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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia)

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Statements were made by:

Mr. Alban-Holguin (Colombia)

Mr. Murin (Czechoslovakia)

Mr. Sutresna (Indonesia)

Mr. Tsvetkov (Bulgaria)

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

AGENDA ITEMS 48 TO 69 AND 145 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ALBAN-HOLGUIN (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Once again peace-loving countries note that the fate of the world is at the crossroads of a political struggle between East and West which does not augur well for the prospects of production and consumption for all nations, for their material and cultural needs, and for their choices for development. Once again the world awaits agreement between the two super-Powers.

This policy is again being reviewed by the Organization. It is fitting that we should submit it to the critical test of the United Nations, if we are to resolve one of the most pressing problems of mankind, the arms race.

A careful analysis of what has taken place in this Committee leads us to pose the following questions. What could convince us of the good intentions that the great Powers continuously proclaim on arms control and disarmament? What guarantees are there that the talks resumed in Geneva and elsewhere will put an end to the spiralling arms race? Why has it not yet been possible to negotiate concrete and effective disarmament measures? Why is there indifference to the world's progress towards the goals of peace, justice and development?

Those are some of the questions which often come to mind when we try to understand the nature of relationships between international politics and the possibilities for achieving disarmament.

We know full well that for the poor countries the problem of their development is much more political than technical. Also, what is lacking in the disarmament process at this time are not the simple formulas which common sense would dictate, nor complicated formulas prepared with the most select and advanced methods of study, nor the many resolutions of the United Nations, but rather the political purpose of States to replace armaments with development.

(Mr. Alban-Holguin, Colombia)

It is our hope that during our work in this Committee we shall realistically approach the causes of the problems - not by references to past mistakes or by citing lists of demands, or even less by a new series of resolutions. Rather, we must do this through a coherent set of guidelines in conformity with global interests. Many of those guidelines are contained in the comprehensive programme of disarmament, which is on the agenda for consideration by the First Committee.

Colombia has always joined in the call by the peoples for peace and disarmament. Like all nations, Colombia wishes to have a new world order based on collective security and the peaceful settlement of disputes. There is no doubt that the prevention of war is a goal of the human race and that the presence of nuclear weapons gives an inevitable connotation and priority to that goal and requires of us rapid action to prevent war.

We repeat our concern that a nuclear threat still hangs over the world, and, at the same time, we express our disquiet about the constant risks inherent in the present state of international relations, based on a balance of power and of force, relations that have been made even worse by the growing violation of the elementary principles of international life.

International standards are based on the assumption that there is a "general interest" which the members of the international community must impose and defend. But that concept falls by the wayside when we try to reconcile the general interest with the real and dissimilar interests of those who believe that there is a legitimate right to commit aggression, that there is a right to defend oneself against such aggression, and that security lies in the accumulation of weapons, as well as of those who feel threatened by that accumulation of weapons.

(Mr. Alban-Holquin, Colombia)

We could make some comments on the weakness and lack of co-ordination of the various pieces of the world puzzle; but at this time we merely wish to express our concern that so far the United Nations system has been unable to impose an international order based on law, to prevent the use and the threat of the use of force or to halt the arms race.

In Colombia we view international policy as an instrument for the affirmation of the specific values of each country and of its right to defend its national interests. We believe that in today's world those purposes are viable only within the United Nations and the regional bodies of the United Nations. We believe also that affirmative nationalism cannot be exclusivist or isolationist.

That understanding of coexistence is truly reflected in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. As Colombia's Minister for Foreign Relations, Mr. Augusto Ramirez Ocampo, said at the ministerial meeting in Luanda:

"As part of a concept of constructive pluralism, so necessary in an international community that guarantees the right to dissent, we must strengthen the philosophy of genuine non-alignment, a non-alignment that does not accept any bias or concessions, or tendentious machinations to support outside causes or interests. It is not a question of taking strategic or equidistant positions; rather, it is a question of maintaining our independence of judgement and our principles, free from any kind of contamination."

The delegation of Colombia, inspired by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, is concerned about any possibility of the violation of the contractual principles to which we, the signatory countries, have committed ourselves. The fact that Latin America made a voluntary commitment not to manufacture any nuclear weapons is a categorical expression of the desire to free the entire region from the enormous dangers of the

(Mr. Alban-Holguin, Colombia)

use of nuclear energy for military purposes. That sovereign decision by our countries must be respected absolutely by all the countries of the United Nations.

We need not repeat here that the effectiveness of the Treaty has been adversely affected by the fact that a small number of States of the region have not joined the Tlatelolco system. But we invite all the States situated in the area of application of the Treaty to sign and ratify it as soon as possible, and we invite France to ratify Protocol I, so that the process of the denuclearization of our hemisphere may be completed.

When the Treaty of Tlatelolco was drafted, it was believed that the Latin American region would coexist and co-operate with other regions of the world in the undertaking of a joint effort to ensure world disarmament. Unfortunately, that has not happened; none of the political circumstances that have made that difficult and delayed it has disappeared. This means that the Latin American region has been robbed of the universal scope that would have made it a force for international peace and security.

Another factor that is a danger to peace and the very existence of mankind is the constant increase in the number of countries that have gained nuclear technology for military purposes. We are convinced that the major scientific and technological advances must be placed at the service of mankind, that the use of nuclear energy is essential to close the gap between the developed and the developing countries, and that all States have the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. But we are also convinced that as soon as it is admitted that nuclear energy can be diverted to military purposes there are very great risks and catastrophe may be the result.

(Mr. Alban-Holguin, Colombia)

Colombia considers it vital that measures be adopted to halt and reverse the naval arms race. We know full well that naval forces play an important part in military arsenals and that there is a growing tendency to attain military superiority and the mastery of the oceans as part of a global strategy in the power struggle of the world Powers. In connection with those weapons also, we now see the spectre of nuclear weapons. For our country, situated between two oceans, military activities on the seas and from the seas is a source of legitimate concern.

The stepping up of naval activities, particularly in regions of conflict, causes a further deterioration in the international situation and threatens the stability and security of all countries and of the international waterways. Consequently, we cannot separate that problem from the problem of development, since we need peaceful transit through our seas for a large part of our trade relations, and since a large source of our subsistence comes from the resources of the seas.

Colombia has a long history of active participation in the formulation of the law of the sea. It is a signatory country of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and, as such, welcomed the remarks by some States, contained in the valuable study on the naval arms race, that limitations on armaments and relevant disarmament agreements concluded in the future must be in harmony with that Convention.

(Mr. Alban-Holguin, Colombia)

The possibility of exploring and conquering outer space means that preventing its militarization should be one of our priorities. For while promising horizons are opening up for mankind, the rapid development of space technology for military purposes darkens the prospects of its use for great productive projects that could lead to a more dignified and decent life on earth.

Consequently my country considers that outer space should be an area of peace, devoted to the exploration and exploitation of space resources for the benefit of all countries. Technical and scientific capability, economic power or military might are not valid reasons why space should become the stage for an arms race such as we see on earth.

There are a number of agreed views in the world on what is good for the underdeveloped countries, what they must do, what they must overcome and what they must eliminate. Those views are largely the result of the ability of some States in the United Nations to abandon dogma and to enter into public discussions of their problems and of proposed solutions. One of those agreed views is to regard the arms race as one of the factors that prevent some countries from achieving the desired level of social advancement.

The United Nations has recognized the relationship between disarmament and development, and has begun to move towards joint action to seek ways of diverting to development resources that are now being devoted to arms. The International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development will no doubt be a very effective stimulus to the promotion of those objectives. We wish to thank the French Government for its offer to host that conference in their country. That undertaking augurs well for the success of the Conference.

(Mr. Alban-Holguin, Colombia)

Differences of views, approaches and objectives among various countries and military alliances undermine multilateralism as an approach to solving the critical problems of disarmament. Consequently we consider it most desirable to have regional co-operation to facilitate the adoption of effective disarmament measures in the countries of the area.

There is reason for saying that regional disarmament measures may be an important supplement to broader multilateral efforts designed to achieve the final goal of general and complete disarmament. Furthermore, in view of the complex nature of the problems involved and the changing considerations of policy and security in the various regions, it becomes increasingly clear that certain matters relating to arms control and disarmament could be dealt with more easily within a regional framework than in a global framework, where there is a growing tendency to attempt to apply general principles to very varying situations.

If every time we spoke about the risks of the arms buildup in Latin America we were to establish clearly that the most urgent task is to advance our countries along the path of development, it might perhaps be easier to say what is the real regional obligation and what should be the regional conduct of some peoples whose pride should be based not on a parade of force, but on the richness of its moral values. In view of pressing financial problems and the strong challenges and tensions of trying to achieve peace, regional integration and co-operation take on special importance.

The Organization of American States, faced with the need to strengthen the inter-American system and to bring it into line with current political, economic and social situations in the region, has considered the need to develop machinery to regulate the buildup of arms and troops in the region. At its seventh plenary meeting on 18 November 1983, the member countries of the Organization of American States unanimously adopted resolution 670, with a view to considering the



(Mr. Alban-Holquin, Colombia)

advisability of setting up such machinery and thus continuing to support those efforts already being made to reduce and regulate arms and military resources in order to safeguard and preserve the peace of the continent, while giving priority to the implementation of economic and social development plans. Colombia has always supported those decisions.

A far-reaching joint effort on behalf of peace should, if adequately promoted, change the face of the developing countries, by eliminating poverty, fostering the basic culture, change agricultural systems by increased use of technology and promote true social justice to restore human life to its full dimensions.

To hear the statements made by the heads of State and ministers of the countries represented at this session of the General Assembly, one might conclude that we have made a collective commitment to disarmament and peace, and that we have identified peace as a spiritual principle to be classed with freedom, justice and the right of peoples to development. It only remains for us to say that we hope it will be so.

Mr. MURIN (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The general debate on disarmament issues in our Committee has been taking place against the background of a situation which can leave no one on our planet indifferent. World events have reached a point where the question inevitably arises of the very survival of mankind and of civilization as a whole. This is not just a rhetorical question or a myth about some illusory menace. This is a question of the preservation of all the peaceful achievements of man both material and spiritual, on his long and arduous path, and a question of handing those achievements on to those succeeding generations, which 40 years ago we all solemnly undertook to save from the scourge of war. I am sure that we all agree on this. In any case, such ideas have formed the essence of the general debate at this anniversary session.

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

We have always held the view that the key to solving this problem lies in halting the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, which is being pursued so feverishly, and in limiting and reducing the stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction and preventing their spread to new environments before it is too late to do so, and before the mounting tensions, fomented by the arms race fever reaches the point where solving these problems is beyond our power.

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

This point, which is the ominous Rubicon of our time, lies in outer space. To go beyond them and launch the arms race in the sector of space surrounding the Earth would mean promoting and perpetuating it on Earth itself, with all the consequences that would entail: a substantial increase in the mortal danger of a nuclear cataclysm, tremendous wasteful expenditure of vital resources and an undermining of the existing foundations of the international legal system and international relations as a whole. If our planet, the common dwelling-place of all peoples, is to be ringed by space weapons, the entire human race will become hostage. It is my belief that the inevitable result of these precise consequences of the implementation of plans to militarize outer space must be obvious not only to us but to the overwhelming majority of States.

It is just such a dangerous course, which poses the constant threat of nuclear catastrophe, that is embodied in the strategic defence initiative, better known by its more revealing title "star wars".

It should be recalled that this decision was taken only a few months after the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Vienna in August 1982, had unanimously and emphatically stated that

"All nations, in particular those with major space capabilities, are urged to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race and to refrain from any action contrary to that aim." (A/CONF.101/10, para. 13)

The temptation to upset the approximate strategic parity by creating a new, so-called decisive, space-based weapon was mentioned by official United States representatives even before the elaborate "star wars" programme was announced. As early as 1982, Under-Secretary of Defense de Lauer openly stated in the United States Congress that, according to Pentagon estimates, a large, permanent, manned space complex capable of effectively attacking ground, sea and air targets from space would be placed in orbit and brought into operation by 1990. The

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

corner-stone of that plan, of course, is to ensure for one side the capability of delivering a nuclear strike with impunity and create for the other side an extremely dangerous situation by putting it into a position of unprecedented vulnerability. Talk about "defence" objectives, the "obsolescence" of nuclear weapons or "mutually guaranteed survival" can be dismissed out of hand.

Implementation of the "star wars" programme would disrupt the process of global disarmament negotiations and undermine the bilateral and multilateral agreements already concluded in this sphere, which serve the common security interests of all States and therefore represent, like peace itself, something common to all. The first victims of that programme would, of course, be the agreements concluded within the framework of the SALT-1 process, particularly the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, which was based on the mutual understanding that effective measures to limit such systems

"would be a substantial factor in curbing the race in strategic offensive arms and would lead to a decrease in the risk of the outbreak of war involving nuclear weapons".

The escalation of the arms race, which has reached staggering proportions even without "star wars", would become even more rapid. It is undoubtedly true that, as stated by several prominent Americans, "star wars" is a recipe not for ending or limiting the threat of nuclear weapons but rather for a competition of unlimited expense, duration and danger.

In such circumstances it would be impossible to envisage any fruitful development of broad international co-operation in the peaceful conquest of the limitless reaches of outer space and the use of its riches for the good of all peoples. All existing multilateral agreements and treaties in this sphere would be called into question, including the crucial Treaty on Principles Governing the

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, which has been in effect since 1967. It is well known that where there is military confrontation there is very little room for peaceful co-operation.

What purpose, therefore, is the "star wars" concept designed to serve? Whose security is it supposed to benefit? Arguments about the untenability of that concept are based on a realistic assessment of the facts, and first of all on the fact that the socialist States will not allow the existing strategic balance to be upset. It is obvious that the extension of the arms race into outer space would benefit only the bank accounts of the military-industrial complex and those that, having bent their energies to the task of sowing hostility and mistrust among nations, persist in thinking in terms of "pre-emptive," "disarming", "limited" or "devastating" nuclear strikes.

The effort to force a number of other States to join in the implementation of such plans is exceedingly dangerous. What is involved is not merely harmless scientific research, as some try to persuade the world public, but rather specific production and deployment of offensive space weapons and the use for that purpose of combined military power and scientific and technological potential on, essentially, a bloc basis. It would mean the internationalization of a qualitatively new component of offensive nuclear systems. It is our hope that the States in question will show the necessary farsightedness. The responsibility is too great for anyone to evade it. In this context we greatly appreciate the important statement made by the President of France to the effect that his country will not participate in the production of space weapons.

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

For all these reasons, the question of preventing an arms race in space orbits has come to the fore in all genuine efforts to reduce the threat of war.

We are all aware of the proposals of the Soviet Union designed to bring about a substantial strengthening of the peaceful status of outer space in terms of international law put forward in recent years: draft agreements envisaging the prohibition of the deployment in outer space of weapons of any kind and outlawing the use of force in outer space and from space against Earth; the proposal for a total mutual renunciation of anti-satellite systems, supported by a unilateral moratorium on test launches of anti-satellite weapons; and the idea of the total renunciation of offensive space weapons, including anti-satellite and anti-ballistic weapons, no matter where they might be based.

It might be expected that this series of far-reaching, realistic and absolutely equitable proposals, which enjoy the almost unanimous support of the international community, would be accepted for what they really are - a broad, just and constructive basis for talks about the use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes for the good of mankind.

However, for reasons which are well known, it was only after lengthy debate and procrastination that we finally succeeded this year at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament in setting up the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. It should be added that the Committee has a very limited mandate - that is, to undertake a general assessment of issues relating to the problem in question. Although we join all others in welcoming the establishment of the Committee and believe that it has fulfilled its mandate, we cannot agree to the position of a certain group of States concerning its future tasks. In essence, those tasks are being narrowed down to a mere clarification of the ambiguities surrounding the existing legal system governing outer space, as if there were not

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

another important body of the United Nations for the consideration of those issues - that is, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Legal Sub-Committee. That approach does not suit those who so fervently defended the purity of the mandate of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space whenever discussion of the non-militarization of outer space arose in its deliberations.

As to the existing gaps in international law relative to ensuring a peaceful régime in outer space under conditions of non-militarization, we advocate that they be filled through businesslike and constructive negotiation leading to the formulation of agreements on the subject at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, in the United Nations or in any other forum, on a basis of fairness and equality. We are in favour of enhancing the role of and expediting the negotiations at the Geneva Conference so that it can proceed without delay with practical work aimed at elaborating concrete international instruments on the non-militarization of outer space on the basis of the proposals before it.

For our part, we have been doing everything in our power to ensure a more tangible progress. We actively support the series of proposals put forward by the Soviet Union and have been participating in a constructive manner in ongoing talks and making a practical contribution to the strengthening and expansion of international co-operation in peaceful space programmes. We have warmly welcomed political initiatives by the non-aligned and other peace-loving States that stress the overriding importance of preventing the militarization of outer space.

Recently, in Prague, there was an international symposium on the role of scientists in preventing an arms race in outer space, in which the participants called urgently for the discontinuance of programmes on the production, testing and use of space weapons. We believe that all countries, large and small, must work together to solve this problem which affects the entire human race.

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

We attach particular importance to the Soviet-United States talks begun in Geneva this year on the whole range of questions concerning space and nuclear weapons. So far, those important negotiations have not made the progress desired. The reason for this is no secret. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the proposal of a radical 50 per cent mutual reduction of nuclear armaments made a few days ago by the Soviet Union will lift those talks out of their current stagnation and prompt a practical solution of those organically interrelated issues. If it is indeed suggested that space weapons are necessary as a shield against nuclear missiles, would it not be better, in the interests of peace, to solve that issue by radically reducing the arsenals of such devices? We believe that the forthcoming Soviet-United States summit meeting will provide an impetus to that end. This would be in the best interests of all the countries of the world and would contribute to the normalization of the situation and the restoration of confidence among States.

A responsible and constructive solution to the problem of the non-militarization of outer space would largely determine the future of human civilization. It is already being decided today whether the future will be bright and promising or gloomy and doubtful. Can we now, as the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space called upon us to do in 1982,

"rid ourselves of our obsolescent biases and concepts and move forward to the more equitable, humane and co-operative society that the image of space conjures up?" (A/CONF.101/10, para. 15)

We are convinced that the right historical choice can be found within the bounds of the attainable. However, a great deal of determination is necessary to jettison the ballast of the past, reconsider many of the postulates that have so far proved valid and break out of obsolete patterns of thought.



(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

We must reject prejudice and suspicion and look at the world through the prism of the needs of the new space age to free ourselves from the illusory ideas that the danger posed by one kind of weapon can be eliminated by producing another more deadly weapon; to renounce attempts to replace the political will to attain nuclear disarmament by new weapons systems; to approach the security of other peoples in the same way as one's own security, as a single indivisible whole for all of us, while taking into account that indeed no introduction of the latest technological achievements into the military sphere can strengthen the security of some if it creates a threat to others.

In stark contrast to the plans for turning space orbits into an offensive springboard against Earth, there is another truly innovative, creative concept of "star peace", which has been elaborated in the proposals of the Soviet Union on international co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space in conditions of its non-militarization.

As our Minister for Foreign Affairs underlined in the general debate:

"Czechoslovakia is the third country, after the Soviet Union and the United States, from which a citizen has entered outer space. It is actively participating in peaceful space programmes and fully supports the idea of 'star peace' as opposed to the threat of 'star wars'." (A/40/PV.18, pp. 57-60)

This initiative presupposes the carrying out of a whole series of concrete measures constituting the basis of a mutually acceptable régime governing the activities of man in relation to space, both on Earth and in space itself, in keeping with the legitimate interests of all peoples. The extremely humane nature of that idea is shown in the fact that its implementation would lead to harmony among the inhabitants of our planet and the surrounding space which is, in its very essence, a peaceful environment. As the Soviet proposal points out, the boundless treasures of outer space, including the resources of celestial bodies and the

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

energy of the sun, would be placed at the service of mankind. Mankind could in a common endeavour approach the unprecedented projects for the industrialization of space immediately adjacent to Earth for the benefit of the economic and social progress of all peoples.

We fully support the argument that an indispensable condition for success in this great enterprise for our time would be unreserved and total renunciation by States of any kind of militarization of outer space, particularly of the production - including scientific research work - testing, and deployment of space strike-weapons, and also unswerving observance of the fundamental principles of international law flowing from the United Nations Charter. It is our belief that these obligations should be brought together and consolidated in a legal treaty.

We regard as right and justified the proposal for the creation of a world space organization to deal with international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space under conditions of non-militarization. It would ensure for all States a broad and equal access to the multi-faceted results of the peaceful space ventures of man. In this spirit we express our support for the convening, no later than 1987, of an international conference to consider those issues in their entirety, as provided for in the draft resolution proposed to the First Committee by the Soviet Union.

We express our conviction that the proposal of the Soviet Union will be discussed in a responsible and constructive spirit, commensurate with its extreme importance and will meet with broad support among Member States of the United Nations, thus becoming a turning-point in the history of man's journey into space.

(Mr. Murin, Czechoslovakia)

At a later stage of our work, the Czechoslovak delegation will set forth its position on other important items on our agenda, including the problem of nuclear armaments and the role of our Organization in solving it. I hope that it will not be a violation of the rules of procedure, Mr. Chairman, if I voice my conviction that our Committee, under your experienced and energetic leadership, with the full co-operation of all delegations, will mark this anniversary session by achieving substantial and positive results. I wish to assure you that, for our part, we shall not be found wanting in our efforts to help attaining these results.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): We are gathered here again to express our views on the multi-faceted aspects of disarmament. The issues before us range from individual concerns to regional preoccupations, and many vitally affect all of humanity. The solemn occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Organization affords us a unique opportunity for deep reflection on the role played by the United Nations in the field of disarmament, for a collective appraisal and assessment of how to promote its effectiveness, and how best to attain the objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

I fully concur with you, Mr. Chairman, that it is our duty to ensure that our deliberations will proceed in an atmosphere of total responsibility, rationality and constructive purpose, and that we should continue to regard the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament as our basic point of departure in the effort to promote dialogue and to provide guidance towards resolving outstanding issues.

It should be recalled that the General Assembly and the Security Council, spurred by the awesome threat posed by atomic weapons and the disquieting prospect of a nuclear-arms race, from the very beginning focused attention on questions of disarmament and the regulation of armaments. Early efforts were therefore concerned

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

with the control of atomic energy in order to ensure its use exclusively for peaceful purposes. The discussions on atomic energy took place under conditions largely comparable to those prevailing today; and in the discussion of the regulation and reduction of armaments, a number of principles were accepted, many of which retain their validity and relevance.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

By the end of the 1950s, the General Assembly had named general and complete disarmament the basic goal of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. At the same time, the Assembly adopted a number of resolutions which, in one way or another, recognized the inter-relationship between the problems of disarmament and of security, and which touched upon issues concerning the arrangements and institutions that should accompany the process of disarmament to ensure the security of States and the maintenance of international peace.

Throughout this period there has been increasing world-wide alarm, as reflected in numerous United Nations resolutions, at the failure to eliminate the ultimate threat posed by nuclear weapons to the very survival of mankind, which is the single most important global issue. Although that realization led to some partial or limited agreements during the 1960s and 1970s - among them the partial test-ban Treaty, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and SALT I and II - the arms race, rather than abating, took on a momentum of its own, spiralling to ever more irrational levels. Indeed, the nuclear arms race, initiated in the 1950s and accelerated through the 1960s and 1970s, has today reached such levels as to be wholly disproportionate to any national security requirements of its major protagonists.

At its first special session devoted to disarmament, convened in 1978 on the initiative of the non-aligned States, the General Assembly adopted by consensus a comprehensive strategy, conferring upon the Organization the central role and primary responsibility in all disarmament questions and assigning priority to nuclear arms issues. Despite that major effort to generate new approaches, the second special session on disarmament, convened in 1982, ended in abysmal failure.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

At the same time, however, the hopes placed in these multiple efforts have not to any appreciable degree allayed our profound anxiety about the spectacle of the arms race now threatening to break through the threshold of outer space. This acutely dangerous situation facing all of us today is directly attributable to four decades of unbridled competition, with its source in the East-West conflict. Further, close scrutiny of the agreements that have been negotiated to date makes it clear that their principle purpose was not, and still is not, arms reduction and disarmament. Rather, they constitute a body of limited agreements on rules for regulating certain aspects of the arms race. As a result, while negotiations on these accords were in progress the technological wherewithal was already to hand, and new weapon systems on the drawing boards, to eclipse the scope of the accords at their very inception. This, unfortunately, is the sad legacy of arms control over the past 40 years.

Clearly then, if there is a lesson to be learned from these past efforts - and I believe there is - it is that attempts merely to regulate or temporize with the arms race, treating the symptoms rather than the underlying causes, have proven to be ineffective.

It is a matter of deep concern, therefore, that, in spite of all the multilateral and bilateral meetings that have been held, and in spite of the mechanisms that have been established, the goal of arms limitation is more distant than ever before. We regret that this can be the only possible characterization also of the recently resumed Geneva negotiations between the two major Powers, the avowed objective of which is the termination of the arms race on earth and the prevention of its spread into outer space. The talks have thus far hardly moved beyond the stage of preliminary soundings and mutual recriminations.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

Mankind's pleas for a halt to the headlong rush towards self-extinction have over the years found expression in a succession of documents adopted by our Organization, by the Non-Aligned Movement, and by scores of international conferences and meetings. Indeed, as early as 1955 the historic Asian-African Conference, held at Bandung, called for the reduction of armaments and for the elimination of nuclear weapons through co-operation at the United Nations.

These concerns were most emphatically reiterated in the declaration adopted at the meeting in commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Asian-African Conference, to which my Government had the privilege of acting as host at Bandung last April. Delegations from Africa and Asia assembled on that occasion expressed, inter alia:

"their deep concern at the accelerated arms race, particularly in the nuclear field....

"In this regard they emphatically reiterated that while the primary responsibility to prevent a nuclear catastrophe rests with the nuclear-weapon States, it cannot be made the exclusive concern of those States, for world disarmament, peace and security are the responsibility of mankind as a whole".

(A/40/276, annex, para. 7)

The question of the prevention of nuclear war has become the overriding concern of the international community. It is undeniable that no other form of warfare has confronted mankind with dangers even remotely comparable to the dangers of atomic warfare. History has shown that weapons invented by man have been used and that nuclear weapons were used in our lifetime in Asia. Since their advent, nuclear weapons have added a new and frightening dimension to the potential for world catastrophe. Possession of these weapons, especially in the light of the strained relations existing between the great Powers, constitutes an unprecedented threat to human society and civilization. The task of preventing nuclear war has

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

acquired even greater urgency with the continued emphasis on doctrines of fighting a nuclear war and on other strategic concepts based on the use of nuclear weapons. The situation is further complicated by alarming technological innovations such as the reduced time required to deliver missiles to their targets and the resultant launch-on-warning policies. These developments reveal the growing vulnerability of command, control and communications systems, thus further increasing the risk of accidental war arising out of technical malfunction, human error or political misjudgement.

Because of these factors, and because of the unprecedented destructive impact of these weapons, the international community has the right to expect the nuclear Powers to realize the untenability of their positions on this most crucial issue, for what is at stake is the most fundamental right of human beings and of nations: their very right to survival and existence. Despite the self-evident principal concerns, the major Powers have shown a callous disregard of the calamitous global consequences that would surely follow a nuclear exchange between them.

On the question of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, my delegation would like to reiterate its basic position on this extremely important and urgent issue, which has engaged our attention for over three decades. We believe, first, that such a ban would constitute an integral phase in the efforts to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race. Secondly, a comprehensive test-ban treaty can be achieved only through serious negotiations, as a matter of highest priority. Thirdly, while not minimizing questions relating to verification, we hold the view that the crux of the problem is one of political will. And finally, pending the conclusion of a comprehensive treaty, all nuclear States should agree to an immediate moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests as an earnest demonstration of their commitment to reversing the arms race.



(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

The specific characteristics of chemical weapons and the magnitude of their destructive effects owing to their indiscriminate nature have long reinforced my Government's conviction that the 1925 Geneva Protocol should be strengthened. The crux of the problem is undeniably the destruction of existing stockpiles. In 1979 Indonesia ordered the destruction of chemical-weapon agents inherited from the former colonial Power, an action prompted by the realization that to do otherwise might give cause to question the sincerity of our commitment strictly to adhere to the Protocol.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

Indonesia is among the countries which have advocated a provision on the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons in the future convention now being considered in the Conference on Disarmament. We are heartened to note the modest progress made in the elaboration of common texts for a convention and the important advances made towards the elimination of stocks and production facilities as well as on the non-use of herbicides as a method of warfare.

At the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Indonesia expressed the serious misgivings that it shares with other non-nuclear States over the highly discriminatory and selective application of the essential elements of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, especially article VI, relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

Many pertinent facts can be cited to indicate the less than sincere attitude of the nuclear Powers with regard to the fulfilment of their obligations under the provisions of that article: the rapid progress of the nuclear arms race, particularly in its qualitative aspects; the spread of the arms race to earth orbit and near space; the deployment of nuclear weapons outside the territories of the nuclear Powers, within the territories of their alliances in Europe, parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and on the high seas; the abandonment of negotiations for a comprehensive test ban, on intermediate-range nuclear weapons and on the reduction of strategic arms; the uncertain prospect of early progress in the resumed talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear and space-based weapons; and the absence of even a modicum of progress, especially during the past five years, on any substantive issue of nuclear arms control and limitation.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

In sum, the goal of nuclear disarmament "at an early date" proclaimed 15 years ago is more distant than ever. Recently, proposals for deep and verifiable reductions in existing arsenals in the process of pursuing the objectives of article VI have been touted. It is worth recalling that at the First Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in 1975 the non-aligned countries, with foresight and perspicacity, proposed a 50 per cent reduction of the stockpiles. The rationale for that proposal has become even more relevant today. Such a reduction could be initiated through a mutually agreed moratorium on new-weapon development, and should rapidly be reinforced by formal agreements on weapons reduction among the major nuclear Powers. In the light of the enormous size of their arsenals, such a reduction would not undermine their security and might well prompt the other nuclear States to adopt similar measures. Such an act would also constitute an important step in fulfilling the obligations undertaken in article VI and add momentum to nuclear disarmament. My delegation is fully convinced that only through such a bold and sweeping departure from the present military postures can we go to the heart of the problem posed by nuclear weapons that imperils the world.

From the historical perspective, it is heartening that the Third Review Conference adopted a Final Declaration, given the dismal failure of the Second Review Conference. On the other hand, its utility in relation to the Final Document of the First Review Conference clearly reflects the discord and reluctance in some quarters to express a genuine commitment to the full implementation of the Treaty. Hence, my delegation regards certain aspects of the outcome of the Third Review Conference with some misgivings.

In this connection, I should like to cite the weak formulations on the nuclear status of Israel and South Africa as well as the greater stress placed on the

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

obligations of the non-nuclear States vis-à-vis the obligations of the nuclear Powers. Indonesia none the less joined in the consensus, as we continue to regard the Non-Proliferation Treaty as an important instrument in the body of treaties governing nuclear arms. Only time will show whether the Non-Proliferation Treaty will sustain its efficacy in preventing both vertical and horizontal proliferation, or whether it will lapse into being less and less relevant to the quest for nuclear non-proliferation.

In the past few years there has been a sustained interest in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In a period of widespread knowledge about and availability of nuclear technology and substantive fissionable materials, those zones provide the most viable means for the non-nuclear States, on their own initiative and with their own effort, to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons from their territories and enhance their mutual security. They can also provide a logical basis for promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy within the zone by facilitating the establishment of regional or international fuel cycle centres, with their attendant economic and physical security benefits for extracting uranium, fabricating nuclear fuel and reprocessing plutonium. Above all, they can provide the means for obtaining security assurances from the nuclear Powers never to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons.

It is in the context of the regional approach to disarmament and security that my Government has long advocated the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone as a component element of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality to be created by common accord in South-East Asia. The States Members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are presently engaged in giving meaning and content to the concept and in working out the principles and modalities.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

But, as in all nuclear issues and nuclear decision-making, the establishment of those zones depends ultimately on the willingness of the nuclear Powers to take the necessary measures and make the necessary commitments to facilitate and promote their success. There is no denying that the non-nuclear States have as much right as the nuclear States to security and survival. We therefore firmly believe that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zones should not be hampered by reasons of global strategic interests of the nuclear Powers, which should respect the wishes of the non-nuclear States to establish those zones in their own regions, which, after all, should be seen as an extension of their commitment under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Under no pretext whatsoever should they withhold collaboration or engage in any activity contrary to the provisions of the Treaty establishing such a zone.

Outer space has long been declared by the General Assembly as the common heritage of mankind. It is therefore in the common interest that the exploration and use of outer space should be solely for peaceful purposes. Any militarization of outer space raises the dangerous possibility of a further escalation of the nuclear arms race in both defensive and offensive weapons. It also threatens the viability of several existing arms limitation agreements. We are all aware of reports that the super-Powers intend to embark upon the actual development of the prototype of space weaponry. In view of that perilous situation, the international community must initiate a substantive examination of the issues involved, leading to effective and practical negotiations and agreements to prevent the militarization of outer space.

The negotiations with regard to the convening of an international conference on the Indian Ocean have remained deadlocked. In the meantime, despite many years of concerted efforts to transform the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, we have

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witnessed an unprecedented militarization of the ocean proper and of its vicinity, in pursuit of strategic objectives, with far-reaching implications for the security of the littoral and hinterland States. That dangerous slide must be arrested through continuing endeavours for the early convening of the conference. In that connection, it is our considered view that the participation and co-operation of the permanent members of the Security Council and the other major maritime Powers, in addition to the littoral and hinterland States, constitutes an essential element for the successful outcome of the conference.

In the same context, as a maritime nation and a non-nuclear State, Indonesia has viewed with mounting concern the disquieting trends of increasing naval build-up and the deployment of new naval systems. Such ominous developments have added a potentially destabilizing dimension to the overall arms race. The decision by the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly to establish a group of experts to carry out a comprehensive study on all aspects of the naval arms race and analyse their ramifications was most opportune. It is our hope that the findings and recommendations of the study, presented as a report of the Secretary-General (A/40/535), will generate concerted and concrete action by Member States primarily through negotiations of measures of nuclear disarmament and confidence-building at sea and identifying ways and means by which naval organization and capabilities may contribute to the establishment of effective management policies for the peaceful uses of the sea and its resources, to the benefit of all mankind.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

I have so far directed my remarks to the nuclear aspects of the arms race and disarmament. This should not be construed to mean that we are oblivious to the danger posed by an unbridled conventional arms race.

We must note, however, that the rapid accumulation and further qualitative development of these armaments are being pursued by States already possessing the largest military arsenals and which develop, produce, stockpile and sell by far the greatest proportion of these armaments. It is also undeniable that developing countries do not possess the capability to produce armaments and are thus dependent on the purchase of weapons to acquire the means of self-defence. Moreover, the proportion of arms purchased by the developing countries pales in significance in comparison with the arms acquired and deployed by members of military blocs. It stands to reason - as the report of the study on conventional disarmament of 23 June 1984, which my delegation endorsed, stated, among others - that negotiations on the reduction of conventional armaments should focus on the major producers and users rather than on seeking to deflect attention by interjecting issues that are secondary to the primary cause of the conventional arms race.

My delegation likewise totally rejects the contention that conventional armaments per se are as great a threat to the survival of mankind as nuclear weapons, and that conventional armaments in the hands of third-world countries somehow pose a greater threat to peace and security than the nuclear and conventional weapons possessed by the great Powers. It is our view, therefore, that, if we are to make progress in our work on the important subject of disarmament, we must return to the fundamental framework and priorities upon which we all agreed in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

My delegation is convinced that a new integrated approach as distinct from the piecemeal disarmament efforts of the past, should be adopted and that it should comprise both quantitative reductions and qualitative restrictions. The wider the range of weapons covered, the greater would be the value of such an initiative. At the same time, while continuing to accord the highest priority to nuclear disarmament, we should ensure that conventional disarmament measures, especially by the major Powers, are pursued simultaneously. Conclusive progress can be gauged by linking reductions in military budgets to cuts in specific weapons systems and related activities in military research and development.

In order to stem qualitative improvement and prevent the development of new types of weapons, a comprehensive treaty banning the testing of all types of nuclear weapons in all environments has become even more urgently necessary. The main responsibility for initiating this comprehensive approach rests with the nuclear Powers, which should agree on an immediate freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons. This should precede substantive arms-reduction negotiations in the context of the Conference on Disarmament. Such a redirection would not constrain but rather strengthen bilateral and regional talks in the efforts to achieve the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Once again this year the report of the Conference on Disarmament fails to record any progress with regard to the priority items. My delegation strongly believes that the Conference on Disarmament, if given the opportunity to do its work, can make a constructive contribution towards disarmament, and nuclear disarmament in particular. But all too often that sole multilateral negotiating forum has been used by the major Powers for the public presentation of rigid positions and mutual recriminations although the need for progress is too



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compelling for this to be allowed to happen. Thus, the Conference has been effectively thwarted in attempts to initiate multilateral negotiations on the priority issues affecting nuclear weapons owing to opposition by some nuclear States which seem to continue to believe these issues to be their exclusive domain, beyond the ambit of decision-making by the international community. On other critical issues as well the Conference has continued to flounder. Indeed, my delegation views with dismay the inability of the Conference to reach even one modest agreement or to fulfil even one minor task set by the first special session. The actions of certain nuclear States in frustrating the Conference's efforts is clearly contrary to the commitments undertaken in the Final Document.

Our view on the role of the Conference on Disarmament stems from the conviction that multilateral negotiations, under the aegis of the United Nations, on all issues relating to disarmament, should remain the rule rather than the exception. It is only through the multilateral approach that the larger context of safeguarding global peace and security, rather than the narrow confines of great Power rivalry and confrontation, can be kept in focus. For these reasons, my delegation hopes that the forthcoming summit meeting between the United States and the Soviet Union will at least generate a fresh start in the efforts to restore a sustained dialogue and the resumption of serious negotiations.

On this the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations it is incumbent upon us all to commit ourselves to further enhancing the effectiveness of the machinery and procedures of the multilateral disarmament process in dealing with the multitude of issues that confront the international community. The Indonesian delegation subscribes fully to the view that the Organization can make a constructive contribution to progress towards the goal of both nuclear and conventional disarmament. We pledge our continuing support in the common endeavours to enhance the role of the United Nations in multilateral disarmament efforts.

Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I should like first to congratulate you and the other officers of the Committee on your election and to wish you all every success. Being familiar with your diplomatic qualifications, Sir, I can only assure you that the Bulgarian delegation will at all times offer its full co-operation.

As the recent general debate has shown, the majority of nations continue to be seriously concerned over the future of the world. This is a most legitimate concern since the danger of a nuclear war is increasing and the international situation is becoming less stable. Expenditures on the development of new systems and types of weapons and their deployment in space are clearly increasing and the first practical steps towards the creation of the most sophisticated anti-satellite weapons have been taken. The arms race is proceeding at an unprecedented pace. It has become clear that the threat of death hangs over not only the States directly involved in the nuclear arms race but also all other countries and peoples without exception, the whole of civilization and even life on earth.

As many delegations have already stressed in the General Assembly and here, the cause of the deterioration in the already serious international situation is the aggressive policies of the reactionary circles in the United States and within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), their arms race policy and their plan to transfer that race to outer space for the purpose of acquiring world hegemony.

The most pressing task that confronts us is to prevent the danger of war, in particular nuclear war. I emphasize the fact that the present dangerous situation of strategic rivalry gradually give way to political agreements, which take into account the legitimate interests and the security of States, progressively reducing the risk of conflagration and leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

The urgent need for this is all the greater, given imperialism's practice of packaging projects of mass destruction as new doctrines, doctrines increasingly dangerous for the future of the world that accept the possibility of waging nuclear war and emerging victorious. The scientists of many countries, including those of nuclear-weapon States, have sounded the alarm. Studies on the direct and indirect consequences of nuclear war, whether limited or protracted, local or global, show that it can lead to the extinction of the human race and take life on earth back millions of years. Consequently all countries, whatever their differences - size, degree of development, geographical location or social system - must pool their efforts to fight the common danger.

The forthcoming meeting between Gorbachev and Reagan and the new Soviet-American negotiations in Geneva have given the world hope for a successful outcome of this situation and the effective solution of the many problems relating to space and nuclear weapons. Strict respect for agreements reached on the purpose and objective of the negotiations is an essential precondition. Extremely important in this regard are the recent proposals of the Soviet Union on the complete prohibition of offensive space weapons and on the reduction to 50 per cent of nuclear weapons capable of reaching the opponent's territory. These proposals represent an expanded Soviet effort to give impetus to the negotiations. In the same spirit the Government of the USSR has halted until November next the emplacement of intermediary missiles and the application of counter-measures in Europe.

These realistic initiatives aimed at improving the present explosive situation are behind the appeals of the USSR, Bulgaria and other countries of the socialist community. Within this framework they continuously recall that they are not in

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favour of bloc politics, and even less the pitting of one country against another. They have never pursued, and never will, a policy aimed at ensuring military superiority. Their doctrine has never been any other than that of defence.

The problem of preventing an arms race in space is literally vital for mankind. Positions on this problem are revealing as to whether they spring from a realistic or an adventuristic approach to the solving of the problems of peace and war. Throughout the months that have passed since the last session, the Soviet Union has through concrete acts continuously shown that these problems are of vital importance for man's present and future. It has adopted an extremely responsible attitude. That explains the Soviet decision not to emplace anti-satellite weapons in space, so long as the United States refrains from doing so. And that is the reason for its proposal to place on the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly the question of "International co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization" together with other concrete proposals on broad International co-operation in this area. Instead of sinister "star wars" projects, it proposes the idea of "star peace", which would allow all nations to benefit from the results of space research.

The prevention of the militarization of space and its reservation solely for peaceful activities is a matter to be resolved before weapons are introduced in space. The risk of introducing such weapons in space increases day by day. Programmes are announced and work is done on the development and deployment of space weapons intended to hit targets from and in space, in the atmosphere and on land, as well as on the creation of a space-based wide-range anti-missile systems. If this process is not halted, the arms race will acquire further scope and intensity, requiring even more material and intellectual resources, raising even

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

higher the already insurmountable barriers to peaceful space activities by States. The arms race will acquire a new dimension, an even more dangerous one. That is why the Soviet Union has proposed - and we fully support this - the conclusion of an agreement on the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, preventing the transfer of the arms race to space, which would virtually make it impossible to reduce nuclear-missile arsenals. In order to make progress in the peaceful exploration of space and to develop co-operation under conditions of its non-militarization, the Soviet Union has proposed the setting up of a world space organization to co-ordinate national peaceful space efforts and the convening of an international conference in 1987 at the latest to give detailed consideration to problems relating to the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization.

Unfortunately, the behaviour of the other party so far casts doubt on its desire to reach a successful conclusion. However, we do wish to believe that a sense of realism will prevail in the United States and that it will respond and take relevant steps towards the peaceful use of space and prevention of its militarization.

Another important approach to stabilization of the international situation and the gradual reduction of the danger of war is contained in the Soviet proposal on a quantitative and qualitative freeze, on a global basis, of existing nuclear arsenals as of a specified date, beginning with the USSR and the United States. This is the appeal contained in the Delhi Declaration of January of the Heads of six States from various regions of the world, a Declaration that was supported by the socialist countries, including my own. Realization of the idea of a freeze in nuclear arsenals does not require complex negotiations, just good political will.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

In the interest of contributing to a climate conducive to a resumption of the process of arms limitation and reduction, and ultimately the complete and general elimination of nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union recently undertook another decisive and bold step, declaring a unilateral moratorium on all nuclear explosions. Thus it set forth the premises leading to the adoption and application of a concrete and effective measure to strengthen confidence and halt the nuclear arms race.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

Need we remind this Committee that the appeal to the United States to follow the Soviet example has not found a response. This proposal has enjoyed an enormous positive response throughout the world, but the United States has responded with new underground nuclear explosions. The contrast between the behaviour of these two countries is much too obvious for it to be necessary to illustrate it with other examples. There again, everything depends on political will. The most recent statements by high ranking officials of the current Administration show that that country is not about to show such political will.

The commitment of all countries not to resort to the first use of nuclear weapons would undeniably be a step forward. As far back as 1982 the Soviet Union offered an excellent example in this regard by committing itself unilaterally not to resort to the first use of nuclear weapons. A similar commitment was also made by the People's Republic of China. It is certain that if the other nuclear-weapon States were to do the same thing, the danger of nuclear conflict would be considerably reduced.

We fully share the view of many States that the establishment of denuclearized zones is an important step in the efforts for international security. We are convinced that initiatives for nuclear-weapon-free zones in northern Europe and in the Balkans, a non-nuclear corridor between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries and the Warsaw Treaty countries in Central Europe, in South-East Asia and in Africa, would greatly contribute to the efforts to free the European continent and the world of those weapons. It is in that context that we should consider the actions taken by my Government aimed at turning the Balkans into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The last decade which followed the signing of the Final Act of Helsinki has shown the beneficial effects of détente and of mutually advantageous co-operation. The meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the signatory countries

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

recalled that the spirit of Helsinki remains alive, that war can be avoided and peace triumph.

In the current complex situation it becomes increasingly urgent to reach an understanding on the proposal by the Warsaw Treaty countries to conclude an agreement, among all the countries participating in the Stockholm Conference, on the non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations between States members of NATO and of the Warsaw Treaty.

The Warsaw Treaty States this year set forth proposals in other important areas which open up possibilities to reach agreement on the preparation of a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. The Governments of the German Democratic Republic and of Czechoslovakia have already proposed to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany that talks be initiated leading to the creation in Central Europe of a chemical-weapon-free zone.

The continued naval arms race, the strengthened military presence in the seas and the oceans of the world, naval activities which directly endanger the security and independence of many countries, as well as maritime navigation and the exploitation of the resources of the world's oceans, strengthen our conviction that the time has come to initiate concrete, serious and fair negotiations with a view to concluding mutually acceptable agreements in this field. The response of the Bulgarian Government to the Secretary-General on this point contains constructive proposals aimed at halting the naval arms race. It is precisely in that spirit that we undertook to work in this Committee and, together with other interested countries, to submit a relevant draft resolution.

In conclusion, I should like to stress once again that the socialist countries, mine included, have made considerable efforts, have taken concrete measures to allow each country which wishes to contribute effectively to détente and the establishment of a climate of confidence in the world to make its own



(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

contribution. It is therefore not by chance that the proposals of the socialist countries respond to the claims of the anti-war and anti-missile movements throughout the world.

Being realistic, we realize that the horrors of the first atomic bomb pale compared with what could occur if certain imperialist forces were to yield to the temptation of a new world war, a devastating nuclear war, which would reduce the universe to ashes. Our planet contains so many explosives that it could blow up several times over. This is one of the alternatives facing current generations. But what alternative will be chosen? That is what we must now decide, and in so deciding there can be no disinterested, passive or neutral parties.

We are convinced of the existence of real possibilities for finding a positive solution to the problems we have discussed, especially with regard to nuclear disarmament, the possibilities to reduce and finally eliminate the danger of war, to channel international relations back to détente and to peaceful co-operation.

In order for this to become a reality, we must make the fullest use of all existing possibilities. This is the appeal which our delegation makes. This will be the purpose of its efforts at this anniversary session of the United Nations and in our Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

I draw the Committee's attention to the following decision of the General Assembly:

"Delegations should exercise their right of reply at the end of the day whenever two meetings have been scheduled for that day and whenever such meetings are devoted to the consideration of the same item.

"The number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two items.

(The Chairman)

"The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes." (Decision 34/401, paras. 8-10)

Mr. JESSEL (France) (interpretation from French): I should like to reply briefly to a passage in the statement this morning of the representative of New Zealand, when he called into question French nuclear tests carried out by France in French territory in the Pacific. The criticisms levelled are not new. It is not surprising, therefore, that my reply is not new either. I recognize that the criticism expressed this morning was very moderate in tone and I wish to be equally moderate in my reply.

(Mr. Jessel, France)

So far as the technical aspects are concerned, it has been established that the tests in question represent no danger either to health or to the environment. I note, furthermore, that this aspect of the matter was not raised this morning, and I conclude from this that there has been implicit recognition that our arguments are well founded and that we are acting in good faith.

Thus, it is essentially a political issue, an issue of principle, that has been raised here. Indeed, this morning the speaker pointed out that he was not opposed specifically to the French tests, but to all tests in general. I would recall that my country has carried out less than 10 per cent of the tests that have taken place throughout the world. In those circumstances, I express the hope that the criticisms levelled against those who carry out these tests will be distributed in the same ratio.

The representative of New Zealand also referred also to the regional aspects of the problem. I would say in that respect that France, a part of whose territory and citizens are situated in the South Pacific region, is keenly aware of the situation and the concerns in that part of the world. But it is a very broad problem, a world problem, that is involved here. It cannot really be solved outside the framework of nuclear disarmament. I entirely endorse the part of the statement by the representative of New Zealand in which he emphasized that a moratorium could not be an adequate solution.

To conclude, I recall that on 26 September, in the General Assembly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France stressed that the continuation of nuclear tests was a condition for the credibility of French forces and that a limitation on tests presupposed that the most heavily armed Powers should first engage in true de-escalation.

(Mr. Jessel, France)

Finally, the highest authorities of my country have repeatedly set forth, particularly within the United Nations, the conditions in which France also could, when that stage has been reached, engage in such a de-escalation.

Mr. McDOWELL (New Zealand): We have had a long day. I do not wish to detain the Committee any longer. I wish merely to respond very briefly to what has just been said by the representative of France.

New Zealand has had warm and friendly relations with France for a long time. We hope to maintain and develop those relations, and we certainly do not dispute that France has a right to security and to a strong defence. What we do not accept, and we will not accept, is that France has a right to test its nuclear weapons 10,000 miles away from metropolitan France, in the region in which we live. As I pointed out this morning, that view is shared by all independent and self-governing countries in the South Pacific region.

If I heard the representative of France correctly, he suggested that we were not opposed specifically to French tests. That is not quite what I said this morning. Perhaps I could just repeat the relevant part of my statement. What I said was that New Zealand is particularly concerned at the nuclear tests that take place in its region; but it is also opposed to all nuclear tests by all States in all regions. That is a slightly different gloss on what the representative of France has just said.

It is for those reasons that we have long advocated the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.