow down the development and production of nuclear weapons. The number of warheads continued to rise and the arms race continues unabated. Clearly, inadequacy of verification is no longer a justification for delaying a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The Group of Scientific Experts working under the aegis of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva will begin early next year its second experiment on collection and exchange of seismic data at global level. A positive first step in the direction of a permanent ban could be to test the effectiveness of this experiment by all nuclear-weapon States declaring a moratorium to coincide with the GBT-2 period.

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Meanwhile, the Ad Hoc Committee could commence negotiations on a treaty and develop the necessary institutional mechanisms to resolve any ambiguous situations that might arise. The infrastructure for the experiment - the national data collection centres, the international data centres and the communication channels - could then be made permanent.

The States parties to the partial test-ban Treaty have requested the convening of an amendment conference to convert it into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The amendment conference should be held in 1990 and the preparatory process for it should begin without any delay. Clear proof of the adequacy of existing verification techniques would go a long way in providing for a successful amendment conference. The larger participation in the partial test-ban Treaty amendment conference would provide political thrust and effectively complement the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is scheduled to be held in Geneva next year. One of the important issues that will be discussed, both inside and outside the conference rooms, is the future of the NPT régime, which, in its present form, expires in 1995. Though India has taken a stand on principle against the NPT's discriminatory approach and is not a State party, in this context it is useful to recall that India, along with seven other countries, sponsored resolution 2028 (XX), one of the first resolutions on this subject in this forum in 1965. The resolution, which identified a set of principles to guide the negotiations on an eventual treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, was adopted unopposed. Among the principles were the following: that the treaty should be void of any loopholes which might permit proliferation by nuclear or non-nuclear Powers, and that the treaty should embody an acceptable balance of mutual

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responsibilities and obligations as between nuclear and non-nuclear Powers. Unfortunately, the 1968 NPT failed to respect either of those principles and the objective of nuclear disarmament virtually disappeared from the international agenda for almost 20 years.

The apprehensions of vertical and spatial proliferation have been amply borne out. Even with the reductions under negotiations in the strategic arms reduction talks there will exist almost double the number of nuclear warheads that existed in 1968. It is relevant to recall that the NPT was not to be an end in itself but was meant to lead to the cessation of the nuclear-arms race. We hope that the States parties to the NPT will take advantage of the 1990 session to look at the genesis of the Treaty and take decisive steps towards a more broad-based régime as part of a comprehensive system of international peace and security in which all countries participate on an equal footing. It was in this spirit that Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi called for negotiations for a new Treaty that would

"give legal effect to the binding commitment of nuclear-weapon States to eliminate all nuclear weapons by the year 2010 and of all non-nuclear-weapon States to not cross the nuclear-weapons threshold."

For more than three decades the international community has recognized outer space as the common preserve of mankind. Developments in space research and technology in the field of communications, meteorology and remote sensing offer a glimpse of the benefits possible for all countries, particularly developing countries, provided outer space is kept free of all weapons. We strongly support the idea of greater international co-operation in these fields. Since 1985 the Conference on Disarmament has carried out useful work on issues relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. A dozen or more proposals have been put

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forward by delegations. These are aimed at strengthening and reinforcing the existing international legal régime pertaining to outer space. The existing international legal régime places some restraints on the placement of certain types of weapons in outer space. However, these restraints are not comprehensive in scope, nor do they apply to all kinds of weapon systems. For instance, under the outer-space Treaty only the placement of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction in Earth's orbit is prohibited. But current research is taking place to develop directed energy weapons, as also weapons which can be placed in the lofted mode without entering the Earth's orbit - neither of which are covered by the present scope of the outer-space Treaty. Other limitations of the existing international legal régime and bilateral agreements such as the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM) have become more evident in the light of technological developments. New legal instruments need to be developed that would be comprehensive and prevent the launching of the arms race into outer space. Meanwhile, it is essential that all States abide fully, in both letter and spirit, with the existing bilateral and multilateral treaties.

In view of the importance of satellite technology, we view with great concern the development of anti-satellite weapon systems. We have, therefore, proposed that multilateral negotiations be undertaken on a comprehensive anti-satellite-ban treaty. Since 1985 both the United States and the Soviet Union have observed a moratorium on the testing of anti-satellite weapons. This de facto moratorium needs to be formalized and negotiations will help to convert this voluntary restraint into a universally binding commitment. The issues of verification are complex enough today. If anti-satellite weapons and other space weapons were deployed, this problem would threaten to become intractable.

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New weapon systems being developed are part of a wider qualitative arms race. Last year we introduced a draft resolution, entitled "Scientific and technological developments and their impact on international security", in order to draw attention to the qualitative arms race, which has not received the attention it deserves. On the contrary, during the last decade there has been a significant increase in global spending on research and development. Increasing amounts of resources, both human and material, are devoted to developing new weapon systems. New scientific and technological developments, making use of miniaturization and large-scale computing capabilities, possibilities of designing new materials, fuel and laser technology and molecular engineering will have a cumulative impact, inevitably transforming the international security environment for the worse. Development and deployment of such systems cannot but exercise a seriously deleterious impact on existing and future disarmament negotiations. Complex technical problems will make the search for verification even more elusive. It is important that such trends be monitored and arrested in the interests of the collective security of the global community.

It has to be remembered that there are no barriers to human knowledge, which cannot be the preserve of a few societies. What is achievable by only a handful of States today can in future years be achieved by many more. Wisdom therefore dictates that there should be a collective compact that routes which will have a profoundly destabilizing and threatening impact on the global security situation should by common agreement not be explored and pursued. We need to address ourselves to problems of hunger, poverty, disease and environment, which are of a global dimension and call for international scientific and technological co-operation on an unprecedented scale. Scientific and technological developments must continue, but they must be reoriented decisively in favour of peaceful uses. It cannot be sufficiently emphasized that science and technology cannot be allowed to become masters of war; they must be servants of peace.

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During the current year concerted attention has focused on the ongoing chemical-weapons negotiations. In January, at the Paris Conference against Chemical Weapons, 149 States unanimously called for a redoubling of efforts to reach an early agreement on a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, transfer and use of chemical weapons and the elimination of existing stockpiles and production facilities. Most delegations suggested that the Conference on Disarmament take advantage of the political momentum by setting itself a deadline for the conclusion of its negotiations. We still believe that it would be useful to work to a deadline, particularly as in the current year considerable progress has been registered in working towards a chemical-weapons convention. Past experience shows that the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - was negotiated in a specified time-frame; the Stockholm Accord had a deadline to meet; and more recently President Bush has suggested a deadline for the ongoing negotiations on the reduction of conventional armed forces in Europe. Artificial deadlines in all situations may not serve a purpose, but the five-year-old negotiations on a chemical-weapons convention need the spur of a deadline to cross the finish line. The proposal that the two States with the largest chemical-weapons stockpiles should begin destroying their stockpiles even before the negotiations are concluded is a positive one and we welcome it. It creates a positive climate and encourages wider adherence to the convention. The positive impact of such a gesture, though, is reduced if production of chemical weapons continues. That too must be halted. Adherence to an international agreement cannot be forced, but it can be urged by demonstrating the advantages of the system of collective security offered by disarmament.

Short-term approaches using export controls may seem an attractive option to some States, but we view them with concern. Such measures, apart from not being

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effective, also run the risk of opening up a parallel track that ultimately leads into a cul-de-sac. The risk does not arise first from the possible use of chemical weapons but from the existence of chemical weapons, and the only way to address this political reality is to find a politically viable solution. A comprehensive solution is the only viable political solution. If we want a convention that will enjoy universal adherence, we must work towards a convention that will attract universal adherence. The international community would do well to learn from the experience of the non-proliferation Treaty. The multilateral approach that has characterized the chemical-weapons negotiations dictates that the convention be non-discriminatory and provide for equal rights and obligations for all States, whether or not they possess chemical weapons and whether or not they have a large chemical industry. The mode of universal participation which has been adopted in developing the chemical-weapons convention is a pioneering exercise and an important model in the field of disarmament negotiations as a whole which should be fostered by the world community.

Last year we mandated the Secretary-General to undertake an in-depth study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification. This concept drew in large measure on the proposal made by the leaders of the Six-Nation Initiative to establish a multilateral verification system within the United Nations as an integral part of a strengthened multilateral framework required to ensure peace and security during the process of disarmament and in a nuclear-weapon-free world. Verification of compliance is an integral and important element of any disarmament agreement, even more so in a multilateral context where all States, big and small, have an equal right to be reassured that treaty obligations are being complied with. We are confident that the results of the study will further efforts to strengthen multilateralization of disarmament.

(Mr. Sharma, India)

We are all aware of the importance of consensus-building in our work in the Committee, slow and painstaking though the process may be. More than one third of the draft resolutions on which we took action last year were adopted without a vote. Given the positive political climate this year, to which many of us have referred, and with political will it is our hope that we shall be able to reach consensus in more areas and on a larger number of resolutions. My delegation will work closely with you, Mr. Chairman, and with other delegations towards our common objective of consensus building.

Mr. SOMOGYI (Hungary): At the end of the 1980s, we believe, a positive answer can be given to the question whether significant progress has been made during the past decade in strengthening international security and disarmament. In the first part of the present decade the winds of the cold war prevailed, Soviet-United States relations reached their lowest ebb, and we experienced grave tensions in the international situation. All this resulted in a standstill on the process of disarmament, which manifested itself in, among other things, interrupting Soviet-United States disarmament negotiations and jeopardizing the activity of multilateral bodies. In the mid-1980s this negative tendency took a different turn and since then the improvement of Soviet-United States relations has materialized in a series of summit meetings as well as in the conclusion of the first genuine nuclear disarmament agreement. However, this favourable change in the international situation has not been translated in a consistent way into the field of multilateral disarmament. While progress could be registered in several fields of bilateral and regional disarmament, multilateral disarmament diplomacy encountered events like the ending of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament without the adoption of a final document and the failure of the recent session of the Disarmament Commission to produce tangible

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results. As a matter of fact, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament is conducting meaningful negotiations on only one of the issues on its agenda - the prohibition of chemical weapons - but a convention is yet to be concluded.

(Mr. Somogyi, Hungary)

From all this it appears that States Members of the United Nations continue to make only partial use of the possibilities offered by the world Organization in order to contribute to the creation and strengthening of international security by way of progress in disarmament. All this holds true even if one cannot expect the world Organization to settle problems where the conditions for solutions are still lacking. Hungary, as a small country vitally interested in strengthening the world Organization, intends to promote, within the limits of its modest possibilities, greater participation by the United Nations in furthering security and disarmament. In this respect, we highly appreciate the dedicated activities of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Department for Disarmament Affairs, headed by Under-Secretary-General Mr. Yasushi Akashi, and we deem it indispensable that they be given the support commensurate with their mandate in these fields.

Last year no real breakthrough was achieved in the solution of the multilateral disarmament tasks faced by the international community. In our view, that reflects not only the technical difficulties involved, but the occasional lack of political will as well. This is especially true for disarmament issues demanding a global solution, such as nuclear disarmament, the comprehensive ban on nuclear-test explosions or the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Although substantial negotiations are being conducted at the Conference on Disarmament on an international convention banning chemical weapons, the aforementioned technical and political phenomena have hindered the successful accomplishment of the work on this issue as well.

Concrete work on the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons has been carried on for years only at the bilateral Soviet-United States talks. The maintenance of the impetus of those constructive discussions required most welcome political decisions from both sides. The early conclusion of agreements and

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arrangements between them would serve not only the interest of the two great Powers, but would also be an important stage in strengthening international security. Progress at the Soviet-United States talks focuses even more sharply on the continued absence of results at multilateral forums, such as the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Progress in the field of nuclear disarmament would be of outstanding importance also from the point of view of the future of the nuclear non-proliferation régime, since it would give further evidence that the great Powers sincerely strive to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Hungarian Government regards the Treaty as an important arms limitation agreement that has so far accomplished its main purpose, namely, the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons. However, the survival of the non-proliferation system requires further efforts on the part of all signatory States, including the depository nuclear Powers. Hungary supports all measures aimed at strengthening the system and making it universal. We sincerely hope that this approach will prevail at the forthcoming Fourth Review Conference on the Treaty, as well as in the course of its preparation.

The problem of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing entails a broader implication for arms control. In recent years, Hungary has declared on a number of occasions that the comprehensive prohibition of nuclear tests can be achieved only through the conclusion of a universal and adequately verifiable treaty. No breakthrough was achieved this year on the issue of a test ban. Progress was made only in the ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts engaged in the investigation of international co-operative measures to detect and identify seismic events in accordance with the provisions of a future treaty. The Conference on Disarmament failed again this year to set up a subsidiary body that could have dealt with specific and interrelated test-ban issues, including structure and scope, together

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with verification and compliance. The feeling of disappointment in this respect is partly toned down because, as a result of progress in Soviet-United States negotiations on these issues, the ratification of the so-called threshold test-ban treaty signed bilaterally about a decade and a half ago, seems to be possible.

The negotiations on the prohibition of radiological weapons also failed to make major progress but, at the same time, serious efforts were made to identify the problems. Radiological weapons have not yet appeared in the national arsenals, so their prohibition can be considered as an important preventive measure. The prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities is closely connected with this issue. Hungary, owing to its small territory and the high density of its population, is particularly interested in the earliest possible conclusion of a relevant treaty. The non-nuclear-weapon countries have renounced the possession of nuclear weapons in the non-proliferation Treaty. At the same time, that Treaty provides for the utilization of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes for the non-nuclear-weapon States as well. These countries have the right to ensure by way of a treaty that their peaceful nuclear activity is not threatened or disturbed. The general confidence- and security-building effect of such a treaty cannot be overestimated. Strengthening mutual confidence becomes more and more important for the non-nuclear countries and the nuclear Powers alike. Possession of nuclear weapons - and it bears repeating often - does imply not only greater power, but increased responsibility as well.

Last year, the examination of issues regarding the prevention of an arms race in outer space continued. We consider the Soviet announcement related to the unconditional dismantling of the Krasnoyarsk radar complex, which had been a source of much disagreement, as a positive contribution to the atmosphere of negotiations. The fact that the Conference on Disarmament makes increasing use of the expertise of specialists in resolving and furthering the elaboration of

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practical measures is also a welcome development. The participation of experts could already be felt in the work of the Conference this year. We continue to deem it practical for this forum to study the possibility of creating a verification mechanism in outer space. One of the elements of this mechanism could be an international agency to be set up for the observation of satellites.

The year 1989 has produced outstanding developments in the 20-year-long efforts aimed at the comprehensive and global prohibition of chemical weapons and the destruction of their stockpiles. The Paris Conference, which ended with success, was an encouraging event. In its Final Declaration adopted by consensus, the international community, practically as a whole, not only solemnly confirmed its unconditional commitment to the Geneva Protocol and condemned the use of chemical weapons, but also unanimously urged the global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable prohibition and elimination of this kind of weapon.

(Mr. Somogyi, Hungary)

The declaration of the Paris Conference has not remained without effect. Its impact is demonstrated by the report of the Conference on Disarmament's Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. This subsidiary body has achieved remarkable progress and made promising plans for its future work.

Progress, however, is still not sufficient to enable us to speak about a real breakthrough in drafting a convention. No agreement has been reached on the key elements of the draft convention, although important political elements in several countries have recently argued in favour of the prohibition of chemical weapons. Considerable progress has been achieved at the bilateral talks between the Soviet Union and the United States. In this connection, we should not lose sight of the fact that it will be hard to reconcile the reduction of chemical-weapon stockpiles with the production of chemical weapons, whether before or after the convention enters into force.

At the end of last year national trial inspections were started. These experiments were, and will be, useful in complementing and promoting the multilateral efforts aimed at elaborating a reliable verification system. We are ready to contribute to those efforts by carrying out a prototype international simulation of some of the verification measures.

We wish to express our appreciation of the initiative of the Australian Government in convening the Government-industry conference that was held in Canberra only a month ago. There, representatives of the world's chemical industry argued in favour of condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and the early conclusion and implementation of the convention on global prohibition. The readiness of representatives of the chemical industry to join in the solution of outstanding problems is an invaluable contribution to the cause of banning chemical weapons.

(Mr. Somogyi, Hungary)

The Hungarian Government has called repeatedly for the prohibition of these weapons and has taken a number of initiatives in this field. The seriousness of our intentions and our readiness to promote the early conclusion of the convention are also demonstrated by our latest initiative, put forward by our Foreign Minister in his recent statement in the plenary Assembly. In accordance with that statement, Hungary is ready to comply with all the provisions of the convention now being elaborated and to act in full conformity with it even before it is concluded and enters into force.

The declaration of our intention to conform with the convention means that we reaffirm that Hungary has no chemical weapons and no industrial plants capable of producing them. It means also that the products of the Hungarian chemicals industry, as well as the country's trade in chemicals, serve peaceful purposes alone. Furthermore, we shall make a declaration, as provided for in the draft provisions of the convention, on the production of, and foreign trade in, chemicals, and we shall publish such declarations at regular intervals in the future.

On the basis of our intention to conform with the convention, we stand ready to be subjected, on a reciprocal basis, to on-site verification regarding all facts and figures contained in the declarations to which I have referred, as well as defence and industrial and trading activity related to the convention. The Soviet Union has consented, on the basis of reciprocity, to on-site inspections of its forces stationed in Hungary. We think it is appropriate, in carrying out on-site verification measures, to have recourse to the professional and technical facilities of the United Nations.

Finally, we shall establish an appropriate organ to perform provisionally some of the duties of the national authority to be set up in accordance with the convention.

(Mr. Somogyi, Hungary)

Our unilateral moves represent confidence-building measures of a new type that are destined primarily to promote the multilateral negotiations in Geneva and to contribute to the strengthening of mutual confidence in a wider perspective.

Perhaps the most promising aspect of the disarmament process is the negotiations on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe under way in Vienna. The progress achieved there, and at the simultaneous negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures demonstrate clearly that political will to reach agreement, together with a constructive approach, can yield results in an unprecedentedly short space of time. On the basis of the progress made so far, it is not unreasonable to expect that an agreement on conventional forces can be concluded within a year. We welcome the fact that similar opinions have been voiced in the highest forums of the two military alliances. As a result of that agreement, the first major steps could be taken towards diminishing military build-up and potential threats and, eventually, withdrawing foreign troops from the territories of other countries. In the present favourable international conditions, the elimination of a military presence outside one's country has become a realistic and attainable prospect.

Hungary intends to contribute actively to the negotiations as it is economically, militarily and politically interested in the early conclusion of an agreement. Even before the start of negotiations we demonstrated our positive approach by announcing, together with some of the other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, unilateral disarmament measures. In the same spirit, we unilaterally provided the participants in the negotiations with precise information on the structure and location of our armed forces. It is our conviction that similar steps by other negotiating parties could speed up the solution of existing problems.

(Mr. Somogyi, Hungary)

My country is aware that one of the key elements in the future agreement on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe will be verification. Bearing this in mind, Hungarian experts are working actively on the elaboration of methods and measures by which compliance with disarmament and arms-limitation treaties can be reliably verified and which are acceptable to all the parties involved. In this respect, we believe that the "open skies" initiative put forward by the United States is noteworthy. It would be helpful if experts from the countries concerned could have consultations in order to explore the details of that initiative. We welcome Canada's offer - just confirmed by Ambassador Mason - to host the first round of such consultations. The issue may require that the talks be held in two stages. In that case, the Canadian meeting might well be complemented by a second meeting to be held in Eastern Europe. Hungary is ready to take part in the consultations and to host a second, concluding, stage in Budapest.

Another proposal presented by us recently was the creation of a regional security zone, partially free from offensive weapons, along the common borders of Hungary, Austria and Yugoslavia, to promote co-operation in the military, economic, environmental and humanitarian fields. We declared ourselves ready, as a first step, to undertake unilateral measures as a means of furthering bilateral and trilateral co-operation between the countries concerned.

(Mr. Somogyi, Hungary)

Let me conclude by saying that diplomats engaged in disarmament questions often stress the significance of informing members of the public at large in order to get them involved in this highly important matter. Unfortunately, as a consequence of the lack of results achieved by multilateral disarmament activities, one frequently encounters depreciatory opinions that may even cast doubt on the raison d'être of multilateral disarmament negotiations. Those opinions can be countered only by a display of the appropriate political will and a constructive attitude and, most importantly, by hard work to obtain tangible results. The conditions for that are now present, and it would be unpardonable were we not to seize our historic opportunity.

Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): On behalf of my delegation I should like to extend warm congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the other officers of the Committee, on your election to your posts. I wish you every success in your work.

I should also like to take this opportunity to extend to the United States Delegation and the American people our sincere condolences and sympathy on their tremendous human disaster, the destructive earthquake that caused loss of life and vast material damage. As you know, the Soviet Government, on behalf of the Soviet people, has expressed its readiness to provide assistance to the victims of the disaster.

The general debate at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly has largely reflected - and simultaneously enriched - our perception of the emergent period of peace in international relations. There has been vivid confirmation of the fact that the world community wishes to see our civilization enjoying a secure, free, democratic and prosperous future. The most important element in that process is the consistent demilitarization of international relations, which, indeed, constitutes the essence of the First Committee's activities.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

Commonsense and responsibility to the future call for us to take a fresh look at the problems of security, which must be maintained primarily through political means, buttressed by the prestige and capabilities of the United Nations. Reason is always more powerful and reliable than the fist. Putting trust in weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, is increasingly at variance with the realities and imperatives of our time. We strongly believe that an alternative to nuclear deterrence must be sought in the adoption by countries of defensive doctrines and structures of armed forces that rule out the likelihood of offensive action. Naturally, there should be concurrent real and drastic reductions in both nuclear and conventional arms.

The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic views the early conclusion of a Soviet-United States agreement on 50 per cent cuts in their strategic offensive weapons as a priority objective. We would hope that such an agreement will be signed at the next Soviet-United States summit meeting, scheduled for late spring or early summer next year.

We deem it of fundamental importance to make the disarmament process irreversible and to progress towards a nuclear-free world.

The reduction and elimination of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and the early commencement of talks on that subject between the members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are now matters of urgency.

A comprehensive ban on nuclear testing is a major priority for a secure world. A halt to nuclear testing without delay is prompted both by the need to end the arms race and build security and confidence and by the critical state of the environment. A number of constructive proposals have been made by various States to bring about an early resolution of the problem. For example, the Soviet

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Parliament has confirmed the USSR's readiness to place a moratorium on all nuclear explosions immediately, naturally in conjunction with the United States, and it has so informed the United States Congress. A moratorium on nuclear explosions could be a precursor of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban agreement.

We favour a radical solution to that problem at the Conference on Disarmament. At the same time, on the basis of existing circumstances the Ukrainian SSR welcomes progress at the Soviet-United States talks on nuclear testing. We believe that bilateral and multilateral efforts should complement each other and lead to the same ultimate goal - a treaty banning all nuclear testing everywhere.

Like many other countries the Ukrainian SSR believes that one way to achieve that goal quickly is to extend the 1963 Moscow Treaty banning nuclear testing in three environments to include underground testing as well. We support the idea of convening an international conference on that subject.

A halt to and subsequent ban on the military production of fissionable material is an important question. The Soviet Union has already announced its first steps to end the production of weapons-grade fissionable material and its decision to shut down all its plutonium reactors by the year 2000. However, if no response is forthcoming, unilateral measures cannot solve the problem. A special international agreement that provides for adequate verification measures is needed.

The Ukrainian SSR would like to see efforts intensified in all fields of nuclear disarmament. That includes credible efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to forestall the development of new and even-more devastating types of such weapons.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

We support the proposals to establish nuclear-free zones in various regions of the world. We believe that such zones have an important role to play in building a safe world and that they will make a major contribution to strengthening international security and building trust and understanding between nations.

If the nuclear-weapon States undertake not to be the first to use such weapons, as China and the USSR have done, that would have a stabilizing effect on the way the whole range of disarmament issues is being tackled.

Urgent measures are also called for to remove the threat posed by chemical weapons. The progress made during chemical-weapons discussions at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, the outcome of the Paris Conference held last January, and the recent Soviet-United States statement that the two sides are resolved to work towards an early ban on chemical weapons, as well as the success of the Canberra Conference, all give us hope that a breakthrough will be made towards reaching an agreement to ban and totally eliminate such weapons of mass destruction. We call upon all the participants in the negotiations to solve outstanding problems in a constructive manner and without delay and thereby to translate this truly epoch-making multilateral disarmament measure into reality.

The General Assembly has a duty to do everything possible to make such talks successful. We now have a real opportunity to celebrate the sixty-fifth anniversary of the 1925 Geneva Protocol with the conclusion of an agreement that will totally eliminate all stocks of chemical weapons and ban their further production.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

The Ukrainian SSR firmly believes that the future of mankind depends largely on whether it succeeds in keeping outer space free of arms.

We call on all States to declare that they will refrain from placing arms in outer space and urge them to set to work earnestly and constructively to produce measures in this area. Such measures could provide for the implementation of existing proposals to ban anti-satellite systems and space-to-earth weapons, to establish an international outer space inspectorate and to verify that arms are not placed in outer space.

Confidence-building and openness measures together with expanded international co-operation in the exploration and exploitation of outer space would help to solve the problem. There is a large number of constructive proposals from various States on this subject. In particular, there are proposals by the Federal Republic of Germany, France and other States on "rules of the road" in outer space and a code of conduct, notification of launching space objects, inspections, exchange of information, an international satellite tracking agency and integrated measures for peaceful co-operation in outer space. Members will also recall the far-reaching proposal of the Foreign Minister of the USSR, Eduard Shevardnadze, in response to the United States idea of "open skies". Speaking during the general debate on 26 September, he said: "Let us also have open lands, open seas and open space".

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There is no lack of concrete and interesting proposals at the United Nations and at the Conference on Disarmament. Yet, it must be regretted that over the past few years debate on this pressing issue has not grown into practical negotiations on an overall agreement, or understandings on specifics.

Progress in disarmament should also encompass efforts to scale down the conventional arms race.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

Today's level of technology of such weapons, the vast sums spent in manufacturing them all countries, both developed and developing, and, lastly, the likelihood of conventional war escalating into nuclear war - all represent grave threats to international security. That is precisely why we are all following so closely the talks on reductions in conventional armaments in Europe. In keeping with the defensive nature of their military doctrine and their intention to make the posture of their armed forces clearly non-offensive, the States members of the Warsaw Treaty have proposed dramatic mutual cuts in troops and conventional weapons, under strict international control, of course.

The Vienna negotiations have confirmed that, given good will on the part of the participants, practical results are possible very soon now - that is to say, a stable and verifiable balance of conventional armaments at a lower level.

We also attach great importance to the Vienna talks on confidence- and security-building measures. Measures to build and enhance confidence, openness and glasnost in disarmament, and making those measures comprehensive in scope, are the order of the day. The progress in Stockholm must not end there. We have to build on it, move towards a new order and a higher level of confidence-building measures. The Kiev Seminar attended by United Nations experts on multilateral confidence-building and war prevention measures, held last September, demonstrated that a new generation of confidence-building measures was desirable and feasible for continued efforts to enhance world security in the future.

The Ukrainian SSR believes that the General Assembly could urge the participants in the Vienna negotiations to make the necessary efforts to conclude their negotiations successfully and as early as possible.

In approaching disarmament as an integrated process of demilitarizing international relations, we should not lose sight of its major element - that is, naval forces and their armaments.

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As we know, with their awesome strike capability, today's naval forces can carry out strategic missions. That is why they play a destabilizing role and can heighten tensions and threaten security in various parts of the world. The outcome of the general debate at this session has conclusively demonstrated that the majority of the members of the world community are increasingly concerned about naval activities. Elementary logic suggests that we must start separate talks on this kind of armaments, to be attended by all States concerned, primarily the major naval Powers.

As is the case in all disarmament matters, this issue is not a simple one, but we must begin solving it, perhaps by small steps, such as confidence-building measures, increasing exchanges of information, invitations to military exercises and exchanges of naval delegations. In this respect, increased contacts between the Soviet and United States navies are significant. We should like to see them followed by concrete efforts to reduce naval armaments and activities.

In the general debate, we described the position of the Ukrainian SSR on the special and critical importance of the problem of converting military production to civilian use, in the light of the initial steps taken in the field of real disarmament. We hope that the First Committee will also consider this matter in a businesslike way.

It is our firm conviction that the United Nations is capable of serving even more effectively as a unique international centre for maintaining international peace and security. If this capacity is to be steadily increased, all members of the world community should pool their efforts and the international machinery for promoting disarmament should be improved. The universality of the machinery and the will of Member States to achieve real disarmament would serve as a pledge of its high effectiveness.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

We have presented our views on ways and means of improving that machinery at the session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission last May. It is to be regretted, however, that on that occasion too attempts to draft relevant recommendations proved unsuccessful.

The Ukrainian SSR shares the concern expressed by a number of delegations over the diminished efficiency of the Commission. We believe it necessary to emphasize that we want to maintain the Commission as a major and truly universal forum of disarmament and sharply to upgrade its activities through enhanced efficiency and some adjustments to its work.

My delegation believes that our joint efforts in the Commission should aim at producing common approaches to solving the problems under consideration, approaches that could be drawn on in the course of subsequent negotiations.

With regard to the elements of international machinery for promoting disarmament, we should also pay attention to the implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly on disarmament. We believe that recommendations of the United Nations on disarmament should be treated with the necessary respect and their bona fide practical implementation should be promoted. Consensus at the stage of adoption should be translated into concrete action to comply with those resolutions.

The Ukrainian delegation urges all States to do their utmost to encourage consistent implementation of General Assembly resolutions on disarmament.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

The noble goals of our Organization, including those in the field of disarmament, can be achieved if, as was pointed out as early as at the first session of the General Assembly, the peoples of the world are fully aware of its purposes and activities. We attach great importance to the information and education work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. The World Disarmament Campaign, which has this aim in view has proved useful in educating broad segments of international public opinion about the pernicious effects of the arms race. We would advocate a more active involvement of non-governmental organizations, the mass media, statesmen and public figures, as well as parliaments, in the effort to ward off the threat of war. At the current session the Ukrainian SSR will pledge a voluntary contribution 300,000 roubles to the World Disarmament Fund. We shall continue to provide every possible support for the noble goals of that Campaign.

Mr. HOU Zhitong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Mr. Chairman, at the outset, the Chinese delegation warmly congratulates you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee of the current session of the General Assembly. We are convinced that with your rich diplomatic experience, outstanding ability and dedication to the cause of disarmament, you will guide the deliberations of this Committee with skill and efficiency and promote new progress in the field of multilateral disarmament. I also wish sincerely to congratulate other members of the Bureau upon their election. I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the Chinese delegation will co-operate fully with you and the entire Bureau. I also want to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Roche for the outstanding contributions he made when he presided over the work of the First Committee last year, and to

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thank Under-Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi and the Department for Disarmament Affairs for their highly efficient work.

In recent years, new successes have been achieved in the efforts of various countries in the world to resolve regional conflicts, reduce the threat of war and improve the international climate. A new prospect for world peace has emerged on the horizon. Viewed as a whole, East-West relations have somewhat improved. Military confrontation has relatively abated and political dialogue is becoming more animated with the international situation moving towards greater relaxation. Preserving peace, promoting disarmament and seeking development have become the common aspiration of the people on Earth and constitute a general trend throughout the world.

Against this background, some new progress has been made over the past year in the field of international disarmament. The Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - is being implemented and the bilateral talks between them on the 50 per cent reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons are under way. New negotiations have also begun on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe where the two major military alliances confront each another and a high concentration of nuclear and conventional weapons exists. Various sides there have advanced specific proposals, and the Soviet Union and certain other Eastern European countries have decided unilaterally to reduce or withdraw from abroad some troops and weapons. The Chinese delegation welcomes these developments and hopes that the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union and between the two major military alliances will lead to early agreements which will serve peace and security without prejudicing the interest of other countries.

Progress has also been made in the field of multilateral disarmament. In January and September of this year, international conferences on the banning of

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chemical weapons were held in Paris and in Canberra respectively, and they achieved some positive results. This year the Disarmament Commission held extensive and in-depth discussions on a number of important disarmament questions. Negotiations are continuing in a constructive atmosphere at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on such questions as chemical weapons, with progress being made from time to time. The Chinese delegation sincerely hopes that the role of multilateral disarmament organs will continue to grow in the future.

It must be pointed out emphatically that the positive changes in the current international situation and in the disarmament field have taken place against a profound historical background and have a far-reaching political significance. They are the outcome of protracted and concerted endeavours on the part of all countries in the world, as well as the result of 40-odd years of evolution in international relations since the end of the Second World War. The post-war bipolar world - characterized by super-Power rivalry, the East-West cold war, and the confrontation between the two major military alliances - has been shaken continually by powerful forces, and the trend towards a multipolar world is gathering momentum. The third world, represented by the Movement of non-aligned States continues to develop from strength to strength and has become a significant political force in the present world. Furthermore, in modern international relations, power politics - with the big bullying the small, the strong lording it over the weak, frequently imposing their will on others, or even violating the sovereignty of other countries with force - has been greatly detested and has become increasingly unworkable. The establishment of a new international political order has become the demand of the times.

While entertaining optimism for the prospect of world peace, we must also be

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sober-minded and recognize that the world we live in is by no means trouble-free and that the root cause of international tension and turbulence has yet to be removed. Regional conflicts have not come to a stop. The ultimate resolution of all the hot-spot issues will still take time to achieve. The problems of uneven development in the world are calling for urgent solutions. Acts of power politics, such as meddling in the internal affairs of other countries and infringing the sovereignty of other countries, still occur from time to time. Even in the field of disarmament, the tasks remain arduous. Instead of putting an end to their arms race, the super-Powers are striving to improve the quality of their weapons, vying with each other in developing hi-tech weapon systems and extending the arms race into outer space. The biggest nuclear and conventional arsenals in their possession and the arms race between them continue to pose a serious threat to world peace and security. Precisely because of this, the international community has been consistently demanding that they discharge in earnest their special responsibilities for disarmament and stop the arms race immediately in all its forms.

China pursues an independent foreign policy of peace and works persistently to safeguard world peace and security. We are always opposed to the arms race and stand for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear, chemical, biological and space weapons, and for the drastic reduction of conventional armaments. Moreover, on our own initiative we have unilaterally taken some concrete steps with regard to disarmament.

At present, nuclear disarmament is a question of universal concern and the focus of international efforts, for it is a matter of life or death for the whole of mankind. The Chinese Government is fully aware of the danger of a nuclear war and has consistently called for the complete prohibition and total destruction of

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nuclear weapons, thus removing, once and for all, the threat of nuclear war. More and more people in the world have come to realize that the attainment of this objective hinges upon the super-Powers, which possess the world's largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals. They must fulfil their special responsibility for ending the nuclear arms race and carrying out nuclear disarmament by taking the lead in stopping the testing, production and deployment of all types of nuclear weapons and by the drastic reduction and destruction of all types of nuclear weapons deployed inside or outside their territories.

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When this has been accomplished it will be time for a widely representative international conference on nuclear disarmament to be held, with the participation of all nuclear States, to discuss the steps and measures to be taken for the total destruction of nuclear weapons.

Last year the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 43/75 E on the question of nuclear disarmament, which reflects the common understanding of the international community on this important question and its view that such is the practicable and effective way to achieve nuclear disarmament. We maintain that, pending realization of this long-term objective and as an effective measure to prevent nuclear war, all nuclear-weapon States should undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or in any circumstances, and to refrain from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-free zones. On this basis, an international convention banning the use of nuclear weapons should be concluded and adhered to by all nuclear-weapon States. In this regard, the Chinese Government made its solemn commitment a long time ago and we call upon all other nuclear-weapon States to do the same.

It is our consistent view that the establishment of nuclear-free zones or zones of peace by the countries concerned, on the basis of agreement freely arrived at between them in the light of the actual situation in their regions, would be conducive to regional peace and stability. Nuclear States should respect the status of nuclear-free zones and undertake the relevant obligations. Proceeding from this position, the Chinese Government has signed and ratified the relevant Protocols to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, thus contributing to nuclear disarmament.

Like the rest of the international community, China is concerned about the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. I wish to take this

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opportunity to reiterate that we do not encourage or engage in nuclear proliferation. Nor do we help any country to develop nuclear weapons. As a member State of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), China abides by its statute and is committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and international co-operation in this field. In exporting nuclear materials and equipment, China has always taken a prudent and responsible attitude, demanding that the importing countries accept IAEA safeguards and pledge to use the Chinese items for peaceful purposes only and not to transfer them to any third country without China's consent.

We are glad to note that the importance and urgency of conventional disarmament have been paid increasing attention by the international community - a fact that was fully manifested in the adoption by consensus of resolution 43/75 F at the last session of the General Assembly. The Chinese delegation has always believed that, along with nuclear disarmament, there should be substantial reductions in conventional armaments. The big Powers, which possess the largest conventional arsenals, have a special responsibility for conventional disarmament and should reach agreement at an early date, through serious negotiations, on drastic reductions of their conventional weapons.

We have witnessed in recent years some new steps forward in the efforts of European countries with regard to talks on conventional forces and these have instilled new vitality in those talks. We welcome this development and hope that an agreement can soon be reached that serves the interests of the peace and security of Europe and the world at large. Europe is the site of confrontation between the two major military alliances and has a high concentration of weapons and troops. In the event of a conventional war there would be a danger of its escalating into a nuclear war, bringing untold sufferings to the people in the region. Therefore, the international community shares the view that it is crucial

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that conventional disarmament efforts should be focused on the European region and the members of the two major military alliances, and in particular on the major Powers among them.

Of course, this is not to say that the efforts of other regions and countries are unimportant. In fact, many third world countries have taken various steps to promote conventional disarmament. They have made their contributions to international peace and security by either taking unilateral actions or working at regional and global levels. Nowadays, however, some people deliberately exaggerate and play up the rate of increase in the military expenditures and armaments of the developing countries, or try to shift on to them the primary responsibility for the arms race. This does not accord with facts, nor is it fair. In fact, the third world countries have made development their top priority and devoted their limited resources to the economic and social development of their respective nations. It is only in special circumstances that some of them are compelled to maintain the necessary military capacity to cope with the threats of armed invasion, interference and subversion imposed on them from the outside and to safeguard their independence and sovereignty. Naturally, no country should in any circumstances seek conventional military capacity in excess of its needs for self-defence, let alone use it for armed aggression against and intervention in other countries.

Faced with the latest tendency to extend the arms race into outer space it is imperative to call for the cessation of the arms race in space. We maintain that outer space is the common heritage of mankind and should be used entirely for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all humanity. The development of space weapons has exacerbated the escalation of the arms race, which could lead to the militarization of outer space, thus posing a new threat to the existence of mankind and to international security. China is opposed to the arms race in outer space

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and the development of space weapons, no matter by whom. It is obvious that the countries with the largest space capabilities competing in the development of space weapons should bear a special responsibility in this regard. Therefore, the international community is justified in asking them to undertake not to test, develop, manufacture or deploy space weapons, and to destroy all existing space weapons. It is also logical that on this basis the parties concerned should proceed with negotiations and work towards an international agreement on a comprehensive ban on space weapons.

In recent years the prohibition of chemical weapons has been given particular emphasis at the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, in Geneva. Member States of the Conference have quickened the pace of their negotiations and have made some headway on the remaining issues concerning a chemical weapons convention. Owing to the complex nature of these issues, some difficult points remain unresolved. It is reassuring that most member States, as well as some non-member States participating in the work, have demonstrated a constructive attitude and made positive contributions to the negotiations. The convening of the Paris and Canberra Conferences proved very useful in the efforts to attain the objective of banning chemical weapons. We wish to express our appreciation of the contributions made by France and Australia in this regard.

China is a non-chemical-weapon State; it does not possess or manufacture chemical weapons, nor does it export chemicals to be used for making chemical weapons. China, which has itself been a victim of chemical weapons in the past, has consistently stood for the complete prohibition and total destruction of chemical weapons. It hopes to see the early conclusion of an international convention and has taken an active part in the negotiations on such a convention. China is firmly opposed to the use and proliferation of chemical weapons. We are of the view that the effective way to prevent chemical-weapon proliferation is to

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conclude as early as possible a convention imposing a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons. First and foremost, efforts should be made to remove the real threat posed to international security by existing stockpiles of chemical weapons and the attempts to improve their quality. At the same time, efforts should be made to ensure that the civilian chemical industry does not produce chemical weapons. It goes without saying that the major Powers which possess chemical weapons have a special responsibility in this respect.

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China wishes to see that, pending the conclusion of the convention, all countries that have chemical weapons would pledge not to use them, and that all countries with chemical-weapon capabilities would undertake not to test, produce or transfer such weapons. To ensure the effectiveness of the future convention on a comprehensive ban of chemical weapons, this convention should stipulate strict, effective, reasonable and practicable measures of verification. It should also contain provisions against the abuse of verification measures in such a way as to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and jeopardize their sovereignty and security interests. The development of the civilian chemical industry should not be hindered. China will, as always, make unremitting efforts, together with all other countries, for the early conclusion of a convention banning chemical weapons.

As the question of disarmament concerns world peace and the security of all nations, all countries - big or small, strong or weak - should have the right to participate on an equal footing in the discussion and resolution of this question. The legitimate interests and reasonable demands of all countries should invariably be respected. International efforts for disarmament can be made at many levels; they may be bilateral, multilateral, regional or global. However, any bilateral disarmament agreement must not compromise the interests of other countries. Likewise, any regional agreement must not infringe the security of other regions. For reasons known to all, progress in the field of multilateral disarmament has been slow. Many countries have expressed concern about this and made various proposals to improve the multilateral disarmament machinery. We are in favour of any proposal aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations and the multilateral disarmament agencies and improving their effectiveness. It must be stressed here that, to a large extent, progress in multilateral disarmament efforts is determined by the political will as well as the attitude towards such

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efforts of all the countries, especially those with the largest arsenals. The deliberations and negotiations on disarmament issues within the multilateral context is an extremely important but arduous endeavour which involves the security interests and concerns of all. We must strive to seek solutions acceptable to all through discussions, consultations and negotiations on the basis of equality and mutual respect. We shall certainly be able to accomplish our common objectives so long as all of us have political will, demonstrate sufficient patience, and persist in our efforts.

Though modest progress has been achieved in the disarmament field over the past year, there is still a long way before the principal objectives of nuclear and conventional disarmament can be realized. The international community must continue its joint efforts. As always, the Chinese delegation will take part in the work of the First Committee at the current session in a positive and realistic spirit and with a constructive and co-operative attitude. We shall once again submit draft resolutions on nuclear and conventional disarmament, and we hope to receive the support of all other delegations. The Chinese delegation will carefully study the draft resolutions, proposals and suggestions of all parties in a positive and co-operative manner. We are ready to work together with other delegations to achieve positive results in the work of the First Committee, thus making fresh contributions to continued progress in multilateral disarmament efforts.

Mr. DONOWAKI (Japan): The Japanese delegation joins with other delegations in congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, upon your election to your highly responsible post. It is a great pleasure to work under your esteemed chairmanship. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

Last month, Mr. Nakayama, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, stated in the general debate in the General Assembly that

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"The international community is today in the midst of a major transition from discord to dialogue, from conflict to co-operation". (A/44/PV.7, p.18)

Needless to say, the main factor behind this development is that the dialogue and negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union have taken root and expanded. The recent meeting of the United States Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Minister in Wyoming produced significant results in the field of disarmament regarding nuclear and chemical weapons, which Japan welcomes heartily. In Europe, we have witnessed steady progress since spring this year in the process of eliminating the capability for launching surprise attacks and for initiating large-scale offensive action that has long been a destabilizing factor in that region.

We must bear in mind, however, that developments in bilateral and regional disarmament do not necessarily lead to further progress in multilateral disarmament. It is up to all nations represented here to pursue multilateral disarmament with determination and ingenuity. I look forward to fruitful discussions in the First Committee during this session which, it is hoped, will reflect the current favourable international situation. Having just assumed office as Ambassador of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, and attending the First Committee for the first time, I am greatly honoured to join all members in the endeavour to achieve the noble objective of creating peace through disarmament.

The people of Japan are solemnly resolved to seek the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons and attach the highest priority to questions relating to nuclear weapons. Japan cannot but express its regret at the many underground nuclear tests that are conducted every year. Noting that a comprehensive test ban is a matter of fundamental importance for the security of nations, Japan has taken the initiative, mobilizing all available technologies, to establish an international network for

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verifying nuclear testing, so that a nuclear-test ban can be achieved without jeopardizing the security of any nation.

Nuclear disarmament is a complicated task that must be pursued tenaciously. Bilateral as well as multilateral efforts are needed. Not only the reduction of nuclear weapons and a nuclear-test ban but also nuclear non-proliferation have to be pursued. All these intricate and interrelated efforts require co-ordination, and the goal will have to be approached slowly but steadily.

With this in mind, Japan strongly supports full-scale, stage-by-stage negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on issues relating to nuclear testing. Japan highly appreciates the fact that the Wyoming meeting confirmed the substantial progress that had been made, particularly on verification matters, which should lead to the ratification of the threshold test-ban Treaty of 1974 and the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty of 1976. We earnestly hope that the ratification of these two treaties will soon become a reality, so that the United States and the Soviet Union can proceed to the second phase: namely, negotiating further intermediate limitations on nuclear testing.

The progress we are witnessing today in the United States-Soviet Union nuclear-test talks makes us keenly aware that we are now blessed with an unprecedented opportunity for commencing substantive multilateral deliberations on nuclear testing.

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In the past several years the Conference on Disarmament has been prevented from establishing an ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban because of political groups' conflicting formal positions on the Committee's mandate. However, a growing number of delegations have come to express their individual wishes to begin the substantive work on nuclear testing issues at the Conference. Since last spring some progress has been made through informal and individual consultations in considerably narrowing differences in the positions of delegations. It is strongly hoped that with a little more flexibility on the part of some of the delegations concerned a consensus will be reached, so that the Conference can start the substantive work next year. It is my intention to become actively involved in the efforts to resolve this matter with the co-operation of the delegations concerned.

In April of this year the United Nations hosted the International Conference on Disarmament Issues, in Kyoto, Japan. Participants in the Conference agreed that issues relating to nuclear testing needed to be discussed at the Conference on Disarmament and that nuclear testing could be effectively verified by means of seismic monitoring. Within the Conference the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts has been doing excellent work and is ready to start at the beginning of next year the second phase of the Group's second large-scale technical test. A global seismic monitoring system is an essential factor in a future comprehensive test ban. I would therefore like to ask that as many countries as possible join in the Group's efforts.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has so far functioned as an important legal framework in reconciling the need for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons with the need for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to maintain the security of the world. Next year the States parties

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to the Treaty are to hold the Fourth Review Conference and in 1995 another conference is to be convened to decide the future of the Treaty régime. The results of these conferences will have far-reaching and long-term implications for world peace and security in the future.

In order to maintain and strengthen the NPT régime, it is imperative that both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States make serious and continued efforts, and also that non-party States subscribe to the Treaty. In this context we should appreciate as positive the very important decisions by Bahrain and Qatar to become parties to the Treaty. It is also important that the safeguards required by the Treaty are faithfully implemented. We hope that those States parties that have not accepted the full-scope safeguards will do so without any further delay. On the other hand, it is to be heartily welcomed that the United States and the Soviet Union are achieving further progress in the strategic arms reduction talks, building upon the smooth implementation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty. It is our sincere hope that the United States and the Soviet Union will make further efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament, without jeopardizing the necessary deterrence and parity. At the same time all other nations are called upon to act in an appropriate and responsible manner to ensure the peace and security of the world.

In recent years growing concern has been expressed concerning the use and proliferation of chemical weapons. The most fundamental, indeed, the only, way to cope with these problems is by concluding without delay a comprehensive, verifiable and universal convention banning those weapons totally, with as many countries as possible acceding to it. From this viewpoint, Japan will continue to participate actively in the negotiations. Pending the conclusion of the convention

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it is incumbent upon each country to exercise restraint and act responsibly, in accordance with paragraph 4 of the final declaration adopted at the Paris Conference on chemical weapons in January this year.

In the past few years the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention have been conducted energetically and steady progress is being achieved, particularly on technical details. Nevertheless, there are still some important political and substantive issues yet to be resolved. What is necessary in these circumstances is to forge a common perception of the political target within the time-frame for the negotiations and to muster the necessary political will and determination to achieve an early conclusion of the negotiations.

The Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, held recently in Canberra, reaffirmed commitment to the early conclusion of the chemical-weapons convention by overcoming the various existing differences and mobilizing support from the private industrial sector. The Conference also succeeded in setting a specific target by announcing the view that work on major substantive issues in the negotiations should be completed during the course of 1990. Having participated in the Conference, I appealed for the need to set a political target for the early conclusion of the negotiations. I was therefore very much encouraged by the significant results achieved through the serious efforts of all the participants in the Conference. In particular, the efforts made by the Government of Australia, as host country, in leading the Conference to its successful conclusion should be highly commended.

Furthermore, Japan welcomes the specific commitment made by President Bush in his speech at the United Nations last month drastically to reduce chemical weapons. The initiative was taken at the appropriate time and is expected to give added momentum to the negotiations on the chemical-weapons convention.

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In the negotiations on the chemical-weapons convention, verification problems are particularly difficult, both politically and technically. We must work to establish a reasonably effective and reliable verification régime, and to agree upon a realistic and feasible text for the convention, making use of the experience gained through national trial inspections. At the same time, it is a matter of the utmost importance to ensure the universality of the convention. I earnestly hope that countries other than those that are members of the Conference on Disarmament will show greater and more active interest in the ongoing negotiations on the chemical-weapons convention.

Japan is pleased to see that steady progress is being made in the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe and on confidence- and security-building measures. This favourable situation has come about as a result of a series of dialogues through various channels, such as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the mutual and balanced force reduction talks and the Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. It is expected that these recent developments in Europe will create an atmosphere conducive to peace and security not only in that part of the world but throughout the entire world. Japan sincerely hopes that these negotiations will be concluded successfully at an early date.

In the international community today we find such encouraging trends as the taking root of the United States-Soviet dialogue, progress in the process of disarmament in Europe and the continuing efforts to resolve regional conflicts. On the other hand, it is also a fact that deterrence based upon a balance of power serves as the basis for peace and stability in the world today. With this in mind we should pursue, through arms control and disarmament, a military balance at a

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lower level of armament, which would enhance the security of the nations concerned and hence the peace and stability of the world.

While arms control and disarmament is an important means of ensuring world peace and security, it should be borne in mind that it is only part of the process of solving the problems of war and peace.

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One of the lessons to be learned from the process of disarmament between the two super-Powers, as well as in Europe, is the fact that such a process is only a part of the larger process of an across-the-board dialogue. It became possible only with the development of mutual confidence and trust between nations concerned, which in turn had to be fostered over the years through repeated contacts between top-level leaders as well as numerous energetic negotiations at the working level. In our efforts to bring about disarmament, we must first give serious thought, not in abstract terms but in specific terms, to what concrete actions will be necessary in order to reduce and eliminate mutual distrust between countries concerned. In Asia there still remain a number of issues and sources of tension, such as territorial issues and regional conflicts. Therefore we ought first to make steady efforts to enhance mutual confidence among nations by solving these problems and conflicts one by one.

Japan, with its Peace Constitution, has over the years been firmly resolved never again to become a military Power threatening its neighbours and has at the same time been trying to establish and maintain moderate and reasonable defence capabilities in line with its basic policy of maintaining exclusively defence forces. Japan will continue to adhere to such a policy, and also will continue to make diplomatic efforts, both bilaterally and multilaterally, to contribute to the improvement and stabilization of the political situation in Asia.

The First Committee of the General Assembly should continue to be an important forum for frank and serious discussion, where international public opinion can be mobilized for the creation of an atmosphere favourable to disarmament. Through our deliberations and the adoption of resolutions during the course of this session, it is hoped that we shall come up with clearer messages to the international community that will give fresh impetus to various disarmament negotiations. Incidentally, it may be advisable to refrain from adopting too many resolutions. By merging similar

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resolutions whenever possible, we should rather aim at adopting a limited number of resolutions by consensus.

The path towards disarmament may be winding and strenuous, but we must continue along it if we are to fulfil our responsibility of helping to create a more peaceful and safer world. At last year's third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, Japan expressed its intention to strengthen its "co-operation for peace" as the first pillar of its "international co-operation initiative". In line with that initiative, Japan is determined to work to the best of its ability, hand in hand with all other nations, to achieve our common goal.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.