

UNITED NATIONS  
**General Assembly**  
FORTY-FIFTH SESSION  
*Official Records*

FIRST COMMITTEE  
5th meeting  
held on  
Tuesday, 16 October 1990  
at 3 p.m.  
New York

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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KANA (Nepal)

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Distr. GENERAL  
A/C.1/45/PV.5  
23 October 1990  
ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand): Congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the other officers of the Committee. Your country, Nepal, is the headquarters of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament and that Centre plays a very important part in developing thinking and discussion about disarmament issues for the Asia-Pacific region, a region which my country shares with yours.

The year 1990 represents a time of challenge for the United Nations security system. Recent events in the Persian Gulf region emphatically prove, more than anything else, that an end to the cold war does not automatically lead to the consolidation of global security. They highlight the enduring problems of regional security and vividly demonstrate the significant threats that remain to the security of small States in our community of nations.

The end of the cold war should mean a more secure world, but, as the Secretary-General notes in his annual report, a comprehensive approach to security is axiomatic if the unfolding opportunities are now to be seized. Addressing the multifaceted aspects of security is, we think, the challenge of today.

The South Pacific region is distant from the centres of world tension and present regional conflict. But New Zealand is keenly conscious that it is not immune from the strains of global political, economic and environmental change. Indeed, these often impact disproportionately on the fragile political, economic and physical settings of our region.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

As a consequence, New Zealand is committed to addressing its security needs through a balanced and integrative approach within a regional framework of co-operation with our South Pacific neighbours. This regional approach to security was the focus for the Pacific Security Symposium hosted by New Zealand earlier this year, which aimed at promoting this integral view of disarmament, economic and environmental issues in our region.

The co-operative resolve of South Pacific nations is enhanced by recognition that the major challenges to the security of our region emanate from outside, whether the issue is ozone depletion or global warming caused by activities in the industrialized North, driftnet fishing carried out by distant water fishing nations, the disposal of chemical weapons from Europe, or the continued testing of nuclear weapons in a region that is committed unswervingly to non-nuclear principles.

Nuclear testing in the South Pacific by France outside its metropolitan territory is an unacceptable intrusion into our region. For decades New Zealand and other South Pacific countries have protested against the nuclear testing programme at Mururoa and Fangataufa. Our protests have gone unheeded.

New Zealand takes a clear stand against all nuclear testing. What makes nuclear tests in the South Pacific all the more objectionable is that they are being conducted against the wishes of the people of the region. It is a fundamental point of principle for us that our region, which has declared itself nuclear free, should not be used by an outside Power for nuclear weapons development. The assurances we are offered about the safety of these tests do not address this point. Nor have they been sufficient to allay the fears about the potential threat to the fragile South Pacific environment.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

The South Pacific nuclear-free zone underlines the rejection of nuclear weapons by our region. Fifteen years ago the General Assembly endorsed the idea of the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific. Five years ago the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty was adopted by South Pacific States as the Treaty of Rarotonga. Last year the Treaty was overwhelmingly endorsed by the membership of the United Nations. Two permanent members of the Security Council have given their formal commitment to this initiative by signing the relevant protocols to the Treaty. Two others have given assurances that their actions are not inconsistent with the Treaty's provisions. However, the New Zealand Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, in her recent address to the General Assembly, urged all the nuclear-weapon States to make a formal commitment by signing the protocols to the Treaty. Such actions would, in our view, constitute the very logic of the new world order that is emerging.

The Treaty of Rarotonga is the most concrete manifestation of the South Pacific co-operative approach to security. It complements the nuclear-free policies which New Zealand itself enacted domestically in 1987 in the New Zealand Nuclear-Free Zone, Disarmament and Arms Control Act. Furthermore, it explicitly reinforces the principles that underpin the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It reinforces the view that no country - no matter how far it may be situated from the potential theatre of nuclear conflict - can afford to be complacent about nuclear proliferation.

Because we are a maritime country New Zealand naturally takes a close interest in the issue of naval armaments and disarmament - both the nuclear and the non-nuclear dimensions. The proposals that have been made by the Government of Sweden on naval confidence-building measures deserve support, in our view, and warrant serious consideration within the multilateral disarmament process.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

We are farther today from the prospect of a nuclear war between the super-Powers than at any time in the past 40 years. We have witnessed in recent years important breakthroughs in the area of nuclear disarmament. New Zealand has warmly welcomed the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (IMF), the agreement in principle to reduce strategic nuclear forces, and the signature by the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of verification Protocols to the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty and the threshold test-ban Treaty. These historic bilateral agreements point the way forward to a world based on co-operation rather than military confrontation.

These are major achievements, for which the super-Powers merit our collective acclaim. New Zealand believes none the less that the multilateral process must reinforce, indeed consolidate, the progress that has been made through bilateral negotiations. We accordingly valued our participation in the Secretary-General's Expert Group on Nuclear Weapons, whose recent study provides a comprehensive discussion of issues related to nuclear weapons. We commend it to the attention of all.

The conclusion of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing is, in our opinion, a vital requirement. New Zealand and Australia will be bringing a draft resolution before the First Committee stressing the urgent need for a comprehensive test ban. More than any other single measure a comprehensive test ban would inhibit the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. It would constitute a major achievement for the security of all if the new spirit of co-operation which now animates relations between the five permanent members of the Security Council were to be translated into a positive response to the General Assembly's call for the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

Agreement in the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban is encouraging. It should allow the Conference to undertake an in-depth discussion of the multilateral aspects of this issue. We look forward to the establishment of the ad hoc committee in 1991 and the convening of the partial test-ban Treaty amendment conference in January 1991, which will provide a broad-ranging discussion on test-ban issues, a discussion involving all States parties. The sponsors of the conference can obviously contribute to this by devising a draft resolution here that can command the broadest possible support.

It has been argued that a lack of adequate verification techniques constitutes a barrier to the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The recent signature by the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the verification Protocols to the threshold test-ban Treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty is particularly welcome. The negotiation and conclusion of detailed verification provisions constitute, in our opinion, important demonstrations of the political will to reach agreement about verification techniques and provide a focus for discussion of comprehensive test-ban verification issues.

Political will on the part of the nuclear-weapons States is, however, not the only component. At the practical level participation in the scientific work on verification, particularly that being carried out by the Ad Hoc Group of Seismic Experts in Geneva, is important. New Zealand is an active member of the Ad Hoc Group. We are participating in the large-scale seismic monitoring experiment currently being undertaken. Our seismic station at Wellington and our communications link to the South Pacific have been updated to ensure an effective role in this experiment. We remain confident that it will demonstrate that an acceptable level of seismic verification is technically possible.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

It is a statement of the obvious that in the pursuit of a comprehensive test-ban treaty we should not lose sight of the overall objective, which is the enhancement of global security. We were disappointed that diverging opinions over the testing issue resulted in the recent Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference concluding with no final document. Clearly progress on testing is an important part of the non-proliferation Treaty bargain. No one would deny that. But we need to advance the non-proliferation régime on all fronts. There comes a point where expressions of frustration at the slow progress on testing issues could result in our losing decidedly more than we gain.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

It was encouraging to see at the Review Conference the growing consensus for enhancing and strengthening important aspects of the international non-proliferation régime. Other speakers before me, like the representative of the United States, have remarked upon this. There was strong support for full-scope safeguards as a condition of supply and a large measure of agreement was reached on negative security assurances. This progress must not be lost. While a "common formula" on negative security assurances is still to eventuate, it is our hope that the progress evident from the Conference could inspire a resolution on negative security assurances here which commands the support of all delegations. All of us will need to demonstrate flexibility in order to achieve such a result.

Given a comprehensive approach to security, New Zealand's concerns are not nuclear alone. Recent arms control moves in the field of chemical weapons have shown that these munitions pose problems not only in their potential use but also in their physical destruction. This has become an issue in the Pacific as a result of the United States decision to incinerate chemical weapons at Johnston Atoll.

New Zealand, of course, welcomes the recent bilateral agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate the bulk of their chemical weapons stockpiles. But along with other members of the South Pacific Forum we have expressed concern at the shipment of such weapons into the region from Europe. We therefore particularly welcome assurances from the United States that there will be no further shipments of chemical weapons to Johnston Atoll from outside the region, nor will the destruction facility be retained for other uses, such as toxic waste disposal. We acknowledge the special United States efforts made to inform Pacific countries on the safety precautions of the disposal programmes.

More generally, the way in which the huge arsenals of conventional weapons pose a threat to world peace has been starkly demonstrated by recent events in the Gulf. There have been ground-breaking negotiations on conventional force



(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

reductions in Europe. Other speakers have referred to those. We applaud these efforts. That experience serves to reinforce the basic truism, as we see it, that conventional and nuclear disarmament are complementary parts of a whole. But further significant measures in the field of conventional disarmament are imperative, particularly in the regions of the world where tension threatens stability. The question of collective restraints by producers and sellers, and arms transfers to such regions, must command priority. The United Nations is the obvious candidate for the ongoing role in addressing the issue and monitoring agreement that may flow from collectively agreed action.

Missile technology is likewise a critical matter, given the implications for delivery of weapons of mass destruction. New Zealand strongly supports the missile technology control régime, and believes it has a constructive contribution to make towards stopping the proliferation of missile technology.

To unlock the new opportunities in the multilateral disarmament field, States must make the system itself work more effectively. We can look back with satisfaction at the achievements of this year's Disarmament Commission in beginning to implement the reform guidelines agreed at last year's session. In the Disarmament Commission we need a focused effective agenda; and in the Conference on Disarmament the reforms already identified need now to be pursued.

What all this means is that we must all ensure that this first year of the Third United Nations Disarmament Decade is one of greater genuine achievement for the United Nations in the area of disarmament and security. If ever the time was right for this, it is now.

Mr. VOLLEBAEK (Norway): Mr. Chairman, I should like to warmly congratulate you on your election to preside over the deliberations of this important Committee. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau and to assure you of the full support of the Norwegian delegation in the conduct of our business.

The forty-fifth session of the General Assembly is taking place against the background of the first major international crisis in the post-cold-war era. The world community has responded with unprecedented cohesion and decisiveness to the brutal Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and rightly so.

Crime must not pay, neither in the relations between individual human beings nor in the relations between States. We must seek a peaceful solution to the present crisis on the basis of full implementation of Security Council resolutions. Any peaceful solution will have to entail complete Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and reinstatement of the lawful authorities of that country.

Since last year's session of the General Assembly, developments in Europe have raced ahead with breathtaking speed. Authoritarian régimes have been replaced by popular movements dedicated to pluralistic democracy, the rule of law and market economy. The emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe have come a long way in an amazingly short time. They are pushing their democratization campaigns forward with determination and courage, often in very difficult circumstances. For the first time in a generation, Europeans all over the continent are pursuing the same aspirations. A common European democratic culture is emerging.

Much of the credit for what is happening on the European continent - and indeed beyond - is due to the new policies pursued by President Gorbachev. For this reason, I welcome the awarding by the Norwegian Nobel Committee of the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize to the President of the Soviet Union. He has made a unique contribution to disarmament and détente in Europe. In fact, he has, together with

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

the leaders of the United States of America, changed totally the nature of East-West relations. Thereby, he has made an essential contribution to the international peace process itself.

The painful post-war division of the European continent is being overcome. German unification was a major step in that direction. The process of German unification was conducted in a manner which deserves our respect and admiration. By taking into account the concerns of others, German unity has become an essential contribution to the creation of a stable and lasting new order of peace for the continent.

These positive developments in the political arena have been accompanied by equally important steps forward in so far as the military aspects of security are concerned. Major achievements have already been made in arms control, and even more spectacular breakthroughs are within reach.

An agreement on conventional forces in Europe (CFE) providing for drastic reductions of conventional armaments in Europe clearly must be seen as an essential part of the foundation of the new Europe. It will benefit the rest of the world, too, making the risk of another major conflict emanating from the continent of Europe significantly smaller. There is not much time, but the progress achieved in recent weeks warrants optimism that the treaty can be ready for signature in connection with the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) summit in November.

A bilateral START treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on the reduction of strategic nuclear arms would be yet another historic achievement marking the evolution of East-West relations from an era of confrontation to one of co-operation. We are encouraged to note that the parties have stated their determination to press ahead with a view to completing a START treaty in the near future.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

Much has been accomplished, but much also remains to be done. Europe is leaving the cold-war order of confrontation and rivalry behind. A new, co-operative order has to come in its place. We are now in the process of drawing up a blueprint for new all-European structures of co-operation. This is a challenging task. Building the new Europe is in many ways as demanding as getting rid of the old.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

One thing is quite clear: Along with other existing institutions, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Community and the Council of Europe, the Conference on Security and Co-operation (CSCE) will have to play a key role in the new Europe. The CSCE is uniquely suited for this. It is a well-established process of co-operation between the European States and the two North American democracies. The CSCE is thus the framework for a transatlantic partnership for democracy, peace and co-operation. This remains as important in the new Europe as it was in the old.

But in order to serve these functions the CSCE must be strengthened and transformed from a process into an institutional framework. The upcoming Paris CSCE summit will be decisive in this regard. In Paris major decisions will be made providing for new CSCE structures, including a political consultation mechanism encompassing periodic political-level meetings, a political committee, a small secretariat and a crisis-prevention centre. These institutions will give the CSCE a more dynamic character and make it more capable of responding effectively in urgent situations and cases of potential conflict between participating States.

However, although the challenges facing European States are of historic importance, Europe must not become inward-looking and oblivious of problems and conflicts elsewhere. The Gulf crisis has served as a reminder that the stability and prosperity we are all striving to achieve can be threatened by developments outside Europe. There is indeed only one world, and Europe is part of it.

In the multilateral arms control field, the main event in the recent past was the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In the view of Norway, the NPT remains the single most important multilateral agreement on disarmament and arms limitations concluded so far. The constructive atmosphere that prevailed during the preparatory process leading up to the Review Conference and the important achievements in nuclear

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

disarmament over the last few years led us to believe that prospects were good for achieving a balanced, substantive and forward-looking final document. Therefore, it was most regrettable that we did not do so. This means that we have missed an opportunity to present to the world a balanced assessment of the progress achieved in the various fields covered by this Treaty. This is particularly disappointing in a period in which relations between the two major nuclear-weapon Powers are better than they have ever been, and at a time when the number of nuclear weapons in the world is diminishing.

Notwithstanding the lack of a consensus final document, the Review Conference brought to light that strong support for the Treaty is the best guarantee against further proliferation of nuclear weapons. An in-depth review of the functioning of the Treaty was undertaken, and there was agreement on most of the language of what would have been a very substantial final document. There was broad agreement on several measures to strengthen the non-proliferation régime, inter alia on the extension of full-scope safeguards as a condition for exports of nuclear material, equipment and technology, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was requested to study such new approaches in its security control routines as the introduction of random inspections. It is now important that the constructive ideas expressed at the Review Conference be followed up, thus paving the way for an extension of the Treaty in 1995.

The stumbling-block that prevented consensus on a final document at the Review Conference was the question of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The achievement of a total and permanent ban on all nuclear testing remains an important Norwegian disarmament objective. My Government is convinced that the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty is essential in order to halt effectively the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are of the opinion that this

(Mr. Vullebaek, Norway)

question is best dealt with within the Conference on Disarmament. Therefore, we welcome the agreement finally reached in July this year on a mandate for an ad hoc committee on a nuclear test ban. According to its mandate, the committee will initiate, as a first step towards achieving a nuclear test-ban treaty, substantive work on specific and interrelated test-ban issues, including structure and scope, as well as verification and compliance. We trust that the committee will be re-established at the outset of the 1991 session of the Conference.

We welcome the signing of the verification Protocols to the threshold test-ban Treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty. We are confident that early ratification of the Treaties and their Protocols will take place, thus enabling the two parties to initiate talks on further constraints on testing.

Let me stress that my Government is very concerned about the environmental and health risks associated with underground nuclear testing, especially in vulnerable environments such as the Arctic. We regard this as an additional reason for the discontinuance of all test explosions. There is indeed clear evidence of the transboundary impacts of nuclear testing, manifested by increased radioactivity even far from test sites. The risk of accidents in connection with testing adds to the concern felt in third countries. We must insist that the nuclear Powers devote special attention to environmental safety measures, including containment of all radioactive venting and leakage.

Norway and the other Nordic countries have therefore expressed their grave concern about Soviet plans to move all its nuclear weapons testing to Novaya Zemlya in the Arctic. Our views have been clearly expressed, and it is our strong hope that this will contribute to the Soviet Union's abstaining from the implementation of any plans in this regard.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

An effective system of verification is of the utmost importance in any international arms control and disarmament agreement. In a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, international co-operation on the exchange and analysis of seismic data will be one of the main prerequisites for adequate monitoring of compliance. Norway has taken an active part in the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament Group of Scientific Experts to develop a global seismological system to assist in verification of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We believe that the remaining problems of verification can be solved.

The amendment conference of the partial test-ban Treaty will take place at the beginning of next year. Norway will be participating in the conference. We are of the opinion that one of the main objectives should be to give impetus to the work on the test-ban issue in the Conference on Disarmament.

The Iraq-Kuwait conflict demonstrates the urgency of placing the achievement of a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable chemical weapons ban at the very top of our agenda.

Although much work has been done during this year's negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden, no breakthrough has taken place. There has indeed been little progress in 1990 on key questions under negotiation. This applies, for instance, to such vital issues as the right of any party to request an inspection at any time and anywhere within the borders of any State party. For verification to be effective and to ensure the security concerns of all States, this right is an important component of the verification régime of the future chemical weapons convention.

Furthermore, it is of vital importance that all countries possessing chemical weapons follow the example set by the United States and the Soviet Union, and make



(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

declarations to that effect. All chemical weapons States should furnish information about the location, composition and size of their stocks. This is, at one and the same time, an important confidence-building measure and a prerequisite for universal adherence to the convention. Moreover, all countries not possessing chemical weapons should also make declarations to that effect. Norway, for its part, has declared that it has no chemical weapons, and that no such weapons will be stationed on Norwegian territory.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

The time has come for the international community to make every effort to ensure that the threat of chemical weapons be eliminated once and for all. An early breakthrough in the Conference on Disarmament is a prerequisite if this is to be achieved. Intensified efforts are now required in the Conference.

The role of the United Nations has been enhanced over the last few years. The decisiveness of the Security Council in handling the Gulf crisis has given our world Organization improved standing and new prestige. We should see to it that multilateral disarmament, and especially the work of this prestigious Committee, does not lag behind.

There is great potential for improvement which will make the United Nations disarmament efforts more relevant and give them greater impact. Some progress has been made in this Committee, and judging from the experience of the Disarmament Commission, more could be done by way of rationalization.

For many smaller countries the First Committee is the only multilateral disarmament forum where active participation is possible. This right should not be limited, but all countries should proceed with an eye to the most rational and efficient manner in which our objectives can be achieved. No rationalization should imply any kind of limitation on the right of members to introduce new draft resolutions.

We support the initiative taken by you, Mr. Chairman, in order to exploit the possibilities of rationalization of the work of the First Committee. We shall take part in the informal consultations under your leadership, and hope that these efforts will result in the greater efficiency of our work.

The Norwegian Government attaches the utmost importance to multilateral disarmament efforts. We are facing a number of threats which require global solutions. This Committee should take the lead in mapping out future actions.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

Moreover, the new spirit of international co-operation opens up promising prospects of progress. In order for the United Nations to meet the new challenges in a constructive way it is of vital importance that we work to reach a common understanding of the interdependency of security, economic and ecological factors. In the disarmament field progress towards the achievement of mutually binding agreements could release resources for use in the environmental and development sectors.

My country is prepared to contribute its share to the work ahead. We have already contributed to the work of the Conference on Disarmament for a number of years as an active observer, inter alia by submitting yearly research reports of direct relevance to the work of the Conference. Our research has been concentrated on important aspects of verification of alleged use of chemical weapons and on seismic verification of a nuclear-test ban. It is our hope that it will be possible for Norway, as the endorsed Western candidate for membership, to join the Conference as a full member in 1991. It is high time that the decision to extend the membership of the Conference be implemented. We for our part are ready to devote the resources necessary for us to assume all the responsibilities which full membership entails.

Mr. MORRIS (Australia): In looking today to the future of disarmament, arms control and security in the 1990's, we should also look back at the extraordinary developments of the last year which have helped shape that future so differently from what we may have anticipated.

We have witnessed the dramatic transformation of the international landscape with all its implications for disarmament and for global order.

But it is not simply the removal of the bipolar shape of the post-war era that is important. Put in more human terms, it is the realization of the aspirations,

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

indeed the dreams, of the peoples of Eastern Europe, the most powerful symbol of which was the reunification of Germany on 3 October this year. Not all recent developments, however, are so welcome. The dreams of the people of Kuwait have been rendered nightmares by Iraq's unlawful invasion of their country.

I have used the new power balance between East and West as a symbol of hope. It is depressingly true however that a greater power imbalance continues to plague the world - the imbalance between North and South. Many fear that, as the East-West divide narrows, the gap between North and South will become the leitmotif of international relations. Alvin Toffler, in his recently published book entitled, Power Shift: Knowledge, Wealth and Violence at the Edge of the Twenty-first Century, argues that unless new strategies are developed the split will be between the "fast and the slow". That is, there will be a greater decoupling between those with the most developed economies and those with the least developed. The dangers of such an imbalance are only too obvious. Economic uncertainty can result in resort to the use of force. With diminishing economic power and a consequent rise in political opposition and instability, it is still all too frequent that countries do what rulers have done since the origins of the nation State: reach for the most primitive form of power - military force.

The danger of allowing the economic gap to widen therefore is all too apparent - already far too many countries - including countries that can least afford it - are diverting scarce resources from health, education and social and infrastructural development to the acquisition of increasingly sophisticated and destructive weapons. Some even seek to develop weapons of mass destruction.

It is bad enough that those countries which currently possess weapons of mass destruction have yet to rid their arsenals of them. But a world in which nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and biological weapons were more widely possessed - in

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

particular in regions of tension - would be even more dangerous and threatening. Accordingly, as we look to the 1990s, particularly in the area of disarmament, we should not lose sight of the need to remove the sources, both political and economic, which fuel military aggression and which result in the build-up of forces and armaments.

The United Nations has identified the elimination of nuclear weapons as the disarmament priority. Australia welcomes the progress that has been recorded in this area - particularly in the ongoing Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). Nevertheless, the level of nuclear weapons remains unacceptably high.

It will be so even after the cuts envisaged are implemented. Accordingly, while acknowledging that reductions in nuclear arsenals are necessarily a slow and complex process, Australia is convinced that in the decade leading up to the twenty-first century, greater progress must be made.

Intrinsically linked with nuclear disarmament is the need for a comprehensive test-ban treaty which would ban nuclear testing by all States in all environments for all time. We find it difficult to reconcile continued testing at a time when nuclear weapons are being eliminated by those possessing them, and when the threat of other threshold States acquiring the technology increasingly is growing.

Together with New Zealand, Australia again will promote a draft resolution in the First Committee entitled "Urgent need for a comprehensive test ban". We hope that this draft resolution, with its support for the on-going work of the Conference on Disarmament, will guide the way for the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban at the earliest possible date.

Although Australia continues to believe that the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body, is the appropriate venue for comprehensive test-ban negotiations, we understand none the less the frustration at

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

the lack of progress there which had led some States to propose the achievement of a comprehensive test ban through another mechanism, that of converting the existing partial test-ban Treaty. Australia supports the call for the early achievement of a comprehensive test ban but is conscious that that Conference will see the expression of widely differing views. We are nevertheless convinced that valuable work to assist preparations for a comprehensive test ban can be undertaken at the Conference and we will participate constructively to this end.

As I noted before - technology is a two-edged sword which can be employed for economic development or for the development of evermore powerful weapons. In the 1990s, while ensuring the need for all to have a piece of the technology pie, it is also necessary for States, unilaterally and multilaterally, to restrain themselves, and others, from diverting technologies to destructive ends.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

In the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the international community sought for the first time to control destructive effects of a technology while making its peaceful uses available. In the NPT it took a deliberate step to change the historical trend of new technologies always being turned to military purposes. The NPT was a bold statement of commitment to constructing a better future. There continues to be a vital role for this Treaty as a permanent feature of the international security framework.

In the 1990s, we need further bold steps forward. The momentous changes to the international order have given us a better chance to make the world safer from the threat of nuclear weapons and other forms of proliferation than at any time since the end of the Second World War.

For Australia in the 1990s, a most urgent priority is the conclusion in the Conference on Disarmament of a global chemical-weapons convention. All too often in recent years the world has been reminded of the ugly spectre of chemical weapons. Many years of work in the Conference on Disarmament have produced a firm framework for a comprehensive chemical weapons convention, and we now have the opportunity, indeed the obligation, to bring these negotiations to a successful conclusion. Australia places high priority on the early achievement of the convention, and will continue to work intensively and imaginatively in the Conference on Disarmament, and to undertake a range of practical activities which facilitate reaching that goal. At present, our conviction is that the most pressing need is for vigorous political commitment and direction, and it is with this in mind that Foreign Minister Senator Evans added his voice to the growing calls for a ministerial-level meeting next year. We urge all countries to meet the challenge of this complex, but absolutely worth-while task.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

Non-proliferation measures which limit the transfer of technologies to countries not possessing them can sometimes cause resentment and misunderstanding. This derives from the point I made before about the essentiality of technology for the development of economies.

Those resentments derive partly from the perception that some consider it to be all right for some countries to have certain weapons systems but not for others. But let us not exaggerate such concerns. Australia participates in several non-proliferation régimes, the most notable of which is the NPT, under which Australia has undertaken not to acquire nuclear weapons. Australia is also a central player in the Australia Group, which seeks to control the export of certain sensitive chemicals and chemical technologies. Most recently Australia joined the missile-technology control régime. None the less, Australia's position is quite clear. We do not see these as avenues for preventing the transfer of necessary technologies to any other State. We see them as interim measures, pending the conclusion of disarmament agreements. Nuclear non-proliferation is not a substitute for nuclear disarmament. Chemical export controls are not a substitute for a global verifiable chemical-weapons convention. Missile technology controls are not a substitute for removing the causes of tension which lead to the acquisition of missiles.

In the next ten years, despite the new face and new resolve of the United Nations, it is likely that regional tensions will persist and that, regrettably, regional conflicts will break out.

The dangers of States diverting too much capital to expenditure on weapons has already been pointed out, as has the potential that the downward spiral of economic stagnation reinforced by such expenditures will increase the likelihood of the use



(Mr. Morris, Australia)

of force. It is imperative, therefore, that States exercise restraint in the transfer of arms and that such transfers be carried out with openness and transparency.

Removing the sources of political and economic tension which lead to instability is not simple - nor will it be in the years to come as regions increasingly become fluid in their strategic environments as a result of the subsidence of East-West polarization.

The prevention of regional conflict will be enhanced by mediation and by peace-making and peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations. It will also be enhanced by the development of regional arrangements which could include developing processes that one day might evolve into specific frameworks for confidence-building measures and for addressing and resolving security problems.

The most interesting regional security development over the last year has been the rapidly increasing interest throughout the Asia-Pacific region in developing more systematic dialogues on security issues. It may be that at some later stage in this process or dialogue some form or structure may be seen as timely. But at this stage, better processes of dialogue need to be commenced and new patterns of co-operation among countries in the Asia-Pacific region need to be explored. The development of these processes will establish a basis upon which countries in the region together could construct a dialogue on the region's security concerns.

As we approach the twenty-first century we have many challenges ahead of us. How we cope with these challenges will determine whether we have a world of divisions, of violence and of increasing change to all its peoples or whether we have a different, safer and more peaceful world.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

The dream of creating a world in which a decent standard of living, peace and social justice prevail - the dream enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations - is as noble and as widely shared as ever. But such a world cannot rise from old foundations of violence, weaponry and war-making.

A historic opportunity to realize our dreams awaits us, if we take the actions to deserve it.

In the words of the recent Nobel laureate, Octavio Paz:

"When history sleeps, it speaks in dreams: on the forehead of the sleeping people, the poem is a constellation of blood. When history wakes image becomes act, the poem happens: poetry moves into action.

"Deserve your dream."

Mrs. URIBE de LOZANO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to take this opportunity to extend to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. Your election clearly reflects the high esteem and great confidence we all have in you. We should also like to extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau and pledge our fullest co-operation to everyone in the tasks we are undertaking.

Efforts to halt the arms race, in particular the nuclear-arms race, have a long history in the United Nations. In 1990, as we begin the Third Disarmament Decade, we believe that it is timely to recall the postulates of the Final Act of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which was held in 1978:

"The ending of the arms race and the achievement of real disarmament are tasks of primary importance and urgency. To meet this historic challenge is in the political and economic interests of all the nations and peoples of the world as well as in the interests of ensuring their genuine security and peaceful future.

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano,  
Colombia)

"Unless its avenues are closed, the continued arms race means a growing threat to international peace and security and even to the very survival of mankind. The nuclear and conventional arms build-up threatens to stall the efforts aimed at reaching the goals of development, to become an obstacle on the road of achieving the new international economic order and to hinder the solution of other vital problems facing mankind." (S-10/2, paras. 1 and 2)

Twelve years have elapsed since this historic document was adopted. But the goal of the United Nations continues to be the creation of a just and peaceful world in which disputes are resolved through negotiations and not by force of arms.

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano,  
Colombia)

Clearly, the attitude States take with regard to the arms race can either lead us to that goal or prevent us from attaining it. The maintenance of a reasonable defensive capability may seem a legitimate goal, but to encourage the arms race and exacerbate tensions may lead to armed conflicts and even to a world war in which there can be neither winners nor losers.

Only a few days ago the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was concluded. Unsuccessful efforts were made to reach agreement on a final declaration, and that situation gives rise to disturbing thoughts about the Treaty's future and its effectiveness beyond 1995.

That Conference afforded States Parties to the Treaty an exceptional opportunity to strengthen their commitment to erecting a higher barrier against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the nuclear-arms race in general. However, the strengthening of the Treaty requires full compliance with the obligations it entails, both by the nuclear-weapon States and by States that do not possess nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, reality demands that we view with a certain pessimism the possibility of a régime that would prevent both the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Although some steps have been taken in the right direction, there are today more nuclear warheads in the world than there were when the Non-Proliferation Treaty was adopted. Notwithstanding the results of the future treaty on the reduction of strategic arms (START), both super-Powers still possess no less than 30,000 nuclear warheads that are still undergoing improvements. Since 1968 a growing number of countries have acquired the capability of producing nuclear weapons, and some of them are reluctant to make their nuclear facilities subject to the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Furthermore, the

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano,  
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non-proliferation process will be incomplete unless it is based on a total nuclear-test ban, and, as we all know, the rhetoric of the nuclear Powers omits mention of that goal.

The principle of universality in the United Nations has great practical value in many contexts and particularly in the context of disarmament. The spirit that prevailed at the time the Non-Proliferation Treaty was negotiated clearly demonstrated that the principle of universality is a fundamental element in the régime established thereunder, which was designed to bring all States together to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Our delegation once again urges that an effort be made to ensure that States not parties to the Treaty, be they nuclear-weapon States or not, accede to it as soon as possible, thereby contributing to dispelling the doubts and difficulties that continue to exist with regard to that Treaty.

The end of the cold war and the end of the bipolar confrontation between the super-Powers have given hope for new relations among States that would remove the spectre of regional conflicts. However, once again events have left our predictions and desires high and dry.

There can be no doubt that Iraq's attack against its neighbour Kuwait surprised a world that was not expecting a new military adventure in the midst of the newly created spirit of détente. Is there any question that that military adventure was inspired by the frantic arms trade generated by the high oil prices that have turned the area into a major destination for ever-more-sophisticated death-dealing machinery? Can we be surprised that a crisis arose in an area that has for over 15 years been a veritable paradise for arms dealers of all kinds, dealers who abetted the 8-year war between Iran and Iraq and encouraged the belligerent attitudes that led to the insane arms race in that region? Did the

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano,  
Colombia)

countries supplying such weapons never imagine that they were contributing to escalating an already volatile and tense situation?

Nothing can justify an act of aggression. Unfortunately, however, the world is today a victim of its own creation: the militarization of its societies. As the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, stated:

"The generosity of the suppliers has made it possible for the recipients to opt for military solutions to regional disputes rather than resolving them by peaceful means."

What has happened so far - even though war has not yet broken out - is enough to give us pause, to chasten us and to make us consider the change that is needed if we are to make a real attempt at curbing the manufacture of and unscrupulous trade in weapons and at putting an end to the profit mentality that has encouraged the present situation.

Present-day history would be quite different if, instead of an arms race, we had opted for the path of development and had tried to give the peoples of the world a living standard in keeping with their aspirations for peace and progress. However, we are experiencing the after-effects of the cold war, which was not a heroic episode but, rather, a wasted stretch of time in the process of improving human lives, one that has led the world to a situation in which it is now held hostage to lethal weapons and in which there is a prevailing paranoia in which one faction of mankind has regarded the other as its enemy.

Unfortunately there are still enemies to justify the arms race and recourse to war. Today, speaking at the Headquarters of the United Nations, we say to the instigators of new wars that they themselves are accountable to mankind for the threat of a military catastrophe that would be a thousand times worse than the world has ever seen before.

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano,  
Colombia)

The need for disarmament is particularly urgent now, when international security is being so flagrantly threatened. If the present crisis teaches us anything it is that the constant arms build-up subjugates and corrupts society and that only if men show a determination to renounce war and violence as instruments for settling vital questions will there be peace.

Notwithstanding the imminent threat of war, some arms-producing countries seem all-too unwilling to forgo an opportunity to make money or to exploit their quarrels or ideologies - or to pay back certain favours by selling war matériel, even when they know that such actions serve to promote the arms race and to escalate serious conflict situations.

For some time now Colombia has been saying that so long as war continues to be a lucrative business there will be no peace. Only when Governments have the wisdom and the courage to understand that the vast resources being invested in weapons can, if properly allocated, solve problems of housing, health, education and security itself, will there be a chance of ending violence where it is rampant; and that there will be peace only when false pride and the arrogance of force are set aside.

As participants in the Group of Governmental Experts on the problem of international arms transfers, we shall continue to stress the harmful consequences of such activities, which are today particularly evident and irrefutable. We shall continue to urge an international course of conduct that will eliminate the indiscriminate trade in weapons, and we shall fight to put an end to the arms race and to see to it that it does not continue to poison the lives of our peoples.

For mankind today peace must be seen as an instrument of conscience, a marvellous instrument for achieving the well-being of all men and all societies - indeed, peace must be an unquenchable passion.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no other names on the list of speakers for this afternoon's meeting. However, one representative wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Before I call on him, I should like to draw the Committee's attention to the following General Assembly decisions. 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 exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two. The first intervention in exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting should be limited to ten minutes and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes.

I call on the representative of Iraq, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. MALIK (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Since this is the first time I have spoken before this Committee, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman and the Bureau, on behalf of the Iraqi delegation, on your assumption of the task of steering the work of the Committee. I also wish to express the willingness of the Iraqi delegation to co-operate with you.

I wish to make the following observations of my delegation in exercise of the right of reply to the statement made by the representative of the United States of America here this morning.

In speaking of the genuine peace to which he aspires, the United States representative seems to have forgotten the fact that the huge, unprecedented American build-up in the Arab Gulf area poses a grave threat to peace and security in the region and is a naked threat to Iraq's security and sovereignty.

Secondly, if the United States representative is really keen on the security of the region's peoples as he claims, and is really interested in peace, then the peaceful initiative by Mr. Saddam Hussein, President of the Republic of Iraq,



(Mr. Malik, Iraq)

constitutes the right and realistic way to solve all the problems of the region. It is a sincere initiative which aims at sparing the region the horrors of a catastrophic war.

Thirdly, the United States representative shed a lot of tears when he spoke of the dangers of chemical weapons. However, he forgot, once again, to mention that in the meeting between the President of Iraq and the United States congressional delegation headed by Senator Dole, Iraq declared its readiness to establish a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, including the nuclear weapons possessed by one single entity, side by side with chemical weapons. Moreover, the Arab Summit Conference held in Baghdad in May 1990 adopted that objective and made clear the way it could be achieved.

Fourthly, the United States representative claimed that his country works for the success of disarmament efforts. Those claims, however, mask a process of qualitative rearmament through which the United States gets rid of obsolete weapons of diminished capability and exchanges them for more advanced high-capability weapons. The evidence is the following: greater funds allocated to the strategic defence initiative; a greater United States military budget; and increased production of sophisticated American weaponry. Furthermore, the United States was the country that prevented consensus at the Fourth Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty by its insistence on continuing nuclear testing.

Fifthly, in conclusion, I have to denounce the way the United States representative spoke of the world order in the post-cold-war era, at the conclusion of his statement. His words show quite clearly that it is the intention of the United States to become the sole leader of an imperialist approach which is a throw-back to the early twentieth century. Iraq will not bend to United States threats and will not allow this aggressive approach to pass through Iraq.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.