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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 23rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MASHHADI (Islamic Republic of Iran) (Vice-Chairman)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Mashhadi (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

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

AGENDA ITEMS 49 TO 69 AND 151 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana): If we have sought to speak in this debate, it is not because of any particular expertise in disarmament matters but rather because of a determination to assert the interest of a small country such as mine in this vital question. As has been so aptly said, disarmament is too important a subject to be left to the nuclear Powers; it must be the concern of all States, irrespective of their size. We would therefore wish to be heard on those issues affecting our welfare and to ensure that our security is not held hostage to the military superiority of others.

Let me say at the outset that notwithstanding our unfailing support of the disarmament process, global stability can best be achieved by the collective system envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations. Article 1, paragraph 4, of the Charter clearly stipulates that the world Organization should be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of their common ends. That responsibility is only proper since the United Nations, based as it is on the democratic principle of the equality of States, is ideally suited to the task. Its role in the field of disarmament must therefore be paramount if genuine and lasting progress is to be made towards a régime of peace and security.

This concept of collective security, as delineated in the Charter, is not restricted to disarmament. It is premised rather on the establishment of a universal and comprehensive peace which encompasses every facet of mankind's existence. We should therefore be committing a grave error were we to look at the issue of security through the narrow prism of disarmament. Global security cannot

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be judged from the level of possession of armaments of death and destruction but rather from the political, economic and social equilibrium which can be achieved in international relations.

Thus, while the arms race may be both a cause and a consequence of prevailing insecurity, there are other non-military threats to world peace and security such as poverty, disease, drugs and environmental degradation which, though perhaps not as alarming as nuclear war, are potentially just as explosive and destructive. Even the nuclear States are not immune to their ravages and can wither away and die as easily as the smallest State. The time has therefore come to reassess our approach to the question of disarmament to see why it has thus far failed to produce significant results; to see whether, as the French would say, the game is in fact worth the candle. It will be quickly realized, we feel, that disarmament cannot occur in a vacuum; its success requires an international environment in which a sense of security prevails.

To appreciate the complex and complicated nature of the problem, one has only to read any recent study on the interrelation of issues on the global agenda. One such report, "Our Common Future", published two years ago by the World Commission on Environment and Development, in concluding that the possibility of a nuclear war was one of the greatest dangers facing the environment, advocated a multilateral endeavour to minimize the risk of such a catastrophe.

It may be apposite to quote here the observation made in the report in this connection:

"The existence of nuclear weapons and the destructive potential inherent in the velocity and intensity of modern conventional warfare have given rise to a new understanding of the requirements for security among nations. In the nuclear age, nations can no longer obtain security at each other's expense. They must seek security through co-operation, agreements and mutual restraint;

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they must seek common security. Hence interdependence, which is so fundamental in the realm of environment and economics, is a fact also in the sphere of arms competition and military security. Interdependence has become a compelling fact, forcing nations to reconcile their approach to 'security'." (A/42/427, p. 290)

Just as persuasive are the findings and conclusions of the Group of Consultant Experts on the climatic and other global effects of nuclear war, which were presented to the General Assembly last year. That report should dispel once and for all whatever illusions we may have had on the value of nuclear weapons. The many consequences of nuclear testing could be truly devastating. In the event of an actual exchange, the recovery of the planet, even in the long term, would be highly uncertain, so that while today we struggle to preserve the environment for sustainable development, with the existence of nuclear weapons we run the risk sooner or later of destroying the planet.

It is most assuredly this latter realization that has impelled the two super-Powers - the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - to reach agreement on limiting their intermediate nuclear forces and now to search for other areas of weapons reduction. It is devoutly to be hoped that their continuing bilateral arms negotiations will soon lead to agreement on a 50 per cent reduction in their strategic nuclear arsenals. We must, however, urge the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to go even further and translate their entente into specific action which would allow disarmament to spread even further. Their co-operation could be epitomized by concluding, at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, work on the chemical weapons convention; by pursuing, with a sense of urgency, a comprehensive test-ban treaty as the highest priority step towards nuclear disarmament and by breaking the impasse on those issues within the

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Conference on Disarmament upon which no negotiating mandates have been agreed in terms of the setting up of ad hoc bodies.

It is at the same time regrettable that while nuclear States may be prepared to abandon so-called obsolete weapons systems, many are still in active pursuit of the qualitative improvements of armaments and the development of new systems through the application of technological innovations to military purposes. The creation of more sophisticated armaments can have a potentially destabilizing impact on the security environment and thus represents a major challenge to the cause of disarmament. General Assembly resolution 43/77 A, which we supported last year, alluded to such a danger. More and more, technological developments rapidly outstrip the pace of arms negotiations, thereby rendering meaningless whatever progress might be made in arms limitation. We therefore echo the call made by the Foreign Ministers of the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at their meeting in Harare last May, for a curb on the development of a new generation of weapons and for global measures to ensure that scientific and technological achievements be applied exclusively to peaceful ends.

We are also concerned at the lack of progress on the comprehensive test-ban treaty. It is now more than a quarter of a century since the three parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water (partial test-ban Treaty) stated their intention of:

"Seeking to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time ...".

Although this resolve was reaffirmed in the preamble to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the pace of United States-Soviet bilateral negotiations on nuclear testing would seem to suggest that the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban remains a distant goal. At the multilateral level, the Conference on Disarmament has not even established a working group or an ad hoc

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committee, much less conducted negotiations on this issue. Because we regard a comprehensive test-ban treaty as the highest priority, we whole-heartedly support the amendment Conference on the partial test-ban Treaty to be held next year. It is our expectation that this Conference will serve as a catalyst for advancing discussions in the right direction.

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We are equally worried by the continuing trend of nuclear proliferation. With the accelerated race to join the nuclear consortium, the danger of further erosion of the nuclear non-proliferation régime is considerably heightened. In this context we seriously advocate the establishment, wherever feasible, of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Such zones, we believe, help to deter the spread of nuclear weapons and promote wider nuclear disarmament. With that in mind my delegation last year supported resolution 43/62 on the Treaty of Tlatelolco, despite the Treaty's exclusionary clause in article 25, paragraph 2. We would hope that that statutory impediment will shortly be removed to allow for full adherence to and participation in the Treaty. In the same vein we regret the spread of the arms race to other arenas of competition. The dangers of the militarization of outer space and of naval armaments must be addressed with a sense of urgency.

While the international community cannot be satisfied with less than swift and total disarmament, there are some interim measures which, if implemented, could be reassuring for small States in terms of their own concern for security. Steps could, for example, be taken to obviate threats of aggression against their sovereignty and territorial integrity. In our statement in this Committee last year we adverted to the dangers of illicit arms trafficking. The risks are now compounded by the growing phenomenon of illicit drug trafficking, which is so organized and powerful that the authority of many States - some not so small - is gravely undermined. Given the limitation of human and financial resources those countries face, they can ill afford to provide for their defence against these new forms of aggression. In such circumstances the international community has an obligation to create machinery upon which threatened States can rely in times of need. There is much merit in the proposal of a multinational force to provide such assistance under United Nations auspices.

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We wish again to voice our support for the idea of compiling a United Nations register of arms transfers to monitor scrupulously such transactions. Such a step, along with agreement on the reduction of military budgets without prejudice to the right of all States to undiminished security, self-defence and sovereignty, could serve as an important confidence-building measure. They are the type of measures which, by providing greater openness and transparency in military matters, could pave the way to more substantial disarmament. We therefore await the study on promoting transparency in international transfers of conventional arms mandated by resolution 43/75 I.

We also trust that the Disarmament Commission will at its 1990 session be able to reach a consensus on the principles which should govern the freezing and reduction of military budgets. All States have an obligation to exercise restraint in their military expenditures but above all the nuclear-weapon States, which bear the major responsibility in this regard. As reflected in the statistics published in the Report on World Military and Social Expenditures, security concerns are impelling States more and more to spend inordinate sums of money in a desperate attempt to protect themselves from perceived threats of aggression. More often than not, however, those efforts cannot provide effective deterrence.

In the light of this we would like to believe that the link between disarmament and development will be fully and finally accepted. Burdened as we are in the third world by the problems of underdevelopment, we would welcome the diversion of resources released as a result of disarmament to assist us in overcoming our current economic difficulties. We would wish also to be spared the dilemma of deciding whether our own limited resources should go towards the betterment of our peoples on the one hand or to their protection and security on

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the other. Progress in disarmament, the lowering of tension and the peaceful resolution of disputes would release us from that cruel decision and allow us to concentrate entirely on our developmental efforts.

So far as the threat of nuclear weapons is concerned, small States remain at the mercy of the nuclear Powers; hence our call for the institution of effective measures to ensure our security against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. As a non-aligned country Guyana has maintained that, pending nuclear disarmament, nuclear-weapon States have an obligation to grant such assurances in a legally binding form. We therefore urge the Conference on Disarmament to continue its debate on the scope, substance, form and nature of such security guarantees at its next session.

We must emphasize, however, that such an assurance should be regarded merely as one step towards nuclear disarmament and not as an end in itself. Along with other measures - such as a unilateral pledge of non-first-use of nuclear weapons, the institution of a nuclear freeze, the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various regions and the termination of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes - it could build some confidence and serve to strengthen the non-proliferation régime.

That, in summary, is how we see our disarmament agenda. I wish, however, to reiterate the point I made at the beginning of my statement: that these specific areas of disarmament cannot be treated and seen in isolation; they must be considered simultaneously with the idea and the thesis of a collective security system which renders national military structures unnecessary and obsolete. Otherwise we shall never be able to see the wood for the trees and we will be lost in a maze of endless discussions.

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It remains the responsibility of this Committee, which is primarily concerned with the political question of disarmament, to orient our activities in the right direction. We are confident that under our Chairman's able guidance it will not fail to do so. His expertise, which we have come to know and admire, will undoubtedly provide the impetus and coherence which are so essential to the success of our efforts.

We are but one year away from the close of the Second Disarmament Decade. The results we have to show for our work thus far are very meagre. Time is therefore not our best ally; while complacency is in fact our worst enemy. As was so well put by an eminent statesman in the United States:

"Our minds have adjusted to it," - that is to the existence of nuclear weapons - "as after a time our eyes adjust to the dark. Yet the risk of a nuclear conflagration has not lessened. It has not happened yet, but that can give us little comfort, for it only has to happen once."

We must therefore open our minds and act to prevent such an unthinkable eventuality.

Mr. ZIPPORI (Israel): Permit me on this occasion of my first statement in the debate to express my most sincere congratulations to Mr. Taylhardat on his election as Chairman of the First Committee. Our past experience of working with him in the Committee assures me that our work will proceed efficiently under his able direction. I should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the other officers of the Committee.

With regard to the items on our agenda I should like to refer first to the question of chemical weapons.

I cannot help but express satisfaction that since we last met there has been no use of chemical weapons anywhere in the world, and especially not in the Middle

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East. This past year has seen two major international events, namely, the Paris and Canberra conferences, which mobilized world opinion to be more active in striving for international legal instruments which could be more effective in achieving a total ban on those nefarious weapons.

We understand that some progress has also been made in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons in the negotiation of a convention on chemical weapons. Unfortunately, in spite of our request to participate in the work of the Conference on Disarmament and especially in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, the necessary consensus required was not achieved - and that despite the fact that all the members of the Conference on Disarmament participated in the Paris Conference and accepted the Final Declaration of the Conference, adopted on 11 January 1989, which called on the Conference on Disarmament to open its deliberations to all interested States. Israel intends to renew its request to participate in the work of the Conference, as is its right as a Member of the United Nations.

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At the third special session devoted to disarmament, in June 1988, the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Yitzhak Shamir, made the following statement:

"Deriving from Israel's deep concern for the peace and safety of our region and that of the world generally, we would make the following proposal. We believe it is essential for the nations of our region to establish a chemical-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, on the basis of arrangements to be arrived at freely among all the States of the region. In such a manner we might safeguard the mutual security of our peoples as well as the security of the entire region and thus make a major contribution to the cause of world peace." (A/S-15/PV.11, p. 81)

Later he stated that the international community

"must rapidly and resolutely conclude the protracted negotiations on a convention that would remove chemical weapons from the arsenals of nations, and must devise a mechanism of inspection that would assure universal compliance. (supra, p. 82)

In our statement during last year's general debate we stated:

"With regard to the ongoing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the drafting of a comprehensive convention for the total elimination of chemical weapons, my delegation, at the special session, suggested the possibility of exploring the use of a regional approach, not instead of a comprehensive treaty but as a supplementary agreement which might be useful in solving some of the problems that might arise in ensuring universal adherence". (A/C.1/43/PV.22, p. 28)

We fully support these positions.

We are pleased to note that some industrial countries have tightened up their export controls over chemical precursors and know-how. Unfortunately, other

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countries have shown an astonishing disregard for the possible consequences of their export of dangerous substances.

Israel calls on all countries, industrial and developing, which have a chemical industry to co-operate in order to deny to countries which are engaged in building up a chemical warfare capacity the know-how, and raw materials they need.

It would be unfortunate to lose time until the convention comes into force, while the proliferation of these deadly weapons continues. Thus effective immediate steps must be taken to curtail and stop the trade in these materials.

Groups such as the Australian group should be strengthened and extended, sanctions against countries evading their responsibility should be explored.

In most other fields of disarmament these past months have seen a continuation of the progress made in recent years. First and foremost, and perhaps most important for world peace, the two super-Powers have continued their fruitful exchange and new bilateral agreements have been reached not only with regard to chemical weapons but also in their full-scale stage-by-stage negotiations on nuclear testing. The strategic arms reduction talks have also been renewed keeping alive prospects of substantial reductions in nuclear weapons in the coming decade.

The negotiations on conventional forces in Europe being held in Vienna between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact countries and the unilateral acts of force reduction carried out by various European countries offer great hope for the future. However, this hopeful situation can only contrast starkly with the situation in other areas, especially the Middle East.

The arms race in the Middle East continues unabated. According to the 1988 Stockholm International Peace and Research Institute directory the four leading Arab countries, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria, spent a total of \$41,748 million between 1983 and 1987 on the purchase of arms. In 1988 alone these four countries bought weapons for a total of \$5,882 million. All these countries,

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with the exception of Egypt, are still in a state of war with Israel. Other countries, such as Libya, have defence budgets of over \$1 billion per year.

The Arab Middle East is supplied with arms by all the permanent members of the Security Council. As long ago as 1967 the late United States President Lyndon Johnson, in a statement before the General Assembly, referring to the arms race as it was then, stated:

"Here the responsibility must rest not only on those in the area but upon the larger States outside the area. We believe that the scarce resources could be used much better for technical and economic development."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said in his address at the third special session, already quoted:

"The arms race is dangerous and costly to us all. Acquisition of arms by one side will only precipitate efforts by the other to acquire more arms. Have we not realized that this cycle is endless; that its price is exorbitantly high, that it will provide no answer to the malaise of our region, and that the security of all States in the region can be assured at much lower levels of armaments?" (A/S-15/PV.11, p. 79-80)

It was against this background of ever-growing and menacing armouries and the growing threat of chemical weapons that the Prime Minister of Israel announced the Government of Israel's peace initiative. There are four points in this initiative.

First, Israel views as important that the peace between Israel and Egypt, based on the Camp David Accords, will serve as a corner-stone for enlarging the circle of peace in the region, and calls for a common endeavour for the strengthening of the peace and its extension through continued consultation.

Secondly, Israel calls for the establishment of peaceful relations between it and those Arab States which still maintain a state of war with it, for the purpose

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of promoting a comprehensive settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict, including recognition, direct negotiations, ending the boycott, diplomatic relations, cessation of hostile activity in international institutions or forums and regional and bilateral co-operation.

Thirdly, Israel calls for an international endeavour to resolve the problem of the residents of the Arab refugee camps in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district in order to improve their living conditions and to rehabilitate them. Israel is prepared to be a partner in this endeavour.

Fourthly, in order to advance the political negotiation process leading to peace, Israel proposes free and democratic elections among the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district in an atmosphere devoid of violence, threats and terror. In these elections representation will be chosen to conduct negotiations for a transitional period of self-rule. This period will constitute a test for coexistence and co-operation. At a later stage, negotiations will be conducted for a permanent solution during which all the proposed options for an agreed settlement will be examined, and peace between Israel and Jordan will be achieved.

All the above-mentioned steps should be dealt with simultaneously.

While some movement is under way with regard to relations with Egypt, improving living conditions of residents of the refugee camps and arranging elections of representatives of the Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, nothing at all has happened with regard to establishing peaceful relations with our neighbours. In fact, the attitude of these States towards peace was demonstrated when all the Arab representatives, with one exception, walked out rather than listen to Israel's Foreign Minister invite them to peace talks; this position was in evidence again in what has become an annual ritual, namely, the

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Arab group's attempt to call into question the credentials of the Israeli delegation.

With regard to the question of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, Israel's position is unchanged. This was stated most authoritatively by Prime Minister Shamir in his address at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, when he stated:

"As early as 1980 we proposed in the General Assembly of the United Nations the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, based on free and direct negotiations between the States of the region. We did so in addition to our repeated declaration that Israel would not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East. Such zones have been established in Latin America by direct negotiations among the countries of the region. And recently the States of the South Pacific reached a similar agreement in the same manner. The mode of negotiating these agreements and the mutual assurances built into them, are vital components in establishing and maintaining such nuclear-weapon-free zones". (supra, p. 76)

Such a nuclear-weapon-free zone would by its very nature provide full and satisfactory answers to the question of full-scope safeguards

In General Assembly resolution 43/65 the Secretary-General has been requested:

"to undertake a study on effective and verifiable measures which would facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, taking into account the circumstances and characteristics of the Middle East, as well as the views and the suggestions of the parties of the region, and to submit this study to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session."

(A/RES/43/65, para. 8)

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The Government of Israel is co-operating fully with the Secretary-General and the consultants he has appointed to assist him in carrying out this task.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, it is written:

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven;

...

"... a time of war, and a time of peace." (The Holy Bible,  
Ecclesiastes 3: 1,8)

It is the time for peace, and not for war, in the Middle East.

Mr. SUJKA (Poland): On 26 and 27 October in the capital of my country, the meeting of the Foreign Ministers' Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty was held. As a result of the deliberations a communiqué was issued which expresses the views of participants on crucial problems of co-operation, security, disarmament, as well as on overcoming the divisions in Europe.

In this connection I should like to inform you and the members of the First Committee that my delegation will submit the text of the communiqué to the Secretariat for distribution as an official document of the General Assembly.

In my statement today I shall limit myself to expressing my delegation's views on four items related to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, namely: chemical weapons, nuclear issues, prevention of an arms race in outer space, and, finally, very briefly, the problem of the effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament.

Ridding the Earth of chemical weapons has for many years been the centre of multilateral disarmament efforts. However, another year is passing and we shall have to repeat in our resolution our common regret and concern that, notwithstanding the progress made in 1989, a convention on the complete and

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effective prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction has not yet been elaborated.

As this year draws to a close, are we any closer to the convention? No doubt. It was the year of many important events on the road to accomplishing this task. It started in a very optimistic and hopeful climate generated by the successful outcome of the Paris Conference. May I take this opportunity to join other delegations in reiterating high appreciation of its results and in thanking the French Government for hosting the Conference and for its considerable contribution to its constructive course. The determined political will unanimously expressed in Paris by the 149 participating States to redouble efforts and to conclude the convention at the earliest date gave additional impulse to the Geneva negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. Indeed, efforts have been redoubled, for which we owe a special tribute to the efficient leadership of the Chairman of the ad hoc committee, Ambassador Pierre Morel, and his closest collaborators in this endeavour.

The new organizational framework, based on a so-called thematic approach, offered additional opportunities to concentrate efforts on resolving outstanding issues, thus opening the door to the final stage of negotiations. The results of this work are now presented in the report of the Conference on Disarmament. This demonstrates that, although not all of our expectations were fulfilled, further progress has been achieved, particularly on many important technical aspects, and that the ground for final solution of some very sensitive issues such as challenge inspection or the Executive Council, has been prepared.

At the resumed Soviet-American consultations on chemical weapons vital issues related to the convention were undertaken, including data exchange, procedures for challenge inspection, and the order of destruction of chemical weapons and of the

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facilities producing them. It is to be hoped that the constructive outcome of those consultations, when presented to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, will have a very positive impact on the negotiations.

The joint Soviet-United States statement on chemical weapons issued after the recent meeting between Mr. Shevardnadze and Mr. Baker in Wyoming is in fact an example of the strong commitment of both sides to the conclusion of the convention at the earliest possible date. In this context, Poland welcomes the practical evidence of this commitment in the important proposals on chemical weapons presented during this session of the General Assembly by President Bush and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze.

The possibility of the beginning of the destruction of chemical weapons and of the discontinuance of their production even before the conclusion of the chemical weapons convention should open up new prospects for our negotiations in Geneva and will, I hope, encourage other States to consider the contribution they might make to strengthening confidence and increasing openness in this regard.

The Canberra Conference was another important event of a unique character in the history of disarmament negotiations. For the first time it brought together, on a large scale, representatives of the Governments responsible for negotiating and implementing the chemical weapons convention and representatives of the world's chemical industry, which will be directly affected by its implementation.

The extensive and fruitful dialogue between them as well as a number of proposals put forward at the Conference will, I am sure, contribute to the elaboration of workable and realistic solutions to different outstanding problems, thus making possible the early conclusion of the convention.

The unprecedented joint statement by the world's chemical industry including its commitment to assist Governments in bringing about a total ban on chemical

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weapons through a comprehensive convention, is the most welcomed and valuable result of the Conference.

Thus, to the political will expressed in Paris, a practical commitment of the chemical industry was added, which is of particular importance for the future implementation process. In this connection, I wish to congratulate the Government of Australia for this valuable initiative and for its constructive efforts to bring the Canberra Conference to such a generally recognized successful conclusion.

One of the encouraging developments in the Geneva negotiations is that a growing number of States, not members of the Conference on Disarmament, have become actively involved in those endeavours. This is a good premise for the universality of the convention. Certainly, as stated in the Paris Declaration, any State wishing to contribute to the negotiations should be able to do so.

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The completion of the work of the group of qualified experts set up by the Secretary-General to prepare procedures for the investigation of alleged violations of the 1925 Geneva Protocol introduced another positive element into our work. Poland fully supports the role of the Secretary-General in carrying out such investigations and it is ready to accept the proposed procedures to that end.

This short review of the various efforts to ban chemical weapons seems to confirm the view that the necessary momentum and the climate for a real breakthrough on the road to the convention really exist. In fact, we have all the prerequisites: the strong political will of States once again expressed so eloquently in Brussels, in Belgrade and recently in Warsaw; the support of the world's chemical industry; the pressure of public opinion; and, last but not least, the required negotiating experience and knowledge.

So, what remains to be done? This political will should be transformed into practical solutions and an appropriate treaty language. It means that all delegations must be ready to take a position on still unresolved issues, in particular on the general pattern of verification. It implies also a common search for mutually acceptable compromises incorporating a proper balance between legitimate security interests and the required level of effectiveness of verification on the one hand, and between the protection of confidentiality and the reliability of the verification mechanisms on the other. Such a mechanism for finding compromise solutions is also to be found in article X, on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, and article XI, on economic and technological development. Here the compromise acquires additional significance by stimulating positive interest in the convention and promoting universal adherence to it.

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Confidence-building steps could play an important role in our efforts. It seems evident and rather indisputable that the pace of progress could be faster and easier, provided that the negotiations are based on broader, more comprehensive information on the size of the existing stocks of chemical weapons and the number of States possessing them, as well as other data relevant to the convention.

Openness and mutual confidence enhance trust in the convention, create a favourable political climate for the negotiations and contribute directly to progress in designing proper mechanisms for the effective implementation of the convention. We call for broader participation in these measures as an important primary step towards achieving the universality of the future convention.

Our common efforts could increase chances of entering the new century without chemical weapons. To reach that end, we have to make 1990 a crucial year in bringing the convention to a conclusion. We all agree that the momentum provided so far cannot be maintained indefinitely. To lose it now, might mean never seeing it again. That would have far-reaching consequences not only for the negotiations on chemical weapons but for disarmament in general. We used to say that we had crossed the point of no return in our negotiations. In my opinion, we are much further; in fact, we are approaching their final stage. The largely finished text of the convention and the present stage of negotiations require - and I share this point of view - the redefinition of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee properly reflecting this fact. Of course, the Conference on Disarmament should take an appropriate decision in this regard.

Last year, despite the quantity and complexity of issues relating to the question of chemical weapons, we concluded our consideration of this item in this body by adopting all three resolutions by consensus. It was an unprecedented achievement which, in itself, established a solid basis for all further developments in this field.

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At this session, in conformity with a well-established tradition, Canada and Poland have jointly submitted again the draft resolution on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, which is now before the Committee as document A/C.1/44/L.38.

In this connection I should like to express my sincere hope that the Committee will be once again able to adopt the draft resolution without a vote, thus giving the Conference on Disarmament another positive stimulus just before the beginning of the 1990 session and contributing to the maintenance of the spirit of accommodation and co-operation prevailing so evidently during its last session. My delegation is ready to co-operate actively with all delegations to that end.

My country also attaches special importance to the nuclear issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. A nuclear war "cannot be won and must never be fought"; that sentence is probably the most often quoted in disarmament circles. However, practical conclusions have yet to be drawn fully from it. Nuclear weapons continue to be the main threat to the survival of mankind in spite of the positive trends in international relations. The cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament are thus of vital importance for ensuring international stability and security. We are witnessing some positive steps in this direction. Under the INF Treaty, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have already destroyed over half of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles. Prospects for halving their strategic weapons have been measurably improved by the recent Shevardnadze-Baker meeting.

The Soviet-American negotiations on the limitation and consequently, we hope, the cessation of nuclear testing are making progress in Geneva. Poland welcomes these developments. However, while recognizing the special responsibility of the USSR and the United States of America in the field of disarmament, we should like

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to underline that each and every State should seek to initiate and promote disarmament, including by unilateral steps, and that multilateral efforts are indispensable for a sustained and global disarmament process.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

The cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament remain an issue of the highest priority. In the interest of all nations, both nuclear and non-nuclear, this race should be stopped and nuclear arsenals reduced. An essential step in this direction is putting an end to nuclear testing by all States in all environments in order to prevent the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapons. Vertical proliferation should be stopped if we want horizontal non-proliferation to succeed.

The Conference on Disarmament is able to play an important role in this endeavour. We regret the fact that, in spite of being so close to beginning substantive efforts in the framework of an ad hoc committee on the nuclear-test ban, we were once again unable to do so. We are convinced that the difficulties are not insurmountable and that consultations will be resumed in Geneva in this respect. In this context I should like to emphasize the valuable and important work done by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. Poland is actively preparing itself for participation in the second phase of the technical experiment because we consider it an important step towards the elaboration of an appropriate verification system. For this reason we support proposals aimed at setting up a special group of experts to prepare a comprehensive system of verification of a nuclear-test ban.

We note with satisfaction encouraging signs that appeared in the Conference's work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Discussion on this item became more intense; various experts participated in the debate more frequently, and their contributions were more significant. New and interesting ideas were submitted. Information on bilateral talks concerning outer space issues were presented by both the USSR and the United States. Unfortunately, despite these

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

positive elements the Conference is still far from any concrete results in this field.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space continues, however, to be one of the greatest challenges facing current disarmament negotiations in general and the Conference on Disarmament in particular. Further and urgent efforts by the Conference aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space are indispensable. Any action and any solution in this field should take into account not only the question of strategic stability, so important for the development of international relations, but also more general considerations which in fact remain at the heart of this problem.

Outer space has a special status under general international law. There is no absolute freedom of action of States. Apart from some specific prohibitions, important general guidelines for activities in this environment have been established. In particular, in 1967 the outer space Treaty recognized the common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and declared that this exploration and use shall be the province of all mankind. States Parties to that Treaty pledged that they would carry on all their activities in outer space in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international co-operation and understanding. Thus the rights of all States to express their views on the use of outer space must be acknowledged and their opinions should be taken into account.

The discussions and resolutions of the General Assembly as well as the debate in the Conference on Disarmament clearly indicate that there is a general wish of the world community that an arms race in outer space be prevented and that outer space, as a common heritage of all mankind, be preserved exclusively for peaceful uses.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

Finally, our experience shows that it is far more difficult to stop an arms race in a particular field than to prevent it. This commonsense logic led to the conclusion of a number of arms control agreements related, inter alia, to Antarctica, Latin America, the seabed and environment modification techniques. Their successful implementation is the best proof of the wisdom of this approach.

Having in mind these considerations, we appreciate and welcome the statement contained in the conclusions of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee that there was "general recognition ... of the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space and readiness to contribute to that common objective".

(A/44/27, p. 284)

It is also our sincere hope that this joint recognition will lead this Committee to early, and in fact overdue, concrete results.

Further endeavours of the Committee can be based on a wide range of submitted proposals. Poland has made its modest contribution to this expanding body of ideas by presenting a set of confidence-building measures aimed at strengthening international law applicable to outer space and increasing the transparency of States' activities in this sphere. We note with satisfaction that the first steps intended to introduce greater openness in these activities are being considered in bilateral USSR-United States negotiations.

We believe that this new approach will find its expression not only in the work of the Conference, but also in this forum, contributing to building greater confidence and understanding.

One of the most characteristic features of the debate on outer space problems in the Conference on Disarmament is a growing recognition of the great potential of space monitoring and verification for enhancing international security. It has found its expression in an increasing number of proposals which, despite some

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

differences between them, provide for the establishment of international systems of space monitoring and verification.

These new ideas emerging at the Conference on Disarmament seem to be an extremely valuable supplement to its, so to speak, traditional approach concentrated on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Step-by-step development of an international system of space verification and monitoring could become a parallel process to our efforts aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space. As a result, outer space would be preserved exclusively for peaceful uses and, at the same time, would be turned into a new area of co-operation for the security of all nations.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

The international system of space monitoring and verification could serve both the Members of the United Nations and the United Nations organs responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. It would contribute to the implementation of arms-control agreements and to arrangements for the settlement of regional conflicts. It would help in United Nations peace-keeping and peace-making operations and would introduce a valuable element of early warning as well as objective information about United Nations activities. International co-operation in space monitoring and verification could, in fact, evolve into a crucial element of the United Nations collective security system.

One can but hope that the future work of the Conference on Disarmament on outer space problems will follow this dual-track approach and that the agreement to refrain from the military application of new technologies in outer space will be accompanied by a decision to make them serve international security. Now especially the world needs both initiatives, based on thinking not only in terms of "national" but also in terms of "common" security.

It is understandable that the complexity of the problems discussed and their direct bearing upon the security of States render the treaty-making work of the Conference on Disarmament laborious and time-consuming. Nevertheless, the inability of the Conference to come to any concrete results in recent years leads to growing concern in many Governments, including my own. Indeed, the question how to improve the work of the Conference and make its functioning more effective has become a subject of serious and continuous consideration both within the Conference and outside it.

We note and study the many ideas and suggestions related to this question. One of the issues is that of making the work of the Conference more flexible and its results more responsive to the different situations that arise during the negotiating process.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

Undoubtedly, the elaboration of new agreements imposing legal obligations upon States is, and should remain, the principal task of the Conference. This basic approach, in the opinion of my delegation, need not, however, prevent the Conference from considering other measures, which would register areas of common understanding, particularly in circumstances where the stage of negotiations or other considerations makes them advisable and the only ones feasible. In fact, different situations may require different approaches and responses.

We believe that this more flexible approach to the possible results of the work of the Conference can make it more productive and increase its impact on international security. Different types of confidence- and security-building measures can play an independent role and can constitute a basis for the further treaty-making efforts of the Conference. Such efforts should remain its main responsibility.

Current changes in international and, in particular, in East-West relations, create new opportunities also in the field of disarmament and arms control. The Conference on Disarmament has an important role to play in this process. My delegation believes that no effort should be spared to make it an effective instrument for transforming the emerging political will into a wide spectrum of international rules and guidelines leading towards disarmament and contributing to peace and international security.

Mr. OKEYO (Kenya): Permit me at the outset to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Taylhardat of Venezuela on assuming the chairmanship of the First Committee at this session of the General Assembly. I am confident that his diplomatic skills and long experience in the field of disarmament are the best assurance that this Committee will achieve the results it sets for itself. My delegation pledges to Ambassador Taylhardat its full support and co-operation in the discharge of his onerous responsibilities.

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

Since the world entered the nuclear era 44 years ago the spectre of self-destruction and of the annihilation of mankind has remained ever present. The nuclear epoch has taken on the countenance of nuclear terror. In search of a credible defence the most destructive weapons have been developed; others with overkill capacity are on the drawing-boards in the name of deterrence. With this destructive capacity in the hands of man, the unarmed innocent is worried about what the future holds for mankind.

This meeting of the First Committee is being held at a time when there are some significant changes in international relations. These emerging changes underscore the acceptance in principle by the super-Powers of the grave consequences that could result from a continued escalation of the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race. The threat of self-destruction emanating from the ready disposition of States to use force in pursuit of their defence postures is a reality. The only practical solution is the application of cohesive and realistic international measures to redress this state of affairs so as to reverse the trend from a crisis of confidence to a process of relaxation of tension. It is the view of my Government that the efforts to prevent a nuclear war should be guided by a strong political will to negotiate openly and constructively on reliable arrangements for security and by a genuine dialogue in search of peace leading to a truly common perception of a secure world.

We cannot, however, lose sight of the reassuring optimism that has emanated from the successful bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Treaty on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, though modest in the number of weapons it sought to eliminate, is of great historic significance. For the first time in the history of arms control, an agreement was signed which totally eliminated a whole class of operational nuclear-weapon systems.

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

There are also good indications of an agreement on strategic-arms reduction talks to reduce the number of intercontinental strategic weapons and of negotiations for the eventual total destruction of chemical weapons. Kenya, like many others, calls upon the two super-Powers to spare no effort to implement all their agreed objectives in accordance with the security interests of the whole world and the universal desire for complete disarmament.

Of paramount importance to my country is the question of a nuclear-test ban. No other issue in the field of arms control has been the subject of so much international deliberation and negotiation as has the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests. A comprehensive test-ban, in our view, is the only means to put an end to the nuclear-arms race, for a total test-ban would render further nuclear-weapon development more or less impossible. A race for qualitative improvements in nuclear weapons would thereby be considerably slowed.

The 1963 partial-test-ban Treaty, even though initially believed to be an occurrence of historic significance, has not, unfortunately, slowed down the nuclear-arms race among the major nuclear Powers. It is therefore Kenya's sincere hope that the proposed international conference that would convert the partial-test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty will materialize. The time has come for those who oppose the amendment proposal to declare their sincerity on the question of total disarmament for, whatever the differences of opinion on the issue of verification, there are no insurmountable obstacles necessitating a delay in the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban.

Last year, in resolution 43/81 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to undertake, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, an in-depth study of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. My Government believes very strongly that a more peaceful

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international system based on negotiated agreements cannot rest on trust alone, but that it requires a verification process in which all States can have confidence. Verification is a channel through which the objectives and aims of the Charter can be achieved, thereby facilitating the peaceful settlement of disputes and a long process wherein all States can rely more on a system of international co-operation than on their own military capabilities for national defence. The responsibilities for the verification of any agreement cannot therefore be left to two countries alone. Kenya will support the establishment of multilateral verification machinery within the framework of the United Nations.

As an African country Kenya is particularly cognizant of the fact that our continent is riddled today with a serious social, political and economic crisis that needs early attention. What we need, if the current crisis to be overcome, is a concrete condition of peace. However, genuine peace is impossible without arms-acquisition restraints and disarmament initiatives. Peace in the African regional context should emerge as a dynamic concept embracing more than just the absence of war. The quest for peace in Africa can be viewed as encompassing, among other issues, the total destruction of apartheid, the release of all political detainees in South Africa, and free and fair elections in Namibia.

For decades African States have demonstrated their commitment to the cause of the denuclearization of their continent, as espoused by the 1964 Cairo Declaration of the Organization of African Unity. Similarly, the African delegations have sought the international community's condemnation of South Africa's nuclear-arms programme and all forms of collaboration by any State, corporation or individual with the racist South African régime. The South African Government's declared possession of a nuclear-weapon capability constitutes a very grave danger not only to the continent but also to international peace and security as a whole. In view

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of that grave danger my delegation appeals to the countries concerned to terminate forthwith all forms of collaboration with the racist régime in the military nuclear fields and space technology. It is on that same premise that my delegation last year supported the resolution sponsored by the African Group on the dumping of radioactive wastes, which would have grave regional and international security implications. The dumping of any nuclear, industrial or radiological waste on the territory of any developing country for whatever purpose is unacceptable to my country and must be condemned.

Kenya continues to attach particular importance to the establishment of zones of peace in various parts of the world. Such zones could strengthen the fabric of regional peace and stability and extend extraregional co-operation in the field of socio-economic development. In the light of that fact the concept of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace reflects the hopes and aspirations of many countries that are littoral States to enhance and share in the prospects of peace and security. We therefore strongly support the proposal to convene the United Nations Conference on the Indian Ocean at Colombo, Sri Lanka, in July 1990. It is believed that that Conference would harmonize the interests of the countries in the region, major naval Powers and maritime users alike. We commend the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean for its work well done in preparation of the Conference, despite astounding obstacles.

My country does not possess and does not intend to acquire any chemical weapons, but the proliferation of those weapons and their use is of great concern to us. Kenya condemns any use and proliferation of such weapons of mass destruction and joins the international community in calling for the destruction of such inhumane weapons through the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on chemical weapons. The progress made in negotiations in the Conference on

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Disarmament in preparation for such a convention is encouraging. The success of both the Paris Conference and the recent Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons at Canberra has brought new impetus and optimism. We hope that negotiators will take advantage of the opportunity and momentum to reach an early conclusion of a convention that will have total universality, both in adherence and in applicability, and that will subsequently remove such mass-killer weapons from the face of the Earth.

Finally, we need to intensify our efforts in the disarmament field if we are to achieve tangible results. My country will continue to exert every effort to make valuable contributions to the cause of peace and disarmament. We shall continue vehemently to oppose the use of force in international relations, military intervention, aggression and the occupation of territories by force.

Mr. AFONSO (Mozambique): I should like at the outset to extend my warm congratulations to the Chairman on his unanimous election. His past experience qualifies him as an outstanding diplomat and is a guarantee of the successful outcome of our deliberations. I wish to congratulate also the other members of the Bureau as well as last session's Chairman on a job well done. I assure the Chairman of my delegation's co-operation in the fulfilment of his duties.

Mankind has been striving over the years for international peace and stability. In the process it has come to realize the importance of the need to address the tools of war in its quest for peace. It has come to understand that the dramatic developments in the field of armaments, both during the Second World War and afterwards, pose a potential threat to the survival of mankind and of contemporary civilization; hence, the elimination of them has become an objective of paramount importance. In these efforts, mankind has had to face challenging difficulties resulting from a sense of mistrust and from strategic considerations.

It is generally accepted that the emergence of new trends in the international sphere has resulted from the ongoing process of the easing of tensions between East and West. The fact that virtually all delegations that have spoken before me have hailed these new relations supports this conclusion. Indeed, the rapprochement between the two major nuclear Powers is apparently having a positive effect on disarmament efforts, as can be seen in the efforts being made to achieve a ban on chemical weapons. This relationship also establishes a new atmosphere for the settlement of regional conflicts. It has also helped to reinforce and restore the confidence of Member States in the role and authority of the United Nations in international relations.

Attempts to address conflicts by exploring peaceful means have been and are being undertaken in virtually all regions. While the outcome seems to be less

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successful in some areas than in others, the spirit of negotiations remains alive even in the face of a stalemate. Furthermore, we are pleased to note that recently the United Nations has been playing a pivotal role in initiatives to bring about lasting peace in several regions. All these developments are the expression and reflection of the positive thinking that has been emerging in international relations, the impact of which is apparently being felt also in the field of disarmament.

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 - constitutes not only a tangible example but also a major landmark in the history of mankind. Its successful implementation will encourage disarmament efforts and to a large extent determine the course of events in this field.

Two years ago it would have been unthinkable to consider developments in the field of disarmament such as the creation of momentum in responding to the urgent need to ban chemical weapons, the declared commitments on that same question by the United States and the Soviet Union during the debate at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, and the ongoing negotiations concerning a 50 per cent reduction of the nuclear arsenals of the major Powers. Such undertakings, if successfully pursued, would eventually prepare mankind for entry into the next century with a sense of hope instead of despair and to greet the year 2000 with confidence and the promise of a better life in peace, without fear of a nuclear holocaust.

While expressing optimism about the future of disarmament, my delegation also believes that much remains to be done. We are confronted by challenging situations that require political will, courage and pragmatism.

(Mr. Afonso, Mozambique)

The continuation of nuclear explosions casts a shadow over mankind's expectations regarding the future of nuclear disarmament. While we regard the INF Treaty as a step in the right direction, we view the continuation of vertical proliferation with deep concern. The continuation of nuclear testing by nuclear-weapon States is at variance with the prevailing international climate that I have just described. The cessation of all nuclear tests and explosions is an absolute necessity if the full confidence of the international community as a whole with respect to ongoing bilateral disarmament efforts is to be won. In this connection, we noted with great satisfaction the declaration of a unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests some time ago. We wish to express our encouragement for the continuation of that undertaking. We also wish to urge other nuclear Powers to emulate that salutary step in support of disarmament.

On the other hand, my delegation has also noted with regret that not a single ray of light was discernible at the Conference on Disarmament during its consideration of a comprehensive test ban treaty. We call upon the nuclear States members of the Conference on Disarmament to reconsider their position on this question. Their rigidity on this question is in conflict with their overwhelming support of the non-proliferation Treaty.

My delegation would like to register its support for the convening of a conference on the conversion of the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty to a comprehensive treaty, as proposed by the representative of Mexico. We are convinced that such a conference would add a new dimension to the field of nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament should remain a priority issue in all disarmament efforts. Such a conference would, in the final analysis, make a major contribution also to general and complete disarmament.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed in 1968, concerning which a Review Conference will be held next year for the fourth time, is

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a historic Treaty. It has been ratified or adhered to by a large number of States, including three of the five permanent members of the Security Council. However, its failure effectively to prevent other States from acquiring nuclear weapons, including racist States, constitutes a major setback. The assurance by nuclear-weapon States to States which do not possess nuclear weapons is another area of controversy in relation to the Treaty.

(Mr. Afonso, Mozambique)

My country is not yet a party to the non-proliferation Treaty. However, we highly appreciate all international endeavours in favour of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In this context, my Government is currently engaged in the process of preparing to adhere to the Treaty.

My delegation whole-heartedly supports the creation or establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones. We regard the creation of such zones as a major factor contributing to the non-proliferation of such weapons, to nuclear disarmament and, as a corollary, to general and complete disarmament. Nuclear-weapon-free zones constitute a practical contribution to international peace and security. The Tlatelolco and Rarotonga Treaties are examples to be followed by States in other regions. We are of the view that these Treaties should be observed by the international community as a whole.

For the record, my delegation wishes to express its disappointment over the continuous postponement of the long-overdue Colombo Conference on the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We call upon the States members of the Ad Hoc Committee entrusted with the preparation of the Conference to complete the last stage of their preparatory work expeditiously in order to permit the convening of the Conference as soon as possible, and not later than 1990, in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions. We are confident that the Committee will take the right decisions on the matter.

Attempts to spare Africa nuclear weapons have been made in the continent. It was in this context that the African Heads of State and Government adopted the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. However, this decision was undermined when, on the verge of the last decade, the South African apartheid régime gave strong indications that it had already acquired sufficient capability

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to produce a nuclear weapon. The declaration of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone was bogged down by the same régime, whose policy and behaviour betray, and run counter to, Africa's dignity.

South Africa's nuclear capability was made possible by the close co-operation of some nuclear Powers. We find it difficult to understand the position taken by certain States in the Disarmament Commission on this issue.

Mozambique is following with special interest the ongoing negotiations in Vienna on the reduction of conventional weapons. It holds the view that conventional disarmament and action with regard to international arms transfers are important components of the overall disarmament process. However, we also believe that they should not be overemphasized to the detriment of nuclear disarmament; nor should the emphasis be shifted to the notion that developing countries are the major factor in the consideration of conventional armaments and arms transfers.

Naval disarmament is another area of great interest to my country. Mozambique has a shoreline that stretches for more than 2,500 kilometres. Our stand on this issue results from our strong identification with the concept of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, particularly in the Indian Ocean region.

Any extension of the arms race into outer space should be completely barred. The status of outer space as a common heritage of mankind should be preserved. Outer space should be open only for activities compatible with its use for peaceful purposes. We believe that the transfer of the arms race to a new dimension, outer space, would serve no purpose, but would narrow the gap between human survival and self-annihilation in the scale of possibilities.

My delegation, like others, views with some optimism the prospect of a chemical-weapons convention. The general awareness of the danger of this category of weapons and the realization of the globalization of technology to produce them

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on the one hand, and the attraction of resorting to them in a war situation on the other, gave birth to the current wave of initiatives in favour of a chemical-weapons ban. The international Conferences on chemical weapons held in Paris and in Canberra and Sydney, Australia, were the culmination of this new feeling.

We welcome the declarations made by President Bush of the United States of America and by Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Shevardnadze of the Soviet Union in the plenary Assembly during the current session. These and other statements have given momentum to the urgent task of concluding a chemical-weapons convention banning the production, use and stockpiling of this devastating class of weapon.

We think that bilateral undertakings are important in disarmament efforts. We value the ongoing talks in various disarmament fields between the two major nuclear Powers. On the other hand, we consider that the maintenance of peace and stability in the world is the task of all humanity. Therefore, we believe that multilateralism is the key to a genuinely successful outcome of concerted efforts to bring about general and complete disarmament. It follows that the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations, and the Disarmament Commission, as the deliberative body in the field of disarmament, should be revitalized and strengthened. We also believe that effective ways to expedite the work of those two bodies should be explored.

My delegation thinks that the international community should not lose sight of the importance of the relationship between development and disarmament; they are two related issues competing for the same finite resources. The United Nations reaffirmed this relationship when it held the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. It is ironic that two years after the holding of that Conference military expenditures have continued to

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skyrocket in inverse proportion to developmental expenditures. The international community should avail itself of the new trends in international affairs to redress this equation.

It is our belief that there is now an appropriate international political climate for the nations to advance hand in hand in pursuit of their common goal, that of saving future generations from the scourge of war.

It is with satisfaction that we witness the adoption of more flexible and pragmatic approaches to disarmament issues. This bears testimony to the fact that a world free of weapons, in particular nuclear weapons, is possible. It also proves that we can make our planet a safer place to live on if we combine our efforts in favour of general and complete disarmament.

Mr. M. B. SY (Senegal) (interpretation from French): I take special pleasure in speaking in the First Committee not only because of the interesting nature of the subjects addressed here, but also and particularly because its objectives are in line with one of the principal concerns of my country - the promotion of world peace and security. I take the opportunity offered by our general debate to make the modest contribution of the Senegalese delegation to our common effort.

I should like first to join earlier speakers in conveying to the Chairman our sincere and cordial congratulations on his outstanding election to guide the work of the First Committee.

The judicious choice of Ambassador Taylhardat as Chairman of the First Committee is evidence of his many qualities as a skilled diplomat and a guarantee of the successful outcome of our work. I am therefore quite sure that, with the benefit of his command of disarmament issues, our debates will be fruitful and will fulfil the hopes vested in our noble Organization by those millions of men, women and children who aspire so ardently to peace, security, justice and happiness. I assure him that I and the whole of the Senegalese delegation will co-operate fully with him in the fulfilment of his task.

We are most grateful, also, to his predecessor for his effective work in tracing the path for us to follow, and, finally, we congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

With regard to the First Committee's agenda, I reaffirm Senegal's dedication to the cause of improving the international climate so that all peoples may live in peace and harmony. Accordingly, my country looks forward eagerly to the elimination of anything that might jeopardize the global equilibrium so desired by all States.

(Mr. M. B. Sy, Senegal)

It is precisely because Senegal has to cope with a variety of challenges that it is convinced that its efforts to achieve economic and social development need to be complemented by co-operation based chiefly on international solidarity, dialogue and broad-based agreement among all nations.

In this connection, Senegal has always supported the primacy of law as a sacrosanct principle and accepted negotiation, conciliation and arbitration as the best means of settling international conflicts. That is why we derive so much satisfaction from the marked improvement in East-West relations in recent years. Similarly, we warmly welcomed the decision of the United States of America and the Soviet Union to commit themselves firmly to genuine détente with the signing in December 1987 of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. The common will of those two super-Powers to step up their efforts regarding the reduction by 50 per cent of their strategic nuclear arsenals is also most reassuring for small countries whose future is in many ways dependent on the international environment.

Lastly, my country welcomes and strongly encourages the setting up of such initiatives. We would like to see them extended to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa, South Asia and the Middle East, and the reduction of military budgets to the benefit of increases in official development assistance.

In this connection, the Senegalese delegation wishes to draw the First Committee's attention to the report of the Disarmament Commission on the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. Paragraphs 3, 6 and 7 of annex II to the Commission's report (A/44/42) clearly show that South Africa is determined to build up its nuclear capacity and continues to refuse to submit its nuclear installations to inspection by the International Atomic Energy

(Mr. M. B. Sy, Senegal)

Agency. That is disturbing because it illustrates the arrogant contempt in which the racist Pretoria régime holds the rest of the international community. That defiant attitude is all the more deplorable in that the General Assembly adopted, on 24 November 1961, resolution 1652 (XVI), calling for the African continent and surrounding areas to be considered a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Furthermore, for 38 years in some 15 resolutions, it has repeatedly recalled that decision.

My delegation feels that the Organization, to bolster its credibility, must compel South Africa and all States that support it in its pernicious attitude to abide by those resolutions and to apply strictly the Organization of African Unity's Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

The worst aspect of this whole matter is that if we are not careful the racist régime of Pretoria, which is notorious for its failure to respect basic human rights and dignity, could one day use its nuclear weapons as an instrument of State terrorism, aggression and blackmail.

We firmly believe that current disarmament efforts may fall short of the expected results if that grave situation is not resolved and if the production, use and stockpiling of bacteriological weapons are not subjected to closer scrutiny with a view to finding a definitive solution.

In this context, we welcome the fact that the Paris Conference of January 1989, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the League of Arab States, and the Islamic Conference Organization have already reiterated their acute concern and reaffirmed the determination of their members to support any useful initiative in the important area of disarmament. It is thus imperative to continue meetings, consultations and negotiations so that all aspects of the question may be better considered, and our world may be rid of weapons, whether nuclear, chemical, or merely conventional.

(Mr. M. B. Sy, Senegal)

It is in this light that the Senegalese delegation welcomes the work done by the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission, and the Advisory Group on Disarmament. We also appreciate the consistent efforts of the Secretary-General to promote peace and security throughout the world.

As I said at the beginning of my statement, general and complete disarmament is of particular interest to my country because we are convinced that without peace and security all development efforts are doomed to failure. This is particularly true for the young nations which, because of their scant economic potential and small markets, are compelled to manage their meagre resources rationally and to focus on the establishment of regional and subregional groups.

Unfortunately, developing countries are not spared the grave consequences of the arms race and the growth of military spending. Suffice it to note that the amount of money spent by developing countries on importing arms accounts for more than 40 per cent of their external debt. To this can be added the fact that value of the arms exports by the rich to the poor countries is practically equivalent to the official development assistance granted to the latter. Furthermore, it has recently been revealed in World Military and Social Expenditures that world military expenditure is equal to the total income of the 2.6 billion inhabitants of the 44 least developed countries. For its part, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has observed that an amount equal to twice its annual budget - that is, \$500 million - corresponds to the amount spent on armaments by the international community in four hours.

(Mr. M. B. Sy, Senegal)

Yet, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), \$300 million a year would suffice for the vaccination of all the children in the world against the six main childhood diseases.

These few examples show the truly noble character of our task of establishing a world of peace, security and solidarity, a mission which deserves our unanimous support.

My delegation earnestly hopes that consensus will increasingly replace voting in decision-taking in the First Committee. This hope is not utopian, because the desire for general and complete disarmament is shared by all States, and the practice is certainly not untried.

The important thing is to persevere in seeking lasting agreement so that past differences may be overcome and greater emphasis put on areas of agreement.

Only in this way can we build the world for which we all long, in which the creativity of man will be used exclusively for the benefit of all mankind.

Mr. NAOURY (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure, first, to congratulate the Chairman, on behalf of my delegation, on his election to his important post. This shows how much the members of the Committee value his great skills. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau, and wish the Chairman and them success in guiding our deliberations.

As we follow the debates in the First Committee this year, we cannot but express our full satisfaction at the positive climate that reigns and the hopeful signs of the possible attainment of the desired objectives. This is a result of the objective circumstances engendered by the atmosphere of international détente which characterizes the relations between the two super-Powers and is beginning to bear fruit in the curbing of the international arms race, whether in relation to nuclear, chemical or conventional weapons. It is also a result of the attempts to

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arrive at appropriate solutions to a number of regional questions that appeared intractable in the atmosphere of international polarization that prevailed in the past.

We in Jordan have welcomed the results of international détente, as well as the atmosphere of détente itself. We hope that the results will extend to our region, the Middle East, to contribute to the attainment of a just, peaceful and comprehensive solution of our problems, at the core of which is the Palestinian problem.

We have received with joy, as has the whole world, the news of the agreements reached by the two super-Powers during the past two years, the latest of which was the outcome of the fourth meeting, which took place recently in Wyoming, of the American Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Minister.

We followed closely and with great interest the initiative concerning chemical weapons announced by the United States President, Mr. George Bush, in his statement before the General Assembly this year, as well as the positive response to that initiative by the Soviet Foreign Minister when he spoke in the Assembly.

These great achievements, which were the result of the détente that now characterizes the relationship between the two super-Powers, reflect the reality of the profound change in the political will of the two countries and the change of course from rivalry and the consolidation of their arsenals of weapons of all kinds, especially weapons of mass destruction, towards co-operation in halting and reversing the arms race. We have seen for the first time since the beginning of the cold war the destruction of a number of types of intermediate-range missiles and the transformation of significant numbers of conventional arms into equipment to be used for peaceful purposes.

While recognizing the importance of the bilateral talks between the two countries, which have imparted momentum to world disarmament endeavours, we feel

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that it is equally important, in order to achieve the desired goals, to strive to develop this process so as to secure the participation of the largest possible number of States. My country, Jordan, believes that the process of disarmament is a matter of the utmost seriousness and importance. It calls for wider participation by the international community, for the cause of international peace and security cannot succeed through the prohibition of one type of weapon; agreement on a total ban on weapons of every type is necessary. Furthermore, the arms race consumes vast sums and resources which, if devoted to development, would lead to great prosperity for all mankind.

During the current debate, we have heard many speakers, including representatives of the nuclear Powers, stressing the need to respect the non-proliferation Treaty and calling for universal accession to it, since it is considered the corner-stone of the process of negotiating further agreements to reduce arms. The representative of Canada said that the fact that not all countries have acceded to the Treaty will affect the negotiating process, because no country can agree to the reduction of chemical or conventional weapons if it feels that other countries can acquire nuclear weapons.

My country, Jordan, which has adhered to the non-proliferation Treaty since it was opened for signature in the depositary States, associates itself with all those that urge all countries which have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty as the sole instrument at present available that can inspire in all concerned the confidence needed to accept a comprehensive ban on the development, testing and stockpiling of these weapons of terror and ultimately a ban on arms of all types and forms.

My country, Jordan expresses its anxiety concerning the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It faces a direct threat, because these weapons exist in our

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region and in our neighbourhood, contrary to our constant demand that the Middle East be considered a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Our concern is shared by all the countries of the world, because such weapons can cause mass destruction the effects of which would stretch far beyond the countries using such weapons.

It is now indisputably clear to the world in general that Israel possesses the capability to produce nuclear weapons, if it does not in fact possess such weapons as well as the necessary delivery vehicles. In spite of this, Israel stubbornly refuses to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty and to place its nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system.

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This causes us and all the countries of the region profound alarm, in view of the threat it poses to the peace and security of the area.

In the light of this, and in conjunction with brother Arab countries, Jordan has submitted a draft resolution to the Committee expressing deep concern at the dangers inherent in Israeli nuclear armaments and calling on the international community to urge Israel to adhere to the agreements and treaties adopted by the whole world for the purpose of controlling the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We hope that countries that advocate adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty will join us in urging Israel to accede to that Treaty. In so doing they would be translating their words into deeds.

Jordan supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East; it also supports the establishment of similar zones in other parts of the world. Israel persists in its obdurate attitude with regard to accession to the non-proliferation Treaty, thus retaining the right to develop and test nuclear weapons and the ability to attack other countries' peaceful nuclear facilities, even when those facilities have been placed under the IAEA safeguards system, such as an attack actually took place against Iraq's nuclear reactor, which was used for peaceful purposes. We believe that this attitude on the part of Israel will remain the basic obstacle to any progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

The attention we devote to the question of nuclear weapons does not lessen our interest in the imposition of a ban on the production of chemical and bacteriological weapons, a subject which is now the focus of international attention. Together with other countries, Jordan attended the Paris Conference, convened to reaffirm the 1925 Protocol banning chemical weapons. With other Arab countries, Jordan welcomed the Canberra Conference, whose purpose was to discuss

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practical measures concerning a comprehensive convention on chemical weapons. We hope that those efforts will bear fruit in the form of an agreement on a comprehensive ban on such weapons.

Finally, I wish to refer to the consensus reflected in statements made by participating countries concerning reaffirmation of the role of the United Nations in international negotiations and increased efforts to expand its role. The international Organization should become the basic instrument in ensuring that multilateral negotiations achieve the necessary progress towards limiting armaments. For the Organization groups together all countries of the world and reflects their hopes for a better future, free from destructive weapons; it is the source of hope for a better life for mankind. In the light of its steadfast belief in the primary role of the United Nations, my country hopes that the emphasis that we have heard put on this is an expression of genuine and constant faith in that role and not merely of a selective process by which countries resort to the United Nations when it is in their interest to do so and totally disregard it when it is not.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.