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Chairman: Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 TO 69 AND 151 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The impact of scientific and technological achievements on international security is a problem that requires the international community's unflagging attention.

The possibilities inherent in today's scientific and technological progress arouse great hope that that progress will help mankind solve many of its problems, but they also arouse fear that new discoveries and achievements could increasingly threaten mankind's security and survival. In this respect, the most urgent issue is the military application of the scientific and technological revolution. The problem of qualitative changes in armaments, which bring them to an entirely new level, and of their implications for universal security takes on a new dimension.

The inner dynamic of the modern arms race has changed substantially over the last few years. In terms simply of numbers, competition is receding into history, owing, to a large extent, to the arms-control and disarmament efforts of the international community.

As experience shows, in the final analysis, qualitative improvements in weaponry fail to yield the most sought-after result - enhanced security. This is corroborated by authoritative, scholarly findings. For example, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, in its analysis of expenditure on military research and development - that analysis may be found in the Institute's Yearbook for 1987 - concludes that it is highly unlikely that these efforts strengthen security.

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(Mr. Martynov, Byelorussian SSR)

Moreover, developments in the field of military technology increasingly erode strategic stability. The 38th Pugwash Conference in 1988 noted that

"Much military research and development is counterproductive because it tends to increase the destructiveness of weaponry, provoke countermeasures, and undermine arms-control agreements, as well as divert material and human resources from meeting real human needs."

A large number of other negative consequences could be included in the list. The transfer of major decision-making and command-and-control functions to artificial-intelligence systems entails the risk of crisis situations getting out of hand.

Emerging new warfare techniques, based on the development of the capability to make numerous accurate strikes deep inside the "enemy" lines, tend to blur the distinction between offence and defence, thus undercutting the basis of today's broadly accepted idea of military doctrines and armed-force structures that are strictly defence-oriented. The intensive improvement of weapons creates an atmosphere of insecurity and a perception of threat, which, in turn, may help to sustain, or even increase, tensions and, thus, have an adverse effect on disarmament efforts and on current or future negotiations.

In this connection, there is an increasingly urgent need to limit the military application of new discoveries and of advances in the fields of science and technology. We reiterate our support for the well-known proposals on the prevention of the use of scientific and technological achievements for the purpose of developing new types and generations of weapons of mass destruction, both nuclear and non-nuclear, as well as of new types and systems of conventional armaments, particularly those with enhanced destructive capability.

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(Mr. Martynov, Byelorussian SSR)

Urgent steps must be taken to prevent the use of technology such as genetic and electromagnetic systems in weaponry. Of course, agreements banning the development of weapons of these types will require appropriate and far-reaching verification measures. The time has come for us to reflect on measures that would prevent the proliferation of missiles and missile technology.

It is necessary also to examine the question of prohibiting the use of battlefield laser weapons whose function is to blind troops. Such a ban might be worked out either as an independent agreement or as a protocol to a convention on inhumane weapons.

Naturally, there are areas in which the military application of science and technology is capable of yielding positive results: improved surveillance and monitoring, verification, the safe destruction of arms that are being eliminated, and so on. This, however, should not be regarded as obviating the need to place under control the use of scientific and technological progress for the purpose of upgrading weapons.

In our opinion, what is of key importance here is a preventive approach that will enable us to come to an agreement on ways of resolving the problem before it can get out of hand. Greater openness too has a positive role to play towards limiting the adverse impact of the military applications of scientific and technical achievements on international security.

For many years now the Byelorussian SSR has been working towards having the efforts of States pooled as regards a particular aspect of this area. I refer to prevention of the emergence of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. In this connection, resolutions sponsored by us have been adopted by the General Assembly.

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(Mr. Martynov, Byelorussian SSR)

Thanks to the spirit of co-operation and mutual compromise displayed by many States at the forty-third session of the General Assembly last year, resolution 43/72 - on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons - met with near-consensus support. We regard this as a new approach by States to complex disarmament problems. We wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all delegations involved in this process. It is our intention to continue to work towards consensus on this important problem.

On the whole, after the third special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, States started to pay much closer attention to the impact that the military application of scientific and technical achievements may have on international security. That is particularly gratifying to the Byelorussian SSR as the sponsor of General Assembly resolution 37/77 B - on renunciation of the use of new discoveries and scientific and technological achievements for military purposes - adopted in 1982.

We believe that there is now an urgent need for a systematic international evaluation of the impact of scientific and technological achievements on international security, so that timely recommendations may be worked out to prevent the use of new technology in the production of weapons and to give the United Nations adequate functions in this context.

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(Mr. Martynov, Byelorussian SSR)

That problem was the subject of General Assembly resolution 43/77 A, sponsored by India. The Byelorussian SSR was a co-sponsor of that resolution and responded to the Secretary-General's note on the issue (A/44/487/Add.1).

In our opinion, the divergence of views on the impact of science and technology on international security emphasizes rather than obviates the need for an expert and systematic consideration of the issue at the international level, as called for in resolution 43/77 A.

We also believe that systematic international evaluation will become increasingly topical as we advance along the path of disarmament, since the emergence of new or upgraded means of warfare is likely to play an increasingly destabilizing role against the background of dwindling military arsenals.

At the same time, we are convinced that measures precluding the use of new technologies for the development of arms would promote peaceful scientific and technological progress and clear the way for openness and peaceful international co-operation in advanced areas of science and technology for the development and economic and social progress of all nations.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I would like to express my pleasure, as Chairman of the First Committee and also in my personal capacity, at seeing among us Mrs. Leticia Ramos-Shahani, the representative of the Philippines in the First Committee, who will be the next speaker.

Mrs. Ramos-Shahani is the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Philippines Senate, and between 1981 and 1986 was United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. She was also Secretary-General of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, held at Nairobi in 1985. I now call on Mrs. Ramos-Shahani.

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Mrs. RAMOS-SHAHANI (Philippines): Allow me first of all, Sir, to congratulate you on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee. These past weeks have indeed confirmed to all of us your abilities as a skilled diplomat and an authority on disarmament. I should also like to express my personal pleasure at being associated with you again after the years we were together in Vienna and in your capacity as the Permanent Representative of your country. I should also like, on this occasion, to extend the best wishes of the Philippines to Venezuela, with whom it shares ties of hispanidad.

1989 is a year of commemorations - especially the bicentennial of the French Revolution, the seventy-fifth year since the inception of the First World War, and the fiftieth year since the outbreak of the Second World War. 1789, 1914 and 1939 were years that remain in mankind's collective memory as anni mirabili - years of monumental events. Though each different in nature, all three events were cataclysmic and led to new world orders.

Yet our times will also perhaps go down in history as an important watershed. Who would indeed have thought that such crises as the Iran-Iraq war, Afghanistan and Namibia, would be seeing the beginnings of a resolution in our times after decades of turmoil? Today, we are seeing other conflicts winding down to possible solutions, as in Central America and Kampuchea. In Eastern Europe, we are witnessing the gradual re-establishment of pluralism, in accordance with the will of the peoples, in what was previously a monolithic bloc.

Yet other events temper our optimism concerning the world situation. In Lebanon, the tremendous suffering of the people continues unabated. In Palestine, people have been denied free expression and self-determination, a denial of which the intifadah is but a manifestation. The hostage crisis is merely a symptom of the impasse reached in the Middle East that has led to that dilemma.

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(Mrs. Ramos-Shahani, Philippines)

On a broader scene, we see the degradation of the environment, the threat of AIDS, and overpopulation. Some developing countries, including the Philippines, are still reeling under the impact of the debt crisis, which to us is a form of modern slavery.

When we turn to disarmament, we witness the double-edged trend present in the world today. On the one hand, we see the positive effects of an improved relationship between the two super-Powers. With the advent of such ideas as perestroika and glasnost, as well as unilateral disarmament initiatives, it has become possible to explore areas of co-operation and agreement. Thus we have seen the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - and the possibility of a 50 per cent cut in strategic offensive weapons.

On the other hand, we see continuing research in the Strategic Defense Initiative, the threat of non-observance of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, and the pursuit of the naval arms race. Continued testing, as well as the development and refinement of all kinds of weapons, continue to take place. Chemical weapons are still employed and biological weapons still developed, while conventional weapons increase, become more sophisticated, and proliferate.

We are at a stage when we are setting the framework for the next century. In 1990, my delegation looks forward to the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as to the proposal for a conference to amend the partial test-ban Treaty. The latter move would make a comprehensive test ban possible and would finally enable us to come closer to the goal of abolishing all nuclear weapons by the year 2000.

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(Mrs. Ramos-Shahani, Philippines)

In the light of this, the Philippines delegation welcomes in principle the serious consideration and further study of the proposal to abolish all military bases outside territories of States by the year 2000 at the latest, a proposal made by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev on the understanding that all concerned will respect the principles of non-intervention and the sovereignty of States. It would thus be appropriate to make the 1990s the Third Disarmament Decade, as was proposed last year and discussed in the Disarmament Commission.

Significantly, 1998 will mark the hundredth year of Filipino emancipation from, and culmination of our struggle against, a former colonial power on our shores. The Philippine Government is thus seeking at present to review arrangements for its defence and security in the twenty-first century.

Let it be said that the Philippines, situated as it is so strategically in the western Pacific and the South China Sea, sincerely wishes to contribute to the present positive environment brought about by the rapprochement between the two super-Powers and the progressive resolution of certain crucial regional conflicts.

Our region is now in search of new arrangements with which to approach the twenty-first century. With our neighbour Australia in the South, we are actively exploring the idea of a chemical-weapons-free zone in our region. We also advocate better control of the flow of conventional weapons, bearing in mind that most wars are carried on with those types of weapons.

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(Mrs. Ramos-Shahani, Philippines)

The Philippines is at present carrying out the goal stated in its Constitution:

"... consistent with the national interest, the Philippines determines to be free of nuclear weapons in its territory".

Together with our Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) neighbours, we continue to study the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia and the idea of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality. At the tenth meeting of the Asian Inter-Parliamentarians Union (AIPO) in Manila, in August 1989, a resolution of its General Assembly noted:

"that the eventual and orderly dismantling of all foreign military facilities/bases and the removal of nuclear weapons will greatly facilitate the early realization of the establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality and the South-East Asia nuclear-weapon-free territory zone. The Asian Inter-Parliamentarians Union nevertheless acknowledged that a declaration of neutrality alone cannot assure peace without the co-operation of the super-Powers".

In this connection, I should like to add that the Philippine Government will very soon start talks with the United States Government as regards the military bases Agreement, the status of which is defined in our Constitution as follows:

"After the expiration in 1991 of the Agreement between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America concerning military bases, foreign military bases, troops or facilities shall not be allowed in the Philippines except under a treaty duly concurred in by the Senate and, when the Congress so requires, ratified by a majority of the votes cast by the people in a national referendum held for that purpose, and recognized as a treaty by the other contracting Party."

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(Mrs. Ramos-Shahani, Philippines)

Our February 1986 revolution, which brought back democracy to our land, came barely in time to prevent the opening of a nuclear plant, which international experts have deemed unsafe, indeed dangerous, to operate.

Shortly after, the tragic effect of nuclear spillover throughout the world merely served to strengthen the anti-nuclear sentiment and the opposition in the Philippines towards the existence of nuclear weapons in the country.

Conscious of the dangers of nuclear warfare and of the need to maintain the territorial integrity of the country, the Senate of the Philippines has passed a bill which would

"ban the development, manufacture, acquisition, testing, use or storage of nuclear weapons, in any part of the Philippine territory and would also ban calls at Philippine ports or passage through Philippine waters by nuclear-powered ships or vessels capable of carrying nuclear weapons".

In a steadily growing public awareness, the Filipino people continue to manifest their will and articulate their attitude towards nuclear weapons. Various municipalities, cities and even, symbolically, schools have declared that purpose and have declared themselves nuclear-free zones. In the Philippines, during the traditional United Nations Disarmament Week in October each year, films on disarmament are televised, disarmament posters shown in schools and public buildings, and disarmament issues dramatized in schools and organizations with such activities as burying and burning toy weapons and toys which encourage war-like mentalities.

Indeed, a Legislative-Executive Bases Council has been formed by the Philippine Government of which I, as head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, am a member, to study the alternative uses of foreign military bases in the Philippines. There is thus a widespread public as well as government interest

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(Mrs. Ramos-Shahani, Philippines)

in the problem of conversion of these military facilities into economic enterprises which would bring economic well-being, particularly employment, to our people, and make the Philippines more competitive among its neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, alternative measures for regional and national security are being studied.

The Philippines looks with favour on developments in the Pacific, such as the strengthening of the régime of the Treaty of Rarotonga. It lauds the efforts of the countries in this region to live up to the letter and spirit of this accord. The Philippines also wishes to encourage respect for the integrity of the Constitution of the Republic of Palau. Like its Philippine counterpart, the Palau Constitution contains provisions which would make the country nuclear-free.

Turning west to the vital region of the Indian Ocean, we applaud the decision undertaken by Pakistan, as stated by Prime Minister Benezir Bhutto, not to develop nuclear weapons. We would hope that other countries in the region would also see fit to make similar declarations, thus bringing to reality the possibility of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean.

Thus far, the United Nations General Assembly has not been able to proceed with plans for the international Conference on the Indian Ocean in 1990. We would hope that the obstacles to this plan could be removed and that the Conference could be called at the earliest possible date.

We have seen that positive developments in the field of disarmament, and specifically nuclear disarmament, have come about as a result of the improved relations between the two super-Powers. After the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, the next positive development could be the realization of the announced intention by the United States and the USSR to cut strategic nuclear weapons by 50 per cent. The Philippine delegation hopes that

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(Mrs. Ramos-Shahani, Philippines)

the Asia and Pacific region will benefit from such an across-the-board cut, especially in the area of naval armaments.

We may well recall that the proposal to achieve disarmament by halting all nuclear-weapon tests in all environments for all time was also viewed as heretical at one time. Yet today it has achieved widespread currency. For this reason, some 41 countries, including the Philippines, have proposed that in 1990, before the Fourth Review Conference of the non-proliferation Treaty, a conference to amend the partial test-ban Treaty be held which would also ban nuclear weapons under ground as well as in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water.

Certainly, modern methods of verification have advanced to a degree where it will be possible to monitor all kinds of nuclear tests fully. The new era of openness, as manifested by the so-called open skies policy and frank admission of violations of the anti-ballistic missile Treaty by one of its parties, the spirit of co-operation of many nations in nuclear disarmament, and the novel intrusive methods of verification will all make it possible for us eventually to achieve a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

In this connection, my delegation recalls the proposal made by the Group of Six - supported by such countries as Japan and Australia - for an international system of monitoring and verification, drawing up the best available scientific and technological skills in the world. We would urge consideration of this idea by pertinent United Nations bodies as well as by the General Assembly.

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(Mrs. Ramos-Shahani, Philippines)

While my delegation has spoken at length on nuclear weapons, we must not forget that it is conventional and chemical weapons which have caused the most suffering in all the wars since the Second World War.

In January of this year the International Conference on Chemical Weapons, held in Paris, reaffirmed the need to put an effective ban on chemical weapons. It urged the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to conclude its work on a treaty which would ban the use of chemical weapons. In September, the Government and Industry Conference Against Chemical Weapons, held in Canberra, Australia, in which nearly 70 countries including the Philippines participated, was able to mobilize support from the private industrial sector. Similarly, the Conference supported the view that work on the major substantive issues in the Conference on Disarmament should be completed by 1990. We certainly hope that the last decade of this century will witness the banishment of this terrible weapon from our arsenals.

Regrettably, even though there has been a biological-weapons Convention since 1972, countries continue to pursue biological-weapons programmes, on the grounds that these are merely defensive. Until biological weapons finally come under civilian and international control, the world cannot be considered safe from this modern scourge.

Similarly, control of the spread of conventional weapons needs our attention. Such phenomena as the drug wars, the fuelling of internal rebellions, surrogate wars and low-intensity conflicts cannot be separated from the proliferation of conventional weapons.

Though the task may be gargantuan, a system must be found to control the flow of conventional weapons. At the very least, it must be possible to show and publicize which countries profit most from the production and export of conventional weapons and thus be answerable to the international community for their actions.

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(Mrs. Ramos-Shahani, Philippines)

Ultimately, we see that a local conflict, exacerbated by international interests, cannot be solved by one country alone but through the co-operation of all countries involved. We have seen that conflicts were abated in such places as Iran-Iraq and Namibia when it was decided to stop the flow of arms to those places. In Central America, the halting of the supply of arms to the contras and the holding of free elections promises a way out of the present conflict.

Today, disarmament must be approached from a different perspective. Disarmament cannot be separated from the other concerns which occupy us at this time. The international debt crisis, for instance, cannot be considered without also taking into account the enormous sums which have been devoted to the arms race.

The human rights issue cannot be considered without also thinking that freedom from nuclear weapons and from threats of annihilation by chemical, biological and conventional weapons - indeed the right to life itself - is a fundamental human right.

Concern for the environment cannot be separated from the fact that nuclear weapons constitute the greatest threat to it and that even now problems regarding locating nuclear weapons and disposing of their residues are also a major environmental concern.

Disarmament therefore can only be considered within the total context of security for the whole planet and for all generations to come. Hence we see that disarmament is but a thread in the web of issues that preoccupy nation-States in this age.

Let me conclude with two quotations: first, "Those who cannot think of a future are doomed to not having one"; second, "We must think of the Earth not as something we have inherited from our forefathers but as something we have borrowed from our grandchildren."

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Mr. HOU Zhitong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The question of banning chemical weapons has aroused great interest at the current session of the General Assembly. The Chinese delegation also wishes to present its views on the question.

It is an important objective of China's foreign policy of peace and a consistent stand of the Chinese Government to strive for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons at an early date throughout the world so that mankind can be freed, once and for all, from the harm and threat of this barbarous weapon of mass-destruction.

China is a non-chemical-weapon State. It does not possess or produce chemical weapons, nor does it export chemicals to be used for manufacturing chemical weapons. The Chinese people themselves were victims of such weapons in the past. Even now, chemical weapons left by foreign troops in times of war are still found from time to time on Chinese soil. Therefore, the Chinese people intensely detest chemical weapons and hope the same disaster will not befall the people of other countries. They are determined to make their own contributions in bringing about a world free of chemical weapons at an early date.

China has always attached great importance to, and taken an active part in, relevant multilateral international deliberations and the negotiations for a chemical weapons convention at the Conference on Disarmament, in Geneva. We are firmly opposed to both the use and the proliferation of chemical weapons, and have persisted in striving for the early conclusion of a convention on a global ban of chemical weapons, because this will be the most effective way completely to prohibit and thoroughly eradicate such weapons. Like the Chinese Government, the Chinese people from all walks of life, including the chemical industry, give unreserved support to the early realization of the objective of eliminating chemical weapons.

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(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

With the positive developments and changes in the international situation, this year will go down as a year of highly animated international activity and auspicious momentum on the question of banning chemical weapons.

The 1925 Geneva Protocol banning the use of chemical weapons is an international legal document of major current significance. But its authority has been challenged by the frequent use of such weapons. Furthermore, the recent modernization, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons has aroused the grave concern of the international community. It was under these circumstances that a high-level international conference on the banning of the use of chemical weapons was held last January in Paris, at France's initiative. The Chinese delegation, led by the Foreign Minister, actively participated in the conference's work. The conference adopted a Final Declaration on reaffirming the effectiveness of the Geneva Protocol, promoting negotiations for a chemical weapons convention and banning the use of such weapons, which was enthusiastically received by the international community. This undoubtedly constitutes a powerful political push for the multilateral international efforts towards a chemical weapons ban.

The early conclusion of a chemical weapons convention and its implementation require close co-operation and co-ordination from the chemical industries of all countries. Not long ago, at the initiative of Australia, the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons was held in Canberra. At the Conference were the representatives of the Chinese Government and chemical industry. Government representatives and representatives from chemical industries met and consulted with each other on ways to ban chemical weapons. This was indeed very helpful for realizing the objective of prohibiting chemical weapons.

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(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

We wish to express our appreciation to France and Australia for their initiatives and contributions.

The United Nations General Assembly, its First Committee and the Disarmament Commission have always regarded the question of banning chemical weapons as one of their priority items for deliberation. Many countries have advanced positive proposals and propositions in this respect. The Security Council and the Secretary-General have also taken some positive steps on the banning of chemical weapons. At the same time, progress has been made in some regional and bilateral efforts. Particularly in recent years, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has clearly quickened and deepened its negotiating process for a convention on the comprehensive ban of chemical weapons. Under the chairmanship of Ambassador Morel, the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has done a lot of work and makes steady progress. Their efforts deserve our commendation.

All this eloquently testifies to the urgency of a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons and to the firm determination of the international community thoroughly to eliminate those weapons. Actively supportive, the Chinese delegation has participated in these activities with a constructive approach, and has made its own efforts. We are pleased with the encouraging momentum that has emerged, and wish to express our appreciation to all the countries which have participated in those activities for their positive contributions.

We must not ignore the fact that there still remain some negative factors in international relations, and the causes of tension and conflict are yet to be removed. World peace and security continue to face a number of threats. Mankind still lives in the shadow of chemical warfare. The menace comes mainly from the huge modern chemical arsenals in the possession of a few big Powers. What is more ominous, they are stepping up the development and mass production of a new generation of chemical weapons. This has undoubtedly made it more difficult to ban

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(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

chemical weapons. It is obvious that the countries possessing the largest chemical arsenals should bear a special responsibility for banning chemical weapons. It has been noted lately that they have again made some statements of intent and put forward some proposals and propositions. However, what people would rather see is genuine and concrete actions from them, expecting those countries to destroy their existing chemical weapons and stop the production and development of those weapons soon so as to facilitate the conclusion of an international convention on a total ban of chemical weapons. In this respect, as the international community will agree, one practical action is better than a dozen fine statements.

The ancient Roman jurists once declared, Armis bella non venenis geri, that is, "War is to be waged with weapons, not with poison". Both history and reality have demonstrated that mankind needs neither poison nor the use of poison as a weapon, still less a war fought with chemical weapons. The complete elimination of chemical weapons and the establishment of a world free of such weapons has become an imperative of our times. Any formula that is designed to solve only a part of this problem can hardly free mankind from its harm and threat. Only the early conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons can ensure the most fundamental way for the eradication of this threat; and only in this way can the problems of proliferation and the use of chemical weapons be resolved. It is China's sincere hope that a global, comprehensive, verifiable, just and reasonable international convention will be concluded at the earliest possible date.

Pending the conclusion of such a convention, we maintain that all chemical-weapon States should undertake not to use such weapons. All countries that have the ability to produce chemical weapons should pledge not to engage in the development, production and transfer of chemical weapons. This will help move

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(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

forward the process of negotiation for an international convention on chemical weapons at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The convention on chemical weapons, in our view, should aim primarily at the complete prohibition and destruction of existing chemical weapons and their production facilities and at ways to ensure against the manufacture of new chemical weapons. To ensure the authority and effectiveness of that convention, we have consistently advocated the stipulation of strict, effective, reasonable and practicable measures of verification, including challenge inspection. At the same time, as explicitly stated in the principle of verification adopted by consensus at the Disarmament Commission: "care" should be "taken to avoid abuses"; and it is necessary to "avoid unduly interfering with the internal affairs of States parties or other States, or jeopardizing their economic, technological and social development"; and verification should be "without discrimination" and "All States have equal rights to participate in the process of international verification of agreements to which they are parties" (A/S-15/3, p. 45). It is therefore understandable that the developing countries, while undertaking obligations to accept verification, ask that they enjoy equal rights to participate in verification, as well as access to the capacity and means for exercising such rights.

As verification touches directly on the sovereignty, internal affairs, security and economic rights and interests of all countries, a serious and earnest attitude is needed in order to handle this question properly. All parties are urged to seek a fair, reasonable and balanced solution through extensive consultations.

The task of a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons, which we have set out to fulfil, is a formidable one. We have already made some headway, but are still

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(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

faced with some complicated problems. However, we are convinced that, in the present favourable international situation, so long as all countries have the political will and demonstrate good faith and a strong sense of responsibility, we shall be able to realize this objective. The Chinese delegation will, as always, join all the other delegations in a continued and persistent endeavour for the early attainment of this noble objective.

Mr. TAIANA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): We are very pleased to see that the international community is continuing in its resolve to follow the promising path of détente and of the search for understanding, a fact which heralds the dawn of a new era in international relations.

The political rapprochement initiated by the major Powers has increased the possibilities for co-operation between the two military alliances and has opened the way for encouraging steps to be taken towards the solution of old conflicts in different regions of the world.

The special dynamics of those developments have created such a rapid pace of historic events that it is becoming particularly difficult to forecast forthcoming events reliably, even in the short term. Nevertheless, countries are fully aware that, as the changes become deeper, this new reality will continue to solidify and become irreversible.

In a world facing an increasingly evident political, economic, social, cultural and ecological interdependence, no nation can afford to remain indifferent. On the contrary, it must act and speak its mind responsibly and in a constructive spirit.

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(Mr. Taiana, Argentina)

Deeply convinced of the validity of these ideas, Latin America is striving to formulate concrete steps that would reflect the far-reaching trends that are becoming noticable in the international arena. Within the framework of the important sacrifices being made by our countries to improve their economies and to achieve better and more edifying standards of living for their peoples, they are, in most cases, consolidating a healthy process of democratic renovation of their governments, while endeavouring to protect the human rights and individual freedoms of their citizens. Not only is the Republic of Argentina an active participant in these processes of renewal, but it has also tried to contribute to the general climate of international détente. The steps that we have taken recently to bring about a gradual solution to our differences with the United Kingdom are an eloquent and concrete expression of the constructive spirit that inspires the actions of my Government.

In order to make further progress it will be absolutely necessary for every country to make contributions in which imagination and flexibility will be appropriately blended with the necessary political will to produce concrete results. The efforts being made, for example, at both the bilateral and the multilateral level on matters of disarmament and international security must complement and influence each other in such a way as to reinforce the process leading to global understandings.

In this context, negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States on reduction of strategic weapons (START) have continued throughout the past year, but apparently not at the same pace as when they first began. As we see it, none of the difficulties advanced to justify that situation is insurmountable, especially in view of the open and positive response given by both sides to the

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(Mr. Taiana, Argentina)

question of verification, proof of which is the successful implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.

We therefore welcome the mutual conviction which resulted from the recent meeting in Wyoming at the Foreign Ministers' level that the START process must be given new momentum. However, we cannot fail to note that, were that to happen, even then the super-Powers would still possess truly impressive stockpiles. At the same time, three other States which possess these weapons of mass destruction have not yet joined the negotiating process towards achieving nuclear disarmament.

On the other hand, the lack of progress in respect of the reduction and cessation of nuclear-weapon tests - a question that bears a direct relation to nuclear disarmament - conspires against the new climate of détente. The international community is fully aware of the fact that if such tests continue, nuclear stockpiles will keep on expanding and new types of weapons and weapon systems will continue to be developed. Given these circumstances, we urge all States members of the Conference on Disarmament to put forth their best efforts to establish an appropriate framework for negotiations which will allow progress towards a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is another priority area both at the bilateral and at the multilateral negotiating level. Argentina has repeatedly stated that outer space should be an arena for international co-operation dedicated to the economic, social and cultural development of mankind. We do not in any way deny the importance of outer space for global stability and security. We recognize that communications, command and control, and early warning systems contribute to minimizing the risks resulting from the existence of massive stockpiles on Earth. Nevertheless, we firmly oppose the idea of military competition in outer space, the developments and results of which are totally unforeseeable.

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(Mr. Taiana, Argentina)

On the bilateral level, while the United States and the Soviet Union have decided, in an attempt to give momentum to the strategic arms process, to put aside their differences on space and defence, which we find positive, we are, at the same time, deeply concerned at the lack of progress towards stopping the continuing militarization of outer space. For this reason, our country believes that the work of the Conference on Disarmament, through its Ad Hoc Committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, is of fundamental importance not only in bringing positions closer together on controversial issues, but also in making progress in concrete negotiations.

Furthermore, the central role and the primary responsibilty of the United Nations in the field of disarmament is nowhere more evident than in the matter of the complete prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. Multilateral efforts, which have been carried out for over two decades, permit us to affirm today that it will be possible in the short term to conclude a universal, non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction. However, in order to make that possible, it will be necessary for States to translate into facts the political will that was expressed at the Paris Conference of January this year and their practical will announced at the recent Canberra Conference, namely, to conclude as soon as possible the negotiations on the Conference on Disarmament.

The Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries recently held at Belgrade adopted a Declaration which once again shows the will of the Movement to contribute to the process of détente. The Declaration highlights the promising events of the present time without

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(Mr. Taiana, Argentina)

disregarding the fact that situations persist which should be changed. Indeed, in spite of the gradual reduction of tensions on our planet, it is not yet a safe place. However, there is the widespread belief and will that we should build a world based on greater democratization in decision-making, which should entail changes in the political structures that were formed after the Second World War.

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(Mr. Taiana, Argentina)

Solutions for the numerous problems of mankind can only be found by tackling its real causes and acting in a concerted way. Multilateralism offers the means to produce permanent and effective answers. The United Nations role in the peaceful settlement of disputes around the world is a clear demonstration of the Organization's enormous potential in this and other fields. In an interdependent world the security of some countries cannot be achieved through the insecurity of others. The United Nations is therefore the appropriate forum in which to settle differences and to strengthen areas of agreement in order to build a peaceful world.

Mr. NYAKYI (United Republic of Tanzania): May I begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation in seeing you, Mr. Chairman, preside over the work of our Committee. Your election is a well-deserved recognition of your vast experience and diplomatic skills demonstrated in the course of many years of participation in disarmament negotiations and deliberations. I wish also to extend my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau.

It is gratifying to note that the Committee is meeting once again at a time of sustained momentum towards achieving the noble goals of disarmament, peace and security. The commitment demonstrated by the two major Powers - the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - in the last two years in defusing international tension, and particularly their joint resolve to rid our planet of nuclear weapons, needs to be commended. The follow-up implementation of the INF Treaty is indeed a welcome development. We are equally gratified that the leaders of the two Powers have announced before this body their plans and mutual obligations for the immediate destruction of their stocks of chemical weapons prior to the conclusion of a multilateral treaty banning those weapons. At the same time we welcome their readiness to cut their strategic weapons by 50 per cent. The progress made in the Vienna talks on conventional forces in Europe is another welcome development.

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(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

While we welcome these bilateral measures we should not succumb to euphoria and in the process lose sight of our ultimate objective - namely, the achievement of general and complete disarmament. It is no secret to anyone who has closely followed the current negotiations that the more the nuclear Powers, particularly the super-Powers, talk about arms reduction and disarmament, the more they increase and perfect their respective military capabilities, including nuclear power. Nuclear tests, whose main objective is to modernize and make their nuclear arsenals more lethal, have to date continued unabated. The reports of the Secretary-General before us on the notifications of nuclear tests received from some members bear testimony to this. The INF Treaty has been rightly hailed by all peace-loving nations and peoples around the world as a landmark for curbing the arms race. But no sooner had the ink used to sign it dried than some forces were already planning the modernization and updating of existing nuclear weapons not covered by the Treaty to "compensate" for what the Treaty seeks to eliminate. Above all, the Treaty does not require the United States or the Soviet Union to destroy the nuclear warheads that are carried by the missiles covered by the INF Treaty.

In the absence of a comprehensive agreement that requires the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons, including nuclear warheads, mankind will continue to live under the shadow of a nuclear holocaust. The establishment of secure peace requires the display of a new political thinking, a new approach and a new sense of realism regarding the issues of war and peace. Albert Einstein rightly observed that the "unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking, and we thus drift towards unparalleled catastrophes".

The clinging to doctrines such as nuclear deterrence of the nuclear Powers certainly diminishes the faith and hope which the international community may have derived from the current wave of negotiations. The argument that nuclear

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deterrence has maintained world peace since the Second World War is a fallacy which has to be rejected as dangerous. It has been said, and indeed it has not been disputed by any parties, that the outbreak of a nuclear war - either by accident or by miscalculation - in the present state of armament would be disastrous for the entire human race since there would be no survivors. This underlines the significance of the 1985 super-Power declaration that "a nuclear war cannot be won and therefore should never be fought".

Those who place conventional disarmament on the same plane as nuclear disarmament have more often argued that since 1945 all wars fought, including regional and internal conflicts, have been fought with conventional weapons. This argument, though valid in terms of events, does not make nuclear weapons any safer. The 1980 United Nations Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons clearly revealed that technological advances have made it possible for one nuclear weapon to release in one micro-second more energy than the total amount released from all conventional weapons in all wars in history.

Jonathan Schell, a well-known writer and campaigner for nuclear disarmament, in his book The Fate of the Earth has described nuclear weapons in these words:

> "These bombs were built as 'weapons' for 'war,' but their significance greatly transcends war and all its causes and outcomes. They grew out of history, yet they threaten to end history. They were made by men, yet they threaten to annihilate man."

This statement if anything underscores the urgent need for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament therefore remains a high priority and should not in any way be held hostage to conventional-weapons reduction or balance.

A major step towards ridding the world of nuclear weapons and the catastrophic consequences of their use is the halting of all nuclear tests. To seek to achieve

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the cessation of all nuclear tests for many of us is the only logical and feasible way of putting an end to the development and stockpiling of new types of nuclear arsenals. Logic tells us that without testing and modernization these weapons will eventually become obsolete and useless.

The conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty is the only popularly accepted mechanism which will ultimately lead to the scrapping of stockpiled nuclear systems. It was on the basis of this strong conviction that more than 40 nations, parties to the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty, including Tanzania, have jointly called for an amendment conference seeking to convert that Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The recently concluded Belgrade Summit of the Non-Aligned Countries has given further credence to this initiative by endorsing the holding of such a conference as early as possible in 1990.

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(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

It is regrettable that some Powers see the initaitive as a misguided effort. We ask those Powers if pursuing a path towards self-extinction is the logical step towards preserving the human race.

The sluggishness of progress in the United Nations multilateral bodies entrusted with the task of deliberating and negotiating disarmament issues needs special mention here. As much as the major Powers expect the rest of the world to accept and endorse their bilateral arrangements, they have a corresponding obligation to listen to and respect the views of the world community. The United Nations provides us with a forum in which to foster such co-operation in the pursuit of international peace and security where all States can be heard on an equal basis. Tanzania, like many others, has more often than not stated that progress in bilateral negotiations should not in any way hinder progress in multilateral bodies which represent the interests of all mankind.

My delegation has read the report of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament - the only single multilateral negotiating body - and that of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and we were disappointed by both. Regrettably, negotiations on all nuclear disarmament items listed on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament as priority items have to date not taken off the ground in view of the obstinate positions of some of the nuclear Powers and their allies. The only area where some progress is said to have been registered is the negotiations for a chemical weapons convention. But here again, the draft text of the convention annexed to the report of the Conference on Disarmament in document A/44/27 leaves much to be desired. The momentum generated at the Paris Conference held in January this year did not apparently permeate through to the negotiations in Geneva as anticipated. It is obvious that behind the technical reasons advanced is the lack of trust and the necessary political will. In the wake of

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technological advances, the question of verification certainly no longer constitutes a major obstacle to achieving a total ban of chemical weapons or a nuclear-test ban for that matter.

The state of affairs in the United Nations Disarmament Commission is equally disappointing. When introducing the Commission's report, the Chairman candidly stated that lack of progress in that body was again a matter of political will on the part of some member States. We have indeed witnessed the obstructive efforts by some influential members of this body to frustrate progress on certain agenda items which touch on their interests. One of these is the issue of South African nuclear-weapon capability. Owing to the position of the Powers which have assisted South Africa to acquire its present nuclear capability, the Disarmament Commission has been prevented for the last 10 years from alerting the Security Council, through the General Assembly, of the threat that will be posed to international peace and security in the event the racist, oppressive and aggressive régime in its desperation resorts to the use of nuclear weapons. Despite several United Nations reports and public statements by leaders of the Pretoria régime that South Africa has the capability to produce nuclear weapons if it so desires, these countries have continued to shield the régime.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean is another subsidiary body of the General Assembly which has suffered several setbacks. In the history of the work of the Committee, the same Powers that have blocked progress in other multilateral bodies have frustrated all efforts to convene an international conference that would enable implementation of the 1971 Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The Indian Ocean continues to hold potential for big-Power conflict. We hope that in the new climate reason will prevail so that the Conference can take place in 1990, as scheduled by the General Assembly.

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(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

My delegation would therefore not support any move aimed at deleting any items from the agenda of United Nations bodies for lack of progress or under the guise of rationalizing the work of those bodies. What we should all aim at is the strengthening of those bodies and not erosion of their effectiveness. If there is political determination to see that these bodies work, then nothing can stop us from making progress.

The non-proliferation Treaty has been hailed by many as the most important multilateral legal instrument ever concluded in disarmament efforts. Some have even gone further to suggest that the Treaty has greatly contributed to international peace and stability.

The non-proliferation Treaty, as we all know, has certainly not stopped the continual and massive growth in the number, size and variety of nuclear weapons in the hands of the nuclear-weapon States. The Treaty certainly does not guarantee the safety of the non-nuclear-weapon States nor does it guarantee that the nuclear States will not use nuclear weapons against each other. It has not prevented the nuclear Powers from assisting countries outside the Treaty in the acquisition of military nuclear capability. The acquisition by South Africa of nuclear capability is a case in point.

The Treaty, in short, as many have rightly described it, "disarms the unarmed and does not disarm the armed". It is unrealistic to ask other nations to exercise restraint if there is no restraint among the nuclear Powers. In order to ensure universal acceptance and consequently the survival of the non-proliferation Treaty, the nuclear Powers should demonstrate a serious commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. How are we to react to the appeals to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty if the same Powers, while tying the hands of the "unarmed"

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perpetuate their nuclear power monopoly, leaving the rest of the world at their mercy? These are the considerations which Tanzania feels should be taken into account when the Treaty comes up for a fourth review at the Geneva Conference next year.

The prevention of the militarization of outer space calls for our collective responsibility, for outer space as a common heritage of mankind belongs to all of us. We cannot therefore sit back as mere spectators when the survival of mankind is increasingly put into jeopardy. Tanzania therefore joins others in calling for multilateral negotiations in this area and the conclusion of a more binding legal régime that would reduce and ultimately eliminate the risk of military confrontation. Outer space should therefore be used for the benefit of all and not for the destruction of humanity.

Today, in spite of arms reduction and disarmament talks, the world has continued to witness unprecedented massive expenditures on deadly weapons while the majority of the world's population continues to live under conditions of abject poverty, starvation and endemic diseases. The urgent need to alleviate the plight of these people and to achieve sustainable development through disarmament measures led to the convening of the historic Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development two years ago. The Conference, among other things, unanimously adopted a programme of action that was to serve as a blueprint in the implementation of its objectives.

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(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

Regrettably, that Action Programme has yet to get off the ground. The report of the Secretary-General (A/44/449) of 14 September 1989, on the specific activities undertaken to implement the Action Programme leaves no doubt that much remains to be done. In their Declaration issued on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the launching of the Six-Nation Initiative, the members of the Initiative, in which Tanzania participated, drew the attention of the international community to the fact that:

> "... disarmament is not just about ceilings and conventions, warheads and launchers, even treaties and resolutions. It is about people and about the waste of human and material resources now being devoted to weapons of mass destruction. Poverty and hunger, disease and unemployment stalk vast sections of humanity. These are issues too urgent to neglect." (A/44/318, p. 4)

This, indeed, is what should guide us in our endeavours to achieve general and complete disarmament.

In conclusion, let me state that the measures taken so far in the field of disarmament, though limited, have demonstrated that, given political determination, no problem is insurmountable. We have no doubt that general and complete disarmament is not only possible: it is also the only rational choice. As my Foreign Minister, His Excellency Mr. Benjamin Mkapa, stated before the General Assembly on 4 October this year:

> "All men everywhere yearn for peace and their fate cannot be left exclusively in the hands of a few countries, even though they be the most powerful." (A/44/PV.20, p. 45)

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(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

It is on this basis that we call for the strengthening of multilateral approaches to issues of peace and security for all mankind. I wish to assure you of my delegation's full co-operation in this endeavour.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

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