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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia)

CONTENTS

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Engo (Cameroon)
Mr. Paz Aguirre (Uruguay)
Mr. Djoudi (Algeria)
Mr. Rana (Nepal)
Mr. Tonwe (Nigeria)
Mr. Al-Kawari (Qatar)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 48 to 69 and 145 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with our programme of work and timetable, this morning the Committee will proceed to the second phase of its work, devoted to statements on specific disarmament agenda items and continuation of the general debate, as necessary.

Mr. ENGO (Cameroon): The very special relevance and historic significance of the current session of the General Assembly has received appropriate emphasis in the statements of practically every speaker so far. We need therefore do no more than express our sentiments of approbation and share the hope that a true sense of this historic moment will permeate our perspectives and dominate our actions and decisions in this Committee, in the same way that the sobering effects of the horrors of open global conflict influenced the judgement of those who assembled the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

Forty years ago the international community, awakened by the traumatic experiences of death and devastation in the Second World War, resolved, in a bold international venture, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and to unite their strength in order to maintain peace and security for all. The dream was for a peaceful world in which States, the embodiment of peoples, would live together as good neighbours, fostering international co-operation in solving problems of mutual interest, placing a prohibition on the threat or use of force, and setting up a mechanism for the recommended peaceful settlement of disputes. The United Nations Charter was to entrench those ideals among its paramount objectives.

Peace is also the primary goal of the Movement of Non-Aligned States, whose modern evolution is rooted in the historic Conference of Afro-Asian States to which

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

your great country, Mr. Chairman, acted as host in the now legendary city of Bandung three decades ago. The Movement of Non-Aligned States has emerged as the central force in the quest for the democratization of contemporary international relations in the new world order characterized by the existing realities of the United Nations. Your country was in the vanguard of this momentous historic development, and it is therefore a fitting tribute to that noble tradition with which Indonesia is associated to see a distinguished son of that nation presiding over the deliberations of the First Committee, a committee charged with the consideration of issues that are central to the principal objective of the United Nations and the non-aligned States - namely, the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Cameroon delegation extends to you, Mr. Chairman, its warmest congratulations and pledges its fullest co-operation as you fulfil your very important tasks. We also congratulate Ambassador Lechuga Nevia of Cuba and our brother Ambassador Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya of Zaire, the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, and Mr. Souliatis of Greece, the Committee's Rapporteur. We also pledge our co-operation with them in the carrying out to a successful conclusion of the important assignments given to this Committee at this historic General Assembly session.

In his statement in the plenary Assembly on 10 October 1985, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my nation, Cameroon, Mr. William Eteki Mboumoua, outlined my Government's position on a number of important issues before this Committee. I therefore intend to concentrate in my statement today on agenda item 68 (g), entitled "Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament". This item appears on the Committee's agenda pursuant to General Assembly resolution 39/151 G, which was adopted by the Assembly by consensus at its thirty-ninth session, last year.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

That resolution, which evolved from a humble initiative by my delegation, among other things requested the Disarmament Commission at its substantive session in 1985 to carry out as a matter of priority a comprehensive review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, taking into account, inter alia, the views and suggestions of Member States on the subject. The resolution also requested the Disarmament Commission to submit its report on the subject, including findings, recommendations and proposals, as appropriate, to the General Assembly at its fortieth session. As representatives are aware, the report of the Disarmament Commission appears in document A/40/42.

As the Commission's report clearly shows, in paragraph 30, the mandate entrusted to the Disarmament Commission by the General Assembly under the agenda item in question was not fully discharged. That was due, in part, to the largely artificial procedural hurdles placed in the way of the Commission's work on this item, thus severely limiting the time available for its substantive consideration of the item as requested by the General Assembly. Apart from eroding further the already fragile credibility and effectiveness of the Commission, that regrettable experience greatly undermined a valuable opportunity for the international community, especially on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, to adopt concrete and substantive measures aimed at demonstrating in a tangible manner our collective recommitment and rededication to the original ideals of our Organization, to maintain international peace and security in order "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

The Government of Cameroon strongly deplores any attempt by any delegation or group of delegations to interfere with the legitimate rights of all States to security and to participate in disarmament negotiations that concern them. We ourselves reject any attempt by any country or group of countries, irrespective of ideological or socio-economic background, to attempt to impose on other countries a particular security concept or policy orientation. Our objective in initiating the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament was not to undermine any particular State or group of States or to promote any particular national or other narrow interest. Rather, our initiative evolved from our profound concern over the increasing marginalization of the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field, which we see as central to the effective discharge of the primary responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, and from our firm conviction of the urgent need to make concrete efforts to strengthen that role.

It may puzzle some people that a country and a region preoccupied with immediate problems of socio-economic development and not involved in the world arms race should be actively interested in the quest for disarmament. Apart from the fact that disarmament - in particular nuclear disarmament - affects the security interests of all countries everywhere, my country, my region and indeed, the Non-Aligned Movement as a whole, view the arms race as contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations for a new world order, free from the scourge of war, more just and equitable and hence, more peaceful.

Moreover, although our small, non-aligned, developing countries are not responsible for the arms race, we are victimized by it. Weapons produced outside our countries and our regions are used to stir up trouble and to create conditions of tension and of war which steal from our peoples what could have been the best

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

years of their lives, dedicated to the consolidation of freedom and independence. In consequence, we are consumed by instigated passions of hatred among the deprived, resulting in the death of millions of people, the senseless destruction of resources and the ravaging of national territories. The international arms trade - successfully and in many instances mischievously - is utilized to destabilize our economies and to divert our meagre resources from vital development needs to military spending, thus keeping us perpetually dependent upon those to whom our interests hardly have relevance, and vulnerable in a cruel world.

In a way, therefore, it can be said that it is precisely because we are small non-aligned developing countries uninvolved in the arms race that we so strongly support disarmament. Throughout the world and, in particular, in the African continent to which my country belongs, the absence of durable conditions of peace and security constitute real obstacles to the stability which is so essential, even indispensable, for the improvement of our socio-economic situation.

Global trends in military spending have generated changes in the kind of international environment in which the nations of the world reside. Each country's pervasive fear of others, combined with its spending for illusory national security based on armaments, has led to a world populated by nations possessing more and more weapons of ever greater destructiveness.

The resources devoted to military spending affect in significant ways how the earth's more than four billion people live. The revenue spent on military hardware and personnel is revenue that is desperately needed to meet the fundamental human needs of a starving, illiterate, disease-ridden planet. A shift from weapons towards peaceful spending would, in the long term, favourably enhance prospects for world peace and security.

Arms limitation and disarmament would enhance prospects for genuine security

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

and development by eliminating fear and suspicion, encouraging the peaceful settlement of disputes and diverting resources from military to constructive uses. In the nuclear age and in today's increasingly interdependent world, the objectives of security, disarmament and development, to be durable and enduring, must be global and universal. That is why Cameroon considers international co-operation as essential for the attainment of these objectives. In this connection, Cameroon believes that despite certain shortcomings and difficulties experienced by the United Nations in the fulfilment of its central role and primary responsibility in this field, our Organization, committed to universality in its membership and founded on the basis of a Charter, the provisions of which have survived not only the test of time but also the complex changes that have taken place in international affairs in the past four decades, remains the most appropriate forum in existence today for such global common endeavours as the quest for security and disarmament.

The proposal for a review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament reflects, on the one hand, our firm belief in the importance of disarmament for genuine peace, security and development in our country, in our region and throughout the world and, on the other hand, our justified frustration and concern over the inadequate and indeed insignificant results realized so far in this field despite the many efforts and the massive resources devoted to the consideration of the subject, especially within the United Nations. Therefore, especially on the occasion of the commemoration of the Organization's forty years of existence, urgent efforts should be undertaken to promote a more effective and efficient role for the United Nations in this field which affects its very raison d'être.

Cameroon places emphasis in the disarmament field on the attainment of

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

practical, concrete measures that would facilitate progress towards the peaceful settlement of disputes, the non-use of force and the reduction and eventual elimination of armaments, in particular nuclear armaments. That calls, in the first place, for practical recommitment to and concrete implementation of the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. We reject any notion of disarmament as a remote, academic or technical subject that is of interest only to a certain category of States. It is, in our view, a practical political question that affects the security or interests of all countries on a permanent, daily basis. Disarmament should therefore be pursued within the framework of the search for an effective operational system of collective security, as provided for under the Charter.

The common interest in mankind's survival which is at the root of international disarmament endeavours should enable us to free the consideration of this subject of all ideological and other differences among States and to concentrate on building confidence and creating appropriate conditions to enable all States and the international community as a whole to participate in evolving the necessary consensus in this field. Only then can we seriously expect to make progress. While my delegation believes strongly that nothing should be done to preclude or to interfere with the sovereign right of States to propose items or resolutions for the consideration of other States in the various disarmament machinery, we consider, at the same time, that our collective goal in those forums should be the emergence of consensus which would facilitate or enhance prospects for the implementation of the various resolutions, decisions or treaties.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

In the view of the Government of Cameroon, the United Nations should concentrate, in the field of international peace and security, including disarmament, on the following priority concerns: first, preventing war and promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes; secondly, where appropriate, providing a forum for and facilitating discussions and negotiations with a view to reaching concrete agreements on specific measures relating to security and disarmament; thirdly, assisting States, as appropriate, in the implementation, monitoring and verification of decisions and agreements relating to security and disarmament; and fourthly, serving as a central source of data, ideas and other relevant information in support of the disarmament activities of States and of the public as a whole.

The successful fulfilment of those priority tasks will require, among other things, appropriate machinery and other institutional arrangements in which Member States can have confidence, and, above all, the demonstration of political will.

While political will is a necessary, indeed indispensable, factor for the realization of progress in this field, we believe that, at the same time, the existence or absence of confidence in the various kinds of machinery is also a crucial factor. Thus, in our view, any review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament must cover also the functioning and achievements of the various institutional arrangements in this field, including the United Nations Secretariat. That is the kind of comprehensive approach that Cameroon sought to take in the views and suggestions it submitted to the Disarmament Commission on this subject, as reflected in document A/CN.10/71. In Cameroon's view, an effective United Nations role in disarmament would require, inter alia, effective co-operation and co-ordination in the activities of Member States, the relevant machinery, including the Secretariat, and the Secretary-General himself, in order

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

to avoid divisive, divergent and contradictory responses among Member States as well as waste and duplication in the activities of the Secretariat.

A number of urgent disarmament issues are currently before the international community in this Committee and in other forums, including, among others, the problems of: a nuclear disarmament, in particular the attainment of a comprehensive test ban; the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the substantial reduction of nuclear weapons with a view to their ultimate elimination; the comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons; the comprehensive prevention of the militarization of outer space, which should be preserved as the common heritage of mankind; the elimination of the nuclear and overall military capability of the racist régime of South Africa, which endangers African as well as international peace and security; the limitation, with a view to its elimination, of the naval arms race; the reduction of military budgets; and the limitation and reduction of conventional armaments. We believe that progress on these questions, both within and outside the United Nations framework, would be facilitated if the Organization played an effective and credible role in the field of disarmament.

As the most important existing embodiment of the collective will of States, the United Nations is expected to be, and must be, involved in efforts and initiatives that affect the common interests of the international community. Surely no such effort or initiative is more urgent than the quest for collective security, indeed survival, in a nuclear age.

A credible and effective United Nations role in the field of disarmament could, therefore, have an important impact on the military activities and disarmament initiatives of the nuclear-weapon Powers. Since the international community and mankind as a whole are affected by the nuclear threat, the international community therefore has a vital interest in developments and

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

initiatives in this field. That is why my Government has proposed that the nuclear-weapon States should hold their nuclear disarmament negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council. Such a move, in our view, would provide an opportunity for the international community to contribute more directly to those negotiations, which are of universal relevance, and would also significantly enhance the effectiveness and credibility of the United Nations in the overall field of the maintenance of international peace and security. In this connection, Cameroon believes also that provision should be made, for instance through the rotation of members, to permit interested countries to become members of the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body, that is, the Conference on Disarmament.

An effective and credible United Nations role would also assist and facilitate the efforts of States at the regional and subregional levels to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes, the mutual reduction of armaments and military expenditures, and the promotion of a broad range of constructive, co-operative relationships that would build confidence and mitigate against the arms race in the regions concerned. Beyond the nuclear arsenals of the major Powers is a diverse set of different types of conventional, chemical and bacteriological weapons, which demonstrates that militarization continues at many levels. We should not underestimate the deadliness, sophistication and negative socio-economic impact of these so-called conventional weapons, which together have killed more than 20 million people in some 150 armed conflicts in the third world in the past four decades and consumed four fifths of world military expenditures.

Cameroon, therefore, welcomes the various regional initiatives in Europe within the framework of the Helsinki and Stockholm Conferences on security,

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

co-operation and confidence-building, the Contadora process in Central America and other initiatives to reduce armaments and military spending in Latin America, and efforts in our region of Africa to promote regional measures of security, disarmament and development. We wish to welcome in particular the Lomé Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the Ministerial Regional Conference on Security, Disarmament and Development in Africa, held at Lome, Togo, from 13 to 16 August 1985, under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). I refer members of the Committee to United Nations document A/40/761.

In that programme, African leaders, inter alia, agree to undertake a continuous and sustained process of diplomatic contact and negotiation within the framework of OAU towards arriving at politically binding commitments fostering regional peace, security and co-operation. The Conference considered that closer co-operation between the United Nations and regional and interregional organizations would permit effective utilization of the experience, capabilities and resources of the United Nations in the service of regional efforts. It called for concrete implementation, as a matter of the highest priority, of United Nations General Assembly resolution 39/151 G, on the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Finally, it called for the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations for effective action in the field of disarmament in order, inter alia, to enable the Organization to render adequate assistance and co-operation with regional organizations in the fields of security, disarmament and development.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

The Cameroon delegation does not measure the effectiveness of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament by the large number of meetings held or resolutions adopted or by the many expensive studies undertaken, the various colourful publications, posters and pocket diaries put out by the disarmament secretariat or by the frequent globe-trotting by Secretariat officers. Rather, we anxiously long for agreements among States that would lead to concrete measures of arms restraint and disarmament and for substantive support by the Secretariat for the political activities of States in this field.

Item 68 (g) on the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament deals with the core of our Organization's role and activities as prescribed in the Charter - namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. The Cameroon delegation has taken note of all the valuable comments and views put forward by Member States on this item during the 1985 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. We take particular note of the agreement reached at that session of the Commission on topics appropriate for recommendations, which would serve as a programme of work for this item. My delegation is prepared to continue to co-operate with other delegations in working towards the successful conclusion of the Commission's consideration of the item. We must, however, express the sincere hope that the procedural hurdles that hampered the Commission's work on that item this year are now far behind us. The final results of the Commission's work in this field will surely have a bearing one way or another on the judgment of the international public regarding the role not only of the Disarmament Commission but also of the United Nations as a whole.

Two decades ago, a distinguished American figure, the late former Senator and Vice-President of the United States, Hubert Humphrey, said:

"Ours is a new era, one which calls for a new kind of courage. For the first time in the history of mankind, one generation literally has the power

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

to destroy the past, the present and the future - the power to bring time to an end."

Two decades later, those axiomatic words of wisdom remain as valid as ever and the call for a new kind of courage to face the new kind of terminal danger that the nuclear threat has imposed on the human race is more urgent than ever as the arms race continues unabated.

On the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, let us summon the same kind of courage and wisdom that led to the founding of the world body so that, as stated by the joint Declaration of Heads of State and Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania, this year of 1985 may be the year when "hope begins to prevail over terror".

Mr. PAZ AGUIRRE (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): The world's nuclear arsenal at present reaches the staggering figure of 20,000 megatonnes. This represents power capable of destroying a million Hiroshimas.

At the same time, it is estimated that a thermonuclear war of 10,000 megatonnes would immediately produce more than one billion deaths and more than one billion wounded as the result of shock waves and thermal waves and exposure to radiation. In all, almost half of the world's population would fall immediate victim to an unlimited nuclear war, in addition to the fact that medical care for the seriously wounded would be practically impossible to obtain.

Moreover, apart from serious psychological stress, survivors, would be exposed to severe cold - the so-called nuclear winter - to darkness, destruction of food sources and fuel, to fire and the release of deadly toxins, to radiation, and contamination. Indeed, the catastrophic effects on ecosystems would cause the end of civilization in the northern hemisphere in the first stage, and in the southern hemisphere in the second stage, since radical changes in the world's air currents could accelerate the interhemispheric transfer of smoke, dust and radioactivity.

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

Consequently, scientists have agreed that atmospheric pressures resulting from a large-scale nuclear war would so greatly disrupt the earth's biological support systems that the human race might well be wiped out.

The single corollary of that agreed scientific view is all too well known: nuclear weapons are the greatest immediate threat to the health and well-being of mankind and to its future.

Faced with such a threat, the response of nuclear-weapon States has been exactly the opposite of that which has been called for with patient insistence by the vast majority of nations. There is a constant accumulation and modernization of atomic arsenals and, in fact, the doctrines of nuclear deterrence and strategic security continue to prevail. This means a constant search for greater destructive power - a search that is senseless in view of the fact that a single thermonuclear bomb can contain greater power than all the explosives used in all wars since the invention of gunpowder, or the fact that the explosive power of the world's nuclear arsenals is today 5000 times greater than that of all the explosives used in the Second World War, or the fact that the super-Powers have sufficient capability to devastate the earth several dozens of times over.

Thus, in the past four decades, the nuclear arms race has been intensified on the basis of the successive unilateral decisions adopted by each super-Power in the name of its own national security, strategic balance or the defence of their military alliances. That phenomenon, based on the constant view that the decisions of one party affect that security of the other, have given rise to a process of action and reaction which has gone on for so long that it seems endless and has relegated the rest of the international community to the role of observer, with conflicting hopes and fears about its destiny.

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

The second paragraph of the Delhi Declaration of 28 January 1985 includes a sentence that represents a dramatic summary of that situation: "... it is a small group of men and machines in cities far away who can decide our fate."

Once the notion of mutual assured destruction became accepted, a sufficient reason in itself for halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the arms race maintained its own dynamic - an expansive dynamic encouraged by the ideological confrontation that has greatly strengthened international trends towards a bipolar system in which two centres of political power exercise decisive control over the security and the very survival of all nations.

Many international statements have emphasized the primary responsibility which those two centres of power bear for deactivating the mechanisms capable of leading to a nuclear holocaust. But such statements have also made very clear not only the hope but also the right of the international community as such to participate in that process of deactivation. That right is above any aim of national defence or strategic balance, because the security of a few cannot be based on the insecurity of all.

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

The United Nations, the institutional embodiment of the international community, is the natural forum where that right may be exercised. However, as a result of tensions between those at the poles of the arms race, the multilateral forum par excellence has gradually been losing its ability significantly to influence the two major political decision-making centres. Consideration of developments on the four nuclear issues - the test ban, the halting of the arms race and disarmament, the prevention of nuclear war and security guarantees for all States - is sufficient to make the conclusions self-evident.

With regard to the nuclear-test-ban treaty, despite the fact that the Moscow treaty, of 1963, included the commitment to conclude a treaty on the general and complete prohibition of such tests, results have not been forthcoming. Since 1945 more than 1,500 nuclear explosions have been recorded seismologically.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty, of 1968, expressly provided for the holding of negotiations to stop the nuclear arms race. However, the world total in that year, equivalent to 5,000 megatons, has now been increased fourfold.

There is still no agreement on minimum guarantee of the prevention of nuclear war. While unilateral declarations have been made, on the basis of which certain Powers have committed themselves not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, it has not been possible to have a joint declaration even on certain essential principles, such as mutual recognition of the impossibility of winning a nuclear conflict, reciprocal willingness to eliminate the risks of a war started by accident or by surprise attack, or a common will to perfect the technical resources to deal with such crises.

Security guarantees for the non-nuclear-weapon States would be genuinely effective only to the extent that significant progress was made on the three issues mentioned previously, but at least progress has been made on the idea of an international convention. A treaty of negative guarantees would be necessary,

legally binding the nuclear-weapon States to refrain from the threat of use or the use of such weapons against States that have renounced their possession.

The efforts of the United Nations to bring about nuclear disarmament will remain mere frustrated expectations as long as the political vacuum in East-West relations persists, mutual trust continues to be precarious and the international community lacks the power to make a real impact on the decision-making centres of the major Powers.

The prospects for conventional disarmament are no better. More than 80 per cent of the world's military expenditures are devoted to conventional weapons and armed forces, and annual expenditure on them is nearly \$1 trillion - 7 per cent of the world's gross industrial product. Although there has been no world war since 1945, there have been 150 armed conflicts, with 20 million dead. There is no doubt that nuclear disarmament continues to merit top priority, but conventional disarmament should also become a permanent objective, especially in view of the magnitude of the resources that could thus be released for social progress and to raise mankind's standard of living. Several studies have confirmed the existence of a close, long-term relationship between the wealth of resources devoted to arms and the poverty of resources devoted to development.

Since 1955 successive proposals have been put forward within the United Nations system on the creation of an institutional mechanism to ensure that resources made available by reductions in military budgets are redirected to development. Last year the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research submitted a valuable report on the possibilities of establishing a multilateral fund administered by the United Nations Development Programme to put into effect a process of transferring resources from disarmament to development. That initiative, together with other proposals, is of special interest in the framework of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which the General Assembly last year decided to convene.

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

Uruguay supports the holding of that Conference. That support has been shown in its participation as a member of the Preparatory Committee and in the fact that it has reduced its own military budget since it returned to democracy. However, there is no doubt that that transfer process can be viable only if the five nuclear Powers commit themselves to contributing most of the resources, in direct proportion to the size of their nuclear arsenals, calculated on the basis of the number of delivery systems and nuclear warheads. The feasibility of such a commitment would obviously depend on the existence of a climate of détente between those Powers, or at least on a renewed spirit of negotiation, such as that which led to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the SALT agreements.

General and complete disarmament is the final goal, the culmination of a series of diplomatic efforts. But it is obvious that, since it is a process, a gradual approach is required. Otherwise, we should be transferring many international statements to the sphere of disarmament, which is so sensitive and so fraught with uncertainty for the future of mankind. It is therefore necessary immediately to increase the pace of the partial, progressive steps that can be taken, which is the only way to bring about tangible results in the short term. In that regard, my country particularly stresses to the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Latin America, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, became the first denuclearized region. Despite the natural limitations in implementing the Treaty, since it is affected by what happens in those areas where the world's nuclear power is concentrated, it continues to be a model that should be followed in other regions.

The peoples of the world often view with disappointment and serious concern the sterile verbal juggling at the periodic meetings between the super-Powers on disarmament. We feel that we are mere pawns on the chessboard; we are not the

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

players, but our very existence is at stake. We are convinced that the peace we hope for can be a reality only to the extent that there is a better, more just distribution of the benefits of civilization among the peoples, to eradicate the factors that tear societies apart and those power plays that so seriously affect human rights in so many places. Only by improving the standard of living world-wide will it be possible to bring about a new order in international relations. Only through a more equitable social and economic international system will it be possible to guarantee a better and more human life to many people in many parts of the world, and thus eliminate hatred as a way of living together.

Nobody should understand that better than the major countries, those with the greatest industrial power, those that are most developed and therefore bear the greatest share of responsibility. They must realize that we all - not merely some - have a right to a dignified life. They must understand once and for all that international law should be strictly observed; that the right to self-determination of peoples and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States are not merely academic issues to be raised when it is in their interest and to be rejected when it is not; that no country has the right to decide by force - its own or that of third parties in its service - the destiny of other peoples; and that in the end only far-sighted intelligence, reason and tolerance make possible genuine peace, true solidarity and the avoidance of distortions that are both undesirable and dangerous.

My country is small. We do not have the weapons or the material power to endanger the peace. We are a people that loves agreement and understanding achieved through reason. We believe that international disputes should be resolved solely through negotiation and arbitration, never through the use of weapons.

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

Those of us in this situation are few, if we are considered individually or as separate nations. However, we are many as a collective group. How many of us are there, counting South Americans, peoples of the Caribbean, the emerging peoples of Africa, those of the Middle East and those of Asia - to mention only those that make up the broad group of the so-called third world? Are we not the vast majority? When we speak in the name of this right to life, do we not do so also in the names of millions of human beings who love peace and abhor war? Is it not absurd for us to have to witness from afar the proliferation of atomic arsenals, the steadily increasing the number of missiles, the technology of war taking over space to make even more horrendous the prospect of annihilation? While enormous sums are spent on this mad race, how many continue to live in subhuman conditions in many parts of the world? How many children die from curable diseases simply because they have no access to health services? How many violations of the rights of peoples occur owing to a lack of education - for it is abundantly clear that the lives of dictatorships are assured only when they are based on poverty and ignorance, and peoples are not able to understand the full meaning of freedom.

There is no doubt - and this is expressly recognized by our Organization - that there is a close and direct relationship between disarmament and development, in other words, between disarmament and peace with justice. Disarmament at all levels is certainly the major objective of our times, and to that end we must exhaust all possibilities of turning these objectives into tangible realities.

The step-by-step approach we hope for cannot, then, be limited to the expansion of nuclear-free zones. It also encompasses other spheres of action, going from the control of horizontal and vertical nuclear proliferation to the strengthening of international verification of chemical and bacteriological weapons, from equitable access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to extension of the list of prohibited conventional weapons. The momentum of this

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

approach requires good faith to achieve real commitments ensuring the gradual and sustained deactivation of existing arsenals and the progressive and more vigorous use of scientific research and the enormous advances in technology for peaceful purposes, to improve man's life and avert once and for all the danger of war.

In the meantime we must continue to ponder the question that the President of Uruguay, Dr. Julio Maria Sanguinetti, posed in the plenary of this Assembly recently:

"One is justified in hoping that those responsible for the warlike escalation will have a moment of supreme enlightenment which will lead them to put a stop to this suicidal race and devote to life a part of the resources, talents and energy that they now devote to death." (A/40/PV.6, p. 26)

Mr. DJOUDI (Algeria) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure for me to convey to you the great satisfaction of my delegation at seeing you guiding the proceedings of the First Committee. This is a just tribute to your competence, your breadth of view and your many personal qualities, which have made you a colleague whose co-operation is sought and a friend whose judgement is always valued. It is also a well deserved tribute to the distinctive wisdom of your country, Indonesia, with which Algeria is linked by traditional bonds of mutual respect and lasting friendship forged by a common struggle for the promotion of the ideals of freedom, justice and peace.

The fact that you have been elected Chairman of this Committee this year only serves to highlight further your personal commitment, as well as that of your country, to the objectives of universal peace, security and prosperity, which remain so indissolubly associated with the long march undertaken by our peoples since the Bandung Conference, the thirtieth anniversary of which we are celebrating this year, and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which is beginning its twenty-fifth year of existence.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

I should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee as well as your predecessor, Mr. Souza e Silva, Ambassador of Brazil, for the exemplary fashion in which he presided over our work at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The United Nations is this year celebrating its fortieth anniversary. It is also 40 years since humanity abruptly entered the nuclear era. Thus, at the very time when the United Nations held out a promise of building a new international society governed by the rule of law, the nuclear weapon held out the prospect of a reign of terror. Since then the gap between the dream and the reality has steadily widened, the former becoming ever more illusory, the latter ever more oppressive. Since then the life of nations, as well as the work of the United Nations, have consistently reflected the dual reality of a world hastening towards its doom, while at the same time the effort of the international community to avert the threat of the extinction of the human race has become ever more derisory.

So at this time of stocktaking we should ask ourselves why it is that today the most outstanding achievements have fallen so far short of even the most modest hopes.

It is a historical fact today that the nuclear competition began even before the end of the Second World War. The logic of the arms race, which was to prevail in the atomic era, was in no way to differ from the logic we had inherited from pre-history; from the club to the slingshot, the quest for the absolute weapon has been a permanent concern. But the absolute weapon, like the distant horizon itself, which recedes as one moves in its direction, is fuelling an unbridled arms race today, where the search for a new system of weapons constantly gives rise to a parallel search for a system of counter-measures. This competition has come to embrace in succession the surface of the Earth and the vast expanses of the seas and oceans. Today it is about to spread into outer space. Never has the vertical

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

arms race come so close to being literally true. The technical possibility of developing anti-satellite and anti-missile weapons is, we are told, contradicted by no law of physics, so, as always, what is technically possible becomes politically necessary, and the world has no choice but to live with it.

However, this is a qualitatively unprecedented arms race; it has been so ever since the conquest of the atom. For that reason it is disturbing for a number of reasons. This is, without doubt, the first time that an arms system so complex and sophisticated and against which no defence is possible has come into being, which implies that the development of new measures and counter-measures in the military field will be raised to a higher, more intensive level. This confirms the human predilection for increasingly sophisticated research into means of destruction. Like the atom, which was used for military purposes before its civilian applications had even been imagined, work on controlled energy is directed, above all, at the achievement of military objectives, while we are told that it could help to solve, once and for all, the energy problem.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

To make outer space a new frontier of the arms race means giving up pursuit of the objective of nuclear disarmament. It is in fact giving top priority once again to the constant concern to neutralize the potential adversary militarily without really having exhausted all the possibilities of dialogue with a view to concluding agreements guaranteeing increased mutual security.

The very prospect of the militarization of outer space makes it imperative to exert increased efforts to begin an authentic process of nuclear disarmament. Indeed, only the virtues of dialogue and mutual trust can banish the threat of an unprecedented arms race. It is imperative that a series of measures be negotiated before the situation gets entirely out of hand. History indeed furnishes abundant proof that new systems of weapons appear more rapidly than the agreements prohibiting them are negotiated. At a time of new, decisive choices for the future of a world already on the threshold of the 21st century, it would be a good thing for the meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev to confirm the hope that the path of dialogue will once again be taken. It is in fact urgently necessary that the nuclear Powers, and especially the most powerful of them, reach agreement first of all on the cessation of nuclear tests and secondly on a series of measures to avert nuclear war definitively. Concrete proposals have been put forward. Negotiations on them should be undertaken in a constructive spirit of mutual trust with the aim of bring about by successive stages a process of authentic nuclear disarmament.

However, we should not lose sight of the fact that the world's security is the business of the whole world. The nuclear threat raises the problem of international security in global, indivisible terms. Hence the primary responsibility of the great Powers to negotiate a reduction of their respective armaments cannot be separated from the responsibility shared by all nations regarding the future of the world and the need for the establishment of international peace and security and the promotion of universal co-operation and

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

understanding. Therefore the United Nations should be prepared to play its full part in organizing these measures in accordance with the claims of universality.

Twenty-five years ago an atomic bomb was exploded for the first time in the Algerian desert, which was at that time under colonial domination. Only some of the African States had achieved their independence, but even then the African peoples were confronted with the dominant reality of today's world, a world in which the nuclear factor had become the essential factor. Realizing very quickly the new danger facing the continent through the introduction of nuclear weapons, the African countries first took the initiative of raising the problem in the United Nations and, subsequently, adopted in 1964 a Declaration calling for the denuclearization of Africa. It can be claimed that the unanimity with regard to the need to keep the African continent free of nuclear weapons was one of the first manifestations of unanimity on the part of independent Africa. Today, this unanimity is one of the essential elements of concerted action on the part of African countries within the United Nations and in particular, within this First Committee.

Less than 20 years after the first nuclear explosion in the Algerian Sahara, we saw in another desert, the Kalahari, signs of preparation for another nuclear explosion. Since then there have been repeated indications confirming possession of nuclear weapons by South Africa. Thus, introduced first in the north of Africa, the nuclear weapon was finally to come to rest in the south of the continent, where now the racist apartheid régime has made of it a constant threat to the countries of southern Africa. This has resulted, at the subregional, regional and international levels, in a situation whose implications we should all understand.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

First of all, we must stress that by acquiring a military nuclear capacity South Africa has introduced a major element of discontinuity in the general framework of regional security. With the Middle East, southern Africa constitutes one of the two regions of the world in which hotbeds of tension persist and where there is the greatest likelihood of the use of the nuclear weapon. In both cases the régimes involved are characterized by a natural inclination to undertake military escalation. The temptation to make use of the absolute weapon grows as it becomes more and more impossible for them to impose by conventional aggression their will to dominate the peoples and States of the region.

Furthermore, the southern African and Middle East conflicts also demonstrate the inappropriateness of a certain concept of the regional approach to disarmament. It cannot be suggested that regional disarmament measures would be likely to promote security and stability in regions of the world where aggressors have long benefited from the complicity of others in the construction of the most redoubtable arsenals and when, on the other hand, States and peoples suffering persistent violation of their sovereignty and territorial integrity have the greatest difficulty in building a credible, deterrent national defence system. This shows the full measure of the problem posed by the dangerously benign assistance which the two aggressive régimes have always managed to get from certain countries prepared to collaborate with them in the nuclear field. Furthermore, at a time when horizontal non-proliferation seems to be the primary concern of certain countries, we cannot fail to note the remarkable absence of any consistent effort to neutralize the nuclear capacity of South Africa and Israel. It is as if, in addition to the five nuclear Powers we all know about, the status of semi-clandestine nuclear Power has to be tolerated with regard to those two régimes. It goes without saying, therefore, that for Algeria the South African and Israeli nuclear capacity is the principal challenge to horizontal nuclear

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

non-proliferation and constitutes one of the most serious blows to the credibility of the existing non-proliferation régime.

Thus an identical situation exists in the Middle East and in South Africa where two projects for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones come up against the same obstacle, that is, the nuclear fait accompli. Furthermore, a recent conflict has demonstrated that it is always tempting for a nuclear Power to resort to a nuclear threat against a non-nuclear-weapon country even when the latter is in a denuclearized geographic zone.

The result is a general situation in which the very concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone must be reappraised. It is therefore no surprise that today the limitations of the gradual denuclearization of the planet by means of the regional approach have been quickly demonstrated.

Therefore, owing to the nuclear factor, insecurity has become the best shared asset in the world and the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones can at best be an adjunct and not an end in itself. It is neither a preliminary to nor a substitute for the objective of nuclear disarmament.

On this fortieth anniversary of our Organization we are bidden to undertake an exercise in stock-taking and to note the undeniable fact of the global preservation of world peace. But we cannot ignore the considerable number of local wars that have broken out since 1945 in the shadow of a nuclear deterrent. Although mankind has thus been spared nuclear annihilation, we cannot consider it acceptable that certain conflicts have persisted even though they have been geographically limited; that they are none the less deadly and often persistently threaten to escalate towards globalization.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

Since 1945, according to polemological institutes, the world has known only 26 days of peace. According to other less rigorous criteria of what constitutes a day without war, mankind has known only 3 days of peace per year. This is hardly reassuring. Some people see in this sufficient justification for laying stress on regional disarmament in the third-world countries; but this once again disregards what is most often the primary cause of conflicts. Who can deny that the situation in the Middle East and that in southern Africa are less matters of disarmament than of bringing about a comprehensive settlement of these two conflicts which would finally satisfy the just aspirations of the peoples of the regions to freedom, independence and security? Generally speaking, the third-world countries are constantly plagued by the threats of interference, intervention and aggression. When the third world is designated as a vast geographic area open to the activities of the great Powers in the search for strategic advantage, the right to preserve their national sovereignty becomes merged with the sacred duty to defend their national independence. This cannot be better illustrated than by the recent Israeli aggression against Tunisia, a country that is known to have no military ambitions.

Although it is true that the slightest military effort on the part of developing countries often imposes on them very heavy burdens socially and economically, one cannot overlook the elementary truth that they are not naturally inclined to martial madness. The fundamental truth shared by all the countries of the third world is that they need peace to bring about their development. This is what underlies the work of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries, whose objective is a continuing struggle against threats of aggression and destabilization in order to promote the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, in a world freed from the threat or use of force, a world determined to achieve international legality and universal development.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

This is not to deny or minimize the existence or importance of conflicts of local origin; but it is the task of the great Powers to strive to end those conflicts in the interest of world peace. From that standpoint, regional efforts, just like those made within the framework of the United Nations, should be encouraged in order to bring about a definitive and just settlement of those conflicts. From that standpoint, too, we note with interest that the leaders of the two greatest countries of the world at their meeting next month intend to deal with the problem of regional conflicts. It would be desirable for world peace if they were thus to show their determination to contribute effectively to the settlement of those conflicts, subject to respect for the rights of the peoples and States involved.

The end of this century sometimes almost resembles the end of the world. The militarization of outer space, even before actually acquiring its anticipated dreaded dimensions, is fraught with a particular symbolism. It is a futuristic version of the sword of Damocles for the 21st century. Thus the arms race will have shown the shortest way from Greek legend to science fiction. Yet, there is more wisdom to be derived from Greek antiquity than can be expected of the pax informatica that is in store for us. Suspended over his head, a sword held by a single strand of horse's hair was to persuade Damocles of the fragility of the good fortune of tyrants. This lesson which comes to us from ancient Greek wisdom is something we would do well to ponder at the present time. It reminds us of the fragility of the good fortune of the world for whose preservation we must all work together.

Mr. RANA (Nepal): My delegation wishes to extend its warmest felicitations to you, Sir, on your well-deserved election as Chairman of this important Committee. We are particularly happy to have the benefit of your able and wise guidance as we begin to deliberate on issues so vital to international security and human survival. We also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the other officers of the Committee on the election to their respective offices.

The 23 agenda items once again under discussion in our Committee have been universally recognized as the most urgent and sine qua non for the achievement of a safer and civilized world order. There is no dearth of studies on various aspects of these issues, including their impact and implications for the future of humanity. Every nation and, for that matter, every person, is today painfully aware of the catastrophic consequences of the present arms build-up and, in particular, that of nuclear weapons. Yet over the past 40 years, even after we collectively pledged "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", the threat to human survival remains not merely undiminished but, if anything, immeasurably heightened. Year after year we witness with growing concern a scandalous increase in the number, lethal power, range and accuracy of both conventional and nuclear weapons.

United Nations efforts from the very beginning to halt and reverse this dangerous trend have not had much success. Such a frustrating experience need not, however, deter us from our common path and purpose. It should, instead, add urgency and resolve to our collective endeavours. My delegation is somewhat happy to note a few encouraging signs in this fortieth anniversary year of the United Nations. Besides the high level of political commitment brought to bear on the subject by world leaders, equally significant is the agreement reached early this

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

year between the two super-Powers to resume their negotiations on nuclear arms control. Although the two rounds of discussions did not achieve much progress, in the light of some new initiatives on the part of General Secretary Gorbachev and also President Reagan's assertion that nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought, as well as in the light of the forthcoming meeting between the two leaders in Geneva, we have reason to hope that the ongoing third round of arms control talks will yield more positive results.

It is also encouraging that the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, recently held in Geneva, was able to arrive by consensus at a Final Document which, inter alia, reiterated a point we have always made, namely, that all nuclear-weapon States parties to that treaty should fulfil the solemn commitments undertaken for a comprehensive nuclear test ban. My delegation fully shares the view expressed by many representatives in this Committee that the successful outcome of that Conference reflects renewed recognition of the value of the Treaty not only to its parties but to the world as a whole.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

Sharing the conviction of the Conference that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is essential to international peace and security, my delegation fully supports the recommendations for its effective implementation. At the same time, we believe that so long as the nuclear-weapon States party to the NPT continue to ignore their obligations to halt all nuclear-test explosions, it will be unrealistic to hope that non-NPT signatories will come around to acceding to its provisions.

In this context, we welcome the moratorium on nuclear tests declared by the USSR and hope this will reassure other nuclear Powers and encourage them to do the same. We recognize, however, that it can only be step towards and not a substitute for a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

During the past few years international concern has been seriously focused on issues related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which, like the high seas and oceans, should be considered as the common heritage of mankind. This is one of the issues which has been much debated in the Geneva negotiations, in the Conference on Disarmament and in this Committee itself with a view to reaching agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In this connection, the initiative of the USSR delegation relating to co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space is commendable and timely and its proposal to convene an international conference in this regard deserves full support. The convening of such a conference has become especially urgent because of the threat of the arms race being carried into outer space. There is no doubt that the development of a "star wars" or "high frontier" system would add a dangerous dimension to the arms race - not because the system itself is feasible, which it is not, but because the system's development is apt to yield dangerous and unexpected spin-offs that could be more destabilizing than the system itself.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

South Pacific, in the same spirit as it does those already established in Latin America and in Antarctica. Likewise, my delegation hopes that the nuclear-weapon-free zone recently established in the South Pacific will pave the way for other regions - including our own region, South Asia - to agree to establishing similar zones.

My delegation wishes to reiterate its fervent support for the General Assembly Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We support the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean next year in Colombo without pre-conditions, to be attended by all nuclear-weapon States, maritime users and the States of the Indian Ocean region. The implementation of the Declaration would, we believe, vastly improve the climate of security of that region, not least by diminishing the possibility of a naval confrontation between nuclear-weapon States in that sensitive part of the globe. We believe it would also help to reduce the danger of nuclear weapons being directed towards the coastal and hinterland countries of the Indian Ocean region.

While the spectre of total nuclear obliteration continues to hold mankind in thrall, we believe serious note must be taken of the dangerous escalation of the arms race in conventional weapons, especially that in third-world countries, whose priorities should clearly lie elsewhere. Without putting too fine a point on it, we wish to underline that, as a United Nations study reveals, it is precisely the developing world that has very largely been the theatre and the target of almost all of the 150 and more armed conflicts that have taken place since the Second World War and have claimed over 20 million human lives.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

As such, my delegation would most firmly support any international efforts aimed at controlling the conventional arms race, and in particular, the international transfer of conventional weapons beyond the legitimate self-defence requirements of developing countries. We also support any measure effectively to monitor the reduction of military expenditures, in the belief that verification and comparability must form the essential components of such a system.

When the world is confronted with a wide range of serious socio-economic problems that need to be addressed urgently, it is tragic that so much of the world's precious resources should be frittered away on the accumulation of costly arms and weapon systems, the more so since it is evident that in our small interdependent world the ever-widening disparities between affluence and poverty, waste and want, luxury and misery, cannot go on without an explosive cataclysm occurring at some point.

In fact it is precisely with this in mind that we have endorsed the idea of convening a United Nations Conference on the Relationship between Development and Disarmament next year, a year designated as the International Year of Peace. This is a theme that is close to our hearts as it very closely parallels the thinking behind our peace zone proposal, which is basically rooted in the idea that we should spend our very limited resources on the most pressing priority of all: that of development.

We believe such a Conference will not only contribute to the cause of world development but, ultimately, to that of disarmament and international security, the central concerns of this Committee.

Mr. TONWE (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, may I first of all congratulate you on your unanimous election to the Chair, an election which is a tribute to your professional and personal qualities. I should like to assure you of the full co-operation of my delegation.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

May I also take the opportunity of congratulating the members of the Bureau, as well as your predecessor, Ambassador de Souza e Silva, for a job well done.

At about this time last year, when I was also in New York attending meetings of this Committee, I had the heart-warming feeling that the purpose of my mission was real, urgent and meaningful. At that time, many leading local and foreign newspapers regularly carried thought-provoking articles and editorials which gave expression to the grave concern which peoples everywhere felt at the dangerous escalation of the arms race on earth and its ominous extension to outer space.

Radio and television stations played their full part in that sensitizing process. Political analysts and scientific experts tried to elucidate the issues so that decision-makers would be fully aware of the potential consequences of their choice of arms. All that built up timely pressure on the nuclear-weapon Powers to take significant steps toward reversing the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race.

This year I do not, I regret to say, have the feeling that most people outside these precincts are showing as much concern about disarmament and international peace and security as they did this time last year. This apparent loss of interest may be attributed to several factors. Some people may have been won over to the doctrine of nuclear deterrence; others may have become weary of the frustrations of the disarmament campaign; yet others may have decided to give the super-Powers another chance of proving their sincerity and political will next November in Geneva, by negotiating a reliable agreement to halt the dangerous slide into global self-destruction.

We in this Committee must not let the United Nations, or anyone, reach any of the three stages of paralysis described above. The job in hand is to take urgent

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

action, as the consequences of inaction or failure are too dangerous to contemplate. Neither conversion to the theory of deterrence, nor frustration, nor excessive optimism will serve the cause of disarmament.

Disarmament is the professed cause which every member of this Committee seeks to serve. But that objective is not an end in itself. It is a means of attaining the lofty ideals of international security, peace and harmony among all peoples. Unfortunately, because these ideals have been so often threatened and disrupted in recent memory; because leaders have seen how easily and nonchalantly some States have torn up existing treaties and conventions for their self-aggrandisement; how recklessly some leaders have jettisoned the basic norms of the international community to seize by force of arms peaceful, unarmed neighbours, and trample on their sovereign rights; because States have been subjected to so much harassment and so many outrageous violations of their territorial integrity and sovereignty, both the potential aggressor and the potential victim are bound to see military power and armament as the guarantee of their objectives. Thus, the potential aggressor and the potential victim alike embark on an arms race to intimidate, dissuade or neutralize each other. From that point the vicious circle is complete, and an arms race becomes a cause as well as a consequence of tension.

The arms race between the two major military alliances is no different from the general situation we have just described. Spurred on by ideological rivalry, the two super-Powers have embarked on an arms race on earth and in space which is virtually unlimited in cost and dimension. Today, the super-Powers account for more than 72 per cent of the \$820 billion or so spent by all nations of the world on military hardware and systems. And while the military expenditure of other countries fell in 1984, that of the major nuclear-weapon Powers rose, thus confirming that they provide the dynamics of the arms race, including the dangerous nuclear-arms race, and its catastrophic extension to outer space.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

When the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963 was followed in 1968 by the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the world thought that the stage was set for the gradual and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons. Experience since then has not vindicated that optimism. Although no new nuclear-weapon States have emerged, and non-nuclear-weapon States have fully complied with the articles of the NPT, nuclear tests by the nuclear-weapon Powers have continued unabated, for the sole purpose of enhancing the destructive capability of the nuclear bomb. What is more, no significant progress has been made towards nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

As we have said time and again, Nigeria is not unaware of the complexity of the negotiations that are necessary to bring about a dismantling, or at least a reduction, of the sophisticated nuclear-weapon-based military systems which the super-Powers have built up against each other. We believe, nevertheless, that a start can be made without endangering the existing mutual assured destruction capability on which the present policy of deterrence rests. The first such step is a moratorium.

My delegation welcomes all unilaterally declared moratoriums on weapons testing. We would like to see other nuclear-weapon States follow the example of the Soviet Union. In that event, we would appeal to the Soviet Union to extend its own moratorium to give enough time to negotiate an international test-ban treaty, complete with verification provisions acceptable to all. As reputable and impartial experts have assured us, fool-proof verification techniques are not now the problem. We therefore hope that the will to conclude negotiations on this very important issue will be demonstrated.

In the light of the current debates about the dangers of qualitative proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Nigerian delegation believes that a comprehensive test-ban treaty will almost certainly reduce international tension and create an atmosphere conducive to further negotiations.

The Nigerian delegation cannot support the view that a freeze of the production, stockpiling and deployment of nuclear weapons would undermine the security of any of the major military alliances. With some 50,000 warheads between them, enough to transform today's bustling world into a dead planet, we do not see how a conditional freeze, limited in time, can make any super-Power more vulnerable, or jeopardize its security. We believe that the vulnerability of nuclear-weapon States increases in proportion to the growth of their own nuclear arsenals, and the best way to reduce that vulnerability is to reduce nuclear arsenals.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

Any negotiation to reduce nuclear arsenals today will be impaired by the ominous extension of the arms race to outer space. That is enough reason for my delegation to maintain its strong opposition to all attempts to militarize outer space. This environment is a common heritage of man, which should be reserved for peaceful uses, beneficial to all of mankind.

The militarization of outer space would create a sense of insecurity among even the major military Powers. It is only natural that each one will endeavour to match the other's space programme. Leaders of some nuclear-weapon States may say today that research into space-based non-nuclear defence systems would enhance not only their defence but that of their potential enemy and, indeed, of the international community as a whole. That may reflect the present stage of scientific knowledge. But we cannot be sure what new horizons may be broken by science. We do not know what new surprises military space technology might have for us all.

A new arms race in space will provide no permanent superiority in favour of anyone. It will merely succeed in postponing disarmament here on Earth for several decades, if not forever. My delegation is opposed to such an adventure. We would like to see substantive discussions begin at the Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space at the next session of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, and that the Committee should receive in 1986 a more meaningful mandate than it has had in 1985.

Nigerians, like the peoples of other countries, are thrilled by the spectacular achievements of the super-Powers in the scientific exploration of outer space. We appreciate the various peaceful purposes to which knowledge acquired from the probes have been put. We all benefit from it. We do not, therefore, advocate an abandonment of space research altogether. All we seek is an international outer space régime which will ensure that research in space is directed exclusively to peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has just successfully cleared its third hurdle in Geneva. The non-nuclear-weapon States parties have demonstrated unequivocally their commitment to the objectives of the Treaty. As was recognized in the Final Document, they complied with the Treaty's stipulations in an exemplary manner. Regrettably, the same could not be said for the nuclear-weapon States, particularly the super-Powers, which, in spite of their obligation to produce results at disarmament negotiations, have done exactly the opposite by extending and intensifying the arms race in all environments. The clearing of the hurdle in Geneva is, therefore, a great success, due partly to the spirit of compromise shown by all and to the diplomatic skill of the President of the Conference, Ambassador Mohamed Shaker of Egypt.

The Nigerian delegation is not satisfied with the politicking that has surrounded the super-Powers attempt to comply with their obligation to negotiate earnestly under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Nigerian delegation believes that the interest of all States will be better protected at negotiations by a broadly-based multilateral conference. We welcome bilateral talks, but we do not believe that they should turn other States into mere observers or sitting ducks.

We would like to see more transparency at the bilateral talks between the super-Powers. We welcome the forthcoming talks in Geneva between President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev. We sincerely hope that this unique opportunity will be fully utilized by the two distinguished leaders of the two great nations to turn the tide of the arms race around; to bring about a reduction of international tension whenever they may be involved in rivalry, and begin a new era of co-operation across the ideological divide, thereby enabling both alliances to devote their scarce resources to economic development and social justice in their respective countries, and provide the much needed markets for the products of the developing countries.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

We do not expect miracles but my delegation believes that if nothing visibly tangible comes out of the scheduled Reagan/Gorbachev summit, the world would have every good reason to be disappointed and to seek other channels to improve the international climate, so that States can be spared the continuous fear of annihilation by nuclear weapons. One such channel would be the idea, which we launched last year, of a special conference of plenipotentiaries to negotiate a protocol to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons, along the lines of the 1925 Geneva Protocol on Chemical and Biological Weapons.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

Having renounced the option to produce nuclear weapons, the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty have the right to demand assurances that nuclear weapons, as long as they last, will not be used against them, and that they will not be threatened with their use. We call on all nuclear-weapon States which have not yet done so to make their own unilateral declarations on non-use against non-nuclear-weapon States and then to embark with others on negotiations to conclude a legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

It should be recalled that paragraph 25 of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade provided for a mid-term review and appraisal which the General Assembly will be expected to undertake at this session. In General Assembly resolution 39/148 Q of 17 December 1984, the General Assembly requested the Disarmament Commission to make a preliminary assessment of the implementation of the Declaration and to offer suggestions to ensure progress. We wish to commend the Disarmament Commission for the efforts it has made so far to fulfil that mandate.

Nigeria would like to remind the Committee of the need to pressure South Africa to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty so that the wishes of the African people to free their continent of any nuclear weapons can be realized.

As we are all well aware, United Nations studies and the results of investigations by usually reliable bodies have confirmed that the racist South African regime is capable of making nuclear weapons. In fact, certain mysterious events in that unhappy country over the past eight years or so suggest that the racist régime has a nuclear weapons programme.

And yet every delegate here today is witness to the atrocities which the desperate minority Government in Pretoria is perpetrating against harmless and innocent women and children and those who stand up for dignity. Every day, four,

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

six, ten or more Africans are killed by the racist Government. We have seen how the racist régime has, in a distinctively fascist manner, rolled across international borders and murdered civilians in their sleep in Botswana, destroyed and burned villages and their inhabitants alive in Angola and blown up railway lines, buses and bridges in Mozambique - all in a wanton bid to stem the tide of freedom which is about to sweep it away. The racists are desperate. If they can wreak so much destruction and havoc against unarmed children and innocent civilians in other countries, what would they do to a country they suspect of giving direct military assistance to freedom fighters in South Africa?

The Nigerian delegation has not doubt that the racist régime in South Africa will use whatever weapons it has, including nuclear weapons, to maintain its diabolical doctrine and exploitation. It may not even wait to verify its information when pressure is put on it in Johannesburg, Capetown or Pretoria. It might be too late to stop the racists when the heat is on them. The time to do so is now.

The Nigerian delegation calls on the Committee to begin consideration of concrete proposals for the non-nuclearization of Africa and appeals to the international community and the Security Council to apply strong pressure against the apartheid régime to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to respect the wish of the African people not to have nuclear weapons on their continent.

The Nigerian delegation sincerely hopes that in this matter it can count on all those who cherish freedom and human dignity.

Mr. AL-KAWARI (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure, in speaking here for the first time in the First Committee, to express to you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation our most sincere congratulations on your election to this important post. This is an expression of the world's trust in your competence. In the meantime, I should like to pay tribute to the bonds of freedom linking our two countries, Indonesia and Qatar.

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

I should also like to congratulate the officers of the Committee here, and I wish both you and them all success in your tasks.

The General Assembly, at its last session, through resolution 39/52, reiterated for the eighth time its strongest condemnation of all nuclear-weapon tests. It also reiterated its grave concern that nuclear-weapon testing continues unabated against the wishes of the majority of Member States.

The General Assembly also, through resolution 39/53, confirmed the importance of concluding a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Those two resolutions were among 19 resolutions adopted by the General Assembly last year on disarmament, and many of them were a repetition of similar resolutions adopted over the years. The wishes of the international community are thus a secret to no one. It is now incumbent upon certain States Members, namely, the nuclear-weapon States, to comply with the will of the international community and to implement the resolutions of the General Assembly by acting in accordance with their contents.

It is also pertinent here to mention General Assembly resolution 39/54, which reiterated the call to the States of the Middle East that are not parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to accede to that Treaty. It also called on those States to support the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. That resolution, as well as the previous one on the same subject, has remained a dead letter owing to Israel's insistence on flouting the will of the international community. Nor did it accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty nor, naturally, did it declare its readiness to support the idea of turning the Middle East into a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in order to retain its monopoly of nuclear weapons in the area and to use that nuclear monopoly as a means of terror and blackmail directed against all the countries of the Middle East.

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59-60

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

The General Assembly at its last session, by resolution 39/147, entrusted the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to prepare a report on Israeli nuclear armament and further developments there. The Institute produced that report, a summary of which is contained in document A/40/725 of 15 October 1985, reaffirming what was set out in the report of the Secretary-General on Israeli nuclear armaments contained in document A/36/431.

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

The report also noted Israel's disregard of the request of the Security Council and the General Assembly that nuclear activities be subjected to international controls. There is no doubt that Israel is ignoring the repeated call by the General Assembly for it to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and for the Middle East to become a nuclear-weapon-free zone. This conduct reveals the most ominous intentions on the part of Israel towards the countries of the area that do not possess nuclear weapons. Israel's conduct in this regard is considered a threat to international peace and security in our region and consequently in the whole world.

My delegation associates itself with previous speakers in this Committee who have expressed the view that the problem is not merely one of the stockpiling of all the different kinds of arms by certain countries. Rather, it is rooted in the lack of confidence among countries, and especially between the two super-Powers. In this respect we support the proposals put forward by the Non-Aligned Countries at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. We believe that those proposals, which cover measures concerning notification, consultation, monitoring and verification, are conducive to the creation of an atmosphere of confidence which is lacking today. We hope that the Conference will be able to achieve significant results at the session to be held in Vienna next year.

My delegation also associates itself with other delegations in expressing the hope that the forthcoming summit meeting between the two super-Powers will produce positive results commensurate with the special responsibilities of those two countries for international peace and security, and that the participants in the summit will thus respond to the hopes, aspirations and interests of the whole world.

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

My country attaches great importance to making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. Fourteen years have passed since the General Assembly adopted its resolution 2822 (XXVI), which recognized and declared that principle. It is now incumbent upon the States concerned to translate that resolution into reality.

We wish to express our gratification at the preparatory steps taken in this regard. We especially welcome General Assembly resolution 39/149, adopted last year, on the convening of a special Conference in Colombo in the first part of 1986, which entrusted the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean with the task of completing preparatory procedures in 1985 so that the Conference would be held as scheduled. We wish speedy success to the Ad Hoc Committee. We look forward to the long-awaited Conference, and we hope it will succeed in achieving the effective implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

The close link between disarmament and the consequent reduction of military expenditures, on the one hand, and meeting the economic and social requirements of the developing countries, on the other, have become crystal-clear now, and no further evidence is needed by the Members of our Organization. After the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament considered this matter carefully, it concluded, in paragraph 89 of its resolution S-10/2, that disarmament would increase the possibilities of reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries. That is an idea that the General Assembly has repeated several times since then, most recently in paragraph 2 of its resolution 39/64 A, in which the General Assembly reaffirmed that the human and material resources released through the reduction of military expenditures could be reallocated to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries.

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

This relationship between disarmament and development has become one of the self-evident facts about those two issues. It behoves us now to move from theory to implementation and effect those savings in military expenditures and direct them to the needy countries that require such resources. Therefore my delegation wishes to express its appreciation and gratification at the adoption of General Assembly resolution 39/160 on the convening of an International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. It is relevant to recall here its paragraph 2 (c), which calls for that Conference to consider ways and means of releasing additional resources, through disarmament measures, for development purposes, in particular in favour of developing countries.

We also note with appreciation that the Preparatory Committee has completed its work on the procedures for the holding of the Conference. We approve the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee concerning renewal of its mandate to enable it to complete its substantive preparations for that important Conference. We also support the idea of the Conference's being held in Paris in June and July of 1986.

We all hope that, within this context, the industrial countries with large military budgets will co-operate with developing countries that need additional resources for development, and we hope that such co-operation will result in practical and effective measures that would crystallize the relationship between disarmament and development in the interests of both the developing and the developed countries.

In this respect my delegation notes the interest of the developing countries in this aspect of disarmament. The developing countries fully realize the come in the field of economic and social development that would come from the reduction of military expenditures. In particular we would refer to the work of the Regional Conference on Security, Disarmament and Development in Africa held, on the

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

initiative of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, in Lomé, from 13 to 16 August 1985. We hope that the Declaration on Security, Disarmament and Development in Africa and the Programme of Action for Peace, Security and Co-operation in Africa adopted by that Conference will be considered by the international Conference to be held in 1986.

My delegation associates itself with those other delegations that have clearly underlined the importance of the United Nations role in the problem of disarmament and the need for that role to continue despite the difficulty of the task and the long time that has elapsed since the Organization first began to consider this vital issue. Without perseverance in this respect, the United Nations would not have assumed its historic responsibility before the peoples of the world, whose destinies are gravely threatened by this feverish arms race.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.