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Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)
later: Mr. MORRIS (Australia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. BILOA TANG (Cameroon) (interpretation from French): I should like, first of all, to join with previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election and on the way in which you are guiding our proceedings. I am sure that our work will be successful.

I should also like to congratulate the delegation of the Soviet Union on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to President Gorbachev.

Thanks to the remarkable improvement in the relations between Washington and Moscow, the rapid advance of historic events in Central and Eastern Europe, the prospects glimpsed in Asia and elsewhere, the thaw between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, the conclusion of many important agreements on disarmament and the re-emergence of multilateralism, which helps to strengthen the role of the United Nations, the work of our Committee is taking place this year in an exceptional international climate.

While it is supported and encouraged by the political will of all States, this improvement in the international climate still seems to us to suggest the need for thorough consideration of the various aspects of the question of disarmament and the maintenance of international peace and security at a time when the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nation impel us to take heed of our duty to preserve future generations from the scourge of war.

Many non-aligned countries have noted that the arms race, both nuclear and conventional, constitutes a particularly harmful factor in the destabilization of developing countries. This is also the case in Cameroon, which is not a military

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

Power and whose major concern is still the improvement of the living standards of its people. However, if we are to attain that main objective it is essential that peace should prevail and that disputes be settled by peaceful means.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

Similarly, and apart from the fact that resources that could have financed development are devoted to military purposes, the arms race in its various forms impedes efforts to establish the conditions for genuine peace and makes it more difficult to settle disputes between States peacefully.

For Cameroon, disarmament - nuclear disarmament in particular - is an essential part of any serious effort to ensure security and promote development at the national, regional and international levels. That is why we have always supported and will unhesitatingly continue to support initiatives and agreements on disarmament, both bilaterally and in our Organization.

Cameroon remains dedicated to the purposes and principles proclaimed by the Charter and attaches particular importance to disarmament and the maintenance of peace. In this connection we welcome the positive and encouraging developments in international negotiations on this question since the last session. In areas where confrontation has been the norm for so many years, attitudes and perceptions are now changing significantly, and long-held divergent views are being reconciled. This trend must be encouraged.

We note with satisfaction the considerable progress achieved in the Soviet-United States bilateral disarmament negotiation. Since the signing of the 1987 Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - those negotiations have led to the agreement on the destruction of chemical weapons reached last June in Washington, to two important protocols on verification relating to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to the Treaty on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, and to a joint declaration on conventional forces in Europe.

We note with equal satisfaction significant reduction in strategic offensive armaments, as well as the time-table that has been envisaged for the conclusion and signature of the START II Treaty - that is, before the end of this year.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

We are grateful to the two super-Powers for having decided to allow the United Nations fully to play its central role in disarmament. That decision meets the concerns of Cameroon, which had made similar proposals at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in 1987. Moreover, we thank the Member States that have always supported this Cameroonian initiative, thereby enabling the Disarmament Commission successfully to conclude its work on the question in May 1990. On the basis of the excellent report of the Disarmament Commission, our Committee should be able to adopt action-oriented recommendations.

In our view, arms control and the quest for peace should be a constant concern of all States. All nations should be involved in the work for arms control and the reduction of all threats to peace, including non-military threats if we truly wish to replace relations of confrontation by bonds of co-operation encompassing all regions of the world.

The reduction of their military budgets and programmes has enabled some developed countries to cancel the debts of the poorest countries and to adopt measures to help medium-income countries, thereby giving concrete expression to the already acknowledged link between disarmament and development. While reiterating our appreciation for these initiatives, which Cameroon would like to see extended, we should point out that the peace dividends have not yet been equitably distributed in all regions of the world: the third world sees its economic and social situation constantly deteriorating and remains confronted by numerous non-military threats to peace - namely, poverty, destitution, the heavy debt burden, the population explosion, illiteracy and hunger.

In the international community, energetic measures are necessary to give further concrete expression to the link between disarmament and development and to help the nations of the South deal with the aforementioned threats.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

With regard to the Disarmament Commission, the adoption of a document on the rationalization of its work and the consensus reached in that Commission, during its last session, on questions as sensitive and complex as South Africa's nuclear capacity, the strengthening of the United Nations role in disarmament, conventional disarmament and the third disarmament decade constitute remarkable progress and real cause for hope.

We hope that the Commission will soon conclude its work on questions that are still pending. Similarly, we consider that in deciding on the agenda of upcoming sessions of the Commission member States should reach an agreement on the criteria governing the choice of items, whose universal application, relevance and interest will enable the Commission to have fruitful deliberations, to the benefit of international peace and security.

My delegation is also pleased to note that rationalization of the First Committee's work is being pursued successfully, thanks to the efforts of its successive Chairmen and on the on the basis of the 1987 Cameroonian proposal in this connection. We hope that this beneficial development, which has already been reflected in a considerable reduction in the number of resolutions, will be extended to the Conference on Disarmament and will accelerate the attainment of the awaited agreements.

Cameroon regrets that despite the progress made on some items on its agenda, the Fourth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was unable to adopt a final document by consensus owing to major differences on the problem of the cessation of nuclear testing, safeguards and the future of the Treaty.

Hence we must ensure progress during our consultations on these questions at this session, in order to strengthen the international non-proliferation régime, taking into account the vertical and horizontal proliferation of modern weapons and

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

their delivery vehicles and the introduction of increasingly sophisticated chemical, biological, nuclear and conventional weapons in some regions of the world, in particular those in the grip of chronic political tensions.

In this connection, we share the idea that parties to negotiations on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe should be able to take steps to guarantee that the weapons covered by the understanding will not contribute to fanning the flames of existing or potential conflicts in other regions of the world.

In view of the importance of the cessation of nuclear tests to an effective quest for disarmament, Cameroon is happy about the convening of the Conference to amend the partial nuclear-test ban Treaty, which we hope will result in a complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. At the same time, the depositary Powers of the NPT should be able to decree on a provisional basis, pending the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban, an immediate moratorium on all these tests, and they should encourage negotiations on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

With regard to the convention on chemical weapons, my delegation believes that the progress already made on the structure of the text and the encouragement given by the Paris Conference and the recent Soviet-American agreement on those weapons should enable the Conference on Disarmament at next year's meeting in Geneva on this question to adopt a definitive text. We hope that the First Committee will support that work by adopting by consensus a resolution containing specific recommendations.

Multilateral and bilateral disarmament efforts can succeed only if they are supplemented at the regional level by the promotion of confidence-building measures and disarmament and security measures between the States involved. That was the reason for the initiative taken by Cameroon in 1987 on Central Africa, dealing with the consideration and adoption by the States members of the Community of Central African States of a range of measures designed to strengthen confidence, security, economic co-operation and disarmament in that region.

We are encouraged by the attention and support given to that initiative by the international community. The United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs organized the first meeting of experts of our subregion in Lomé in 1988. We hope that it will also organize the second meeting of experts, scheduled to be held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, in 1991, on a date yet to be agreed, to consider every aspect of our proposal and to draw up recommendations for the authorities of the 10 States concerned.

Chemical-weapon-free zones, nuclear-weapon-free zones, and zones of peace and co-operation are important means by which States try to exclude their regions from the arms race and to organize regional co-operation for the maintenance of peace and the promotion of co-operation and development. Therefore, it is important that all States respect the international instruments by which such zones are created.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

Cameroon is pleased at the encouraging results of the second meeting of States of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic, held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 25 to 29 June this year.

Similarly, we hope that the Disarmament Commission's adoption by consensus of a document on the nuclear capability of South Africa during its last session will enable the First Committee to adopt by consensus during this session a set of recommendations on the effective implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, which was adopted in 1964 by the Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity.

For the sake of the common future of mankind, all nations - big and small, rich and poor - must spare no effort to bring about a more just and equitable new world order. In this context, the United Nations remains the melting-pot in which States can harmonize their positions and make joint efforts to meet the pressing challenges of today: peace, development and human rights, rights for which there must be equal respect throughout the world.

Mr. TADESSE (Ethiopia): At the outset, Sir, allow me to express our warm congratulations to you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee. Having witnessed the commendable manner in which you have led the deliberations of other important United Nations bodies, and being fully aware of your well-known qualities as an accomplished diplomat, we have no doubt that you will elevate the deliberations of our Committee to even higher planes. Let me also extend our felicitations to your colleagues, the other officers of the Committee, on their election. You can rest assured, Mr. Chairman, that you will enjoy the full support and co-operation of the Ethiopian delegation in all your undertakings.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

As many of the speakers who have preceded me have observed, this meeting of the First Committee is taking place at a moment when the world is witnessing changes of an unprecedented nature. Indeed, our deliberations are being held at a time when the morphological structure of the international political system seems to have been altered beyond all recognition. Although the substantial impact of the changes on the democratization of international relations is yet to be fathomed, the relaxation of tension which has accompanied them augurs well for the maintenance of international peace and security. In the field of disarmament, the effect of these changes has been significant. The initiatives taken by the two leading Powers in the area of nuclear disarmament continue to generate hope for a more stable international order. In this respect it is with anticipation that we await the speedy conclusion of a START treaty and an agreement on conventional forces in Europe.

Although we are gratified by the turn of events which has contributed immensely to the prevalence of détente and a spirit of dialogue at the international level, we continue to harbour concerns relating to the remaining stockpiles of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the hands of a few States. We have yet to overcome the shock we sustained as a result of the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait. That flagrant violation of the basic norms of international law has once again revealed the precarious nature of the emerging order. While we find the overall situation of the present international political environment fairly reassuring, we cannot fail to recognize the dangers inherent in the residues and undercurrents of the past. Thus in the broad area of war and peace much remains to be done.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

Among the most encouraging developments we have witnessed in the last few years has been the determination manifested by the international community in facing the challenges posed by chemical weapons. The protracted negotiations held at the Conference on Disarmament have reached a most decisive stage, in spite of some hurdles yet to be surmounted. It is essential that all States, especially those with significant stockpiles of such weapons, demonstrate the necessary political will to enable the multilateral disarmament forum to conclude its work on the long and eagerly awaited convention on the total ban of chemical weapons.

The collective effort of the international community to rid our planet of the scourge of nuclear war will remain futile unless and until meaningful negotiations are initiated on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. Much as we welcome the bilateral initiatives taken by the two leading Powers to reduce existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons, we shall persevere in our demand for a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. In this regard, we welcome the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban in the Conference on Disarmament, in spite of our dissatisfaction with the limited nature of its mandate. It is also our ardent hope that the amendment Conference of the partial test-ban Treaty, scheduled to be held in New York in January 1991, will contribute immensely to the universal effort aimed at the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

Ethiopia attaches paramount importance to the role that nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace play in the fields of the non-proliferation of weapons and confidence-building in various parts of the world. Throughout the years, Ethiopia has participated in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean in the belief that the conversion of the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace would go a long way towards enhancing the prospects for peace and stability in the region. So far, the concerted effort made by the littoral and hinterland States to ensure the convening of the international Conference on the Indian Ocean has remained a distant hope owing to the apprehensions and misgivings that some maritime Powers have expressed regarding the validity of that forum. The most recent decision of some of those Powers to withdraw from the Ad Hoc Committee has added another dimension to the problem. We therefore appeal once again to those maritime Powers to reconsider their position and join us in our effort to establish a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean.

In my own continent, the lofty objectives enunciated in the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa have been undermined as a result of South Africa's acquisition of nuclear capability. In spite of the modest reforms that have taken place in that country, there are no indications that the racist régime in Pretoria has abandoned its policy of destabilization. Despite pronouncements containing promises, the Pretoria régime has yet to subject its nuclear facilities to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. It is therefore our considered view that all States should ensure the scrupulous observance of the arms embargo against the apartheid régime.

The well-established link between disarmament and development is a matter to which my country attaches the highest importance. It is morally repugnant that the

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

leading military Powers should spend the scarce resources of our planet on their nuclear arsenals in a world in which the majority are deprived of their right to shelter. It is indeed inconceivable that so many resources should be allocated to the refinement of nuclear warheads on a planet where many are grappling with the development of better seeds. It is equally regrettable that considerable sums should be invested in efforts aimed at the militarization of outer space at a time when many countries are endeavouring to combat desertification and the degradation of the environment. It is high time, therefore, that the resources that would be released by disarmament were channelled into ameliorating the sad economic plight of the developing countries.

Although we may be on different rungs of the ladder of development, the interdependence of our world compels us to perceive our existence in a unitary fashion. As we have often pointed out, our collective fate cannot and should not be left to the judgement of a few States. Especially in matters of disarmament and peace, the involvement of all States, large and small, is bound to contribute towards the universalization of commonly shared goals and to their attainment. In our pursuit of such goals, we must endeavour to enhance the role of the United Nations as the leading Organization capable of interpreting and equipped to interpret the genuine aspirations of the international community. Our success in this effort will very much determine our ability to survive as a family of nations. As a family of nations, we should act collectively in a manner that ensures our survival as inhabitants of the same planet.

Mr. NANDOE (Suriname): My delegation joins preceding speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau. My

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

delegation assures you all of its co-operation in the discharge of your responsibilities.

Innumerable small, everyday and almost unnoticed changes have a way of undermining existing patterns of behaviour and belief, until a single event suddenly triggers far-reaching alterations in the lives of millions.

The Iraqi aggression against Kuwait was such an event. It struck when we were on the threshold of a new decade in a world already caught up in fundamental transition and transformation. The virtual end of the cold war had opened avenues to a constructive dialogue for arms control and disarmament, introducing a new phase in international relations in which attention could be concentrated on more pressing problems, such as economic and social development. However, the present tense and explosive situation in the Gulf, where the dangers of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons are looming, has, much to our distress, changed the expectations.

My delegation has always attached great significance to the maintenance of an effective mechanism for the prevention or control of the spread of nuclear weapons, and in particular to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, which we consider to be a major security arrangement for the entire international community.

Although the main responsibility for nuclear disarmament lies with the major nuclear-weapon Powers, all States should take part in efforts to eliminate those weapons. Nuclear-weapon States should accept the obligation to take positive and practical steps towards the adoption and implementation of concrete measures regarding nuclear disarmament. We therefore regret that the Fourth Review Conference could not reach a consensus on a formal document.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

However, as many representatives have stated previously, basic features of the Treaty could be reaffirmed by the participants and we should therefore direct our future efforts in a positive spirit towards the strengthening of non-proliferation and encourage the accession of more countries to the non-proliferation Treaty. As we approach 1995, when a decision will have to be taken on whether the Treaty shall continue in force indefinitely or be extended for an additional fixed period, it is mandatory that a number of specific issues be tackled beforehand. In this respect, we welcome the decision of the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear-Test Ban.

There are well-established allegations that a number of countries possess a chemical-weapons capability with a destructive force that could be a military threat with a political impact. It is therefore regrettable that, although the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons was able to make progress on technical matters, on a number of political issues no agreement could be reached in order to arrive at a comprehensive chemical-weapons ban. It is of the utmost importance that the last remaining obstacles be removed so that an effective ban on the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons can be concluded during the next session of the Conference on Disarmament, in 1991.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

It has long been a policy of our Organization that arms limitation and disarmament should apply not only to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction but also to conventional weapons. At the tenth special session some concrete suggestions were put forward - for example, those concerning the prevention of all forms of illegal trade in arms and those concerning an international register of arms sales and transfers.

As the Secretary-General indicates in his report, there exists the unfortunate possibility that significant arms reductions in one part of the world, owing to ongoing positive changes in the overall world situation, will be followed by the transfer of the resultant surplus weaponry to other parts of the planet. This would make our arms-reduction efforts an exercise in futility, as it would only result in arms redistribution.

My delegation therefore welcomes the Disarmament Commission's recommendations on ways of facilitating possible measures in the field of conventional-arms reduction, including measures to restrain international arms transfers. The initiative of a United Nations study on ways and means of promoting, on a universal and non-discriminatory basis, transparency in international transfers of conventional arms, is praiseworthy.

In this respect, we support the Secretary-General's suggestion that an international arms-transfer register be established as a step towards curbing the increasing illicit and covert trafficking in arms and as a means of averting their known, potentially negative, effects on the process of the peaceful social and economic development of peoples.

The recent resurgence of United Nations peace-keeping activity has brought a new challenge to our Organization. A careful analysis indicates that multilateral peace-keeping under United Nations auspices, although certainly no panacea, can be

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

more successful than unilateral efforts to defuse military and other conflicts. It is our view that peace-keeping operations work best if they are widely perceived as being impartial and, therefore, enjoy broad international support.

The Secretary-General, in his report, states:

"A deeper and more active involvement of the United Nations has over time, ... increasingly shown that peace-making itself determines, as it should, the size, scope and duration of peace-keeping as conventionally understood and that it is often by a fusion of the two in an integral undertaking that peace can genuinely be brought to troubled areas." (A/45/1, p. 4)

My delegation recommends that the United Nations peace-keeping system be streamlined and consolidated so that it can be used properly, not only in cases of military conflict but also in other situations.

As a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, my country underlines the objectives established in the Declaration on the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic. The basic obligations of the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco are: to use nuclear material and facilities exclusively for peaceful purposes; not to possess nuclear weapons; not to engage in or encourage any nuclear-weapon activities in the region; and not to permit the presence of any such weapons in their territories.

My country remains committed to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to the strengthening of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The CHAIRMAN: I have received a request from the Observer of the Holy See, Archbishop Renato Raffaele Martino, to be allowed to make a statement. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees to that request.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop MARTINO (Holy See): I wish to offer warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this important Committee, and I extend appreciation also to the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat.

The deliberations of the Committee this year are taking place at a time of startling contrast.

The world rejoices at the end of the cold war, which had the effect, over more than four decades, of polarizing relations between East and West and leading to the biggest build-up of arms in the history of the world. The dismantling of the Berlin wall, the peaceful reunification of Germany, the sweep of freedom through Eastern Europe, and the reduction of armed forces in that area of the world, which has lived under militarism for too long, are all signs of the transformation in international relations. They are the signs of hope of a new era in which security will be found through the political co-operation of States rather than corrosive military confrontation.

Yet, at this very moment, the crisis in the Persian Gulf has led to a massive build-up of armed forces that could result in a war of devastating proportions. The world is on edge - knowing that oppression must be stopped, but recognizing that recourse, once again, to military action would not address the roots of the problem. What must be addressed is the underlying crisis: the poverty and instability of so many countries; the competition for resources; the huge transfer of arms from the industrialized countries to the vulnerable regions. It is the United Nations that must address these problems if they are not to be subject to militarism, which would inevitably sink the world into armed camps. The Holy See cannot but share the conviction expressed by the Secretary-General,

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, that common action to resolve disputes is preferable to action by individual States, which is always subject to "incoherence, dispersal and fragmentation in the peace effort". (A/45/1, p. 13) In that regard, the United Nations seems to be actually the most appropriate means of settling peacefully the too-numerous points of crisis and war that affect humanity.

The Gulf crisis is a reminder that the signs of danger must be heeded lest the gloss of post-cold-war peace turn out to be a veneer covering the militarism still deeply imbedded in the psyche of nations.

The Holy See appeals to nations to use this moment of hope to redouble efforts to ensure stability in the new era by rooting out the threats to world peace. Foremost among these threats is the continued modernization of nuclear weapons and the maintenance of the cold-war strategy of nuclear deterrence. The Holy See has frequently spoken on this question, reaffirming the stand taken by Pope John Paul II when he said:

"Deterrence based on a balance of terror cannot be considered an end in itself, but only a stage towards progressive disarmament."

Nuclear deterrence can in no way be morally acceptable as a permanent policy.

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

I am happy to note that the representative of Ireland has spoken along the same lines, emphasizing the moral aspects of disarmament.

As the failed process of reviewing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in Geneva last month showed, there is growing resentment among non-nuclear States at the continued vertical nuclear-arms development by the nuclear States. The present nuclear-arms negotiations between the two major possessors, welcome and essential as they are, do not obscure the fact that the modernizing of nuclear weapons continues. That is why the Conference on amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty should be actively supported by all as a means of launching multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

The Holy See encourages a review of the strategy of nuclear deterrence at this hopeful moment; for surely the advances made in redefining their relationship open the way for the two major States to have a new ethical relationship. The willingness of many political leaders to take a positive step forward through the strengthening of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe as a viable forum for security, economic and environmental concerns opens up new possibilities for attaining common security.

This past decade has revealed the physical, security, economic and social connections that increasingly affect modern life. A new ethical view of nuclear deterrence should come from a greater recognition of what the "common ground" of our one planet means. The end of nuclear weapons will not leave us with a perfect world but will at least give the political order more room to deal with other imminent threats to peace caused by economic and social deprivation.

We recall the teaching of the Second Vatican Council that a universal public authority should be put in place to outlaw war. This goal requires broad and bold efforts to reinforce, or eventually to build, global institutions that can enable

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

all societies to be secure. International monitoring and enforcement, economic incentives for demilitarization and international legal procedures would play central roles in replacing deterrence by non-nuclear means. The signs of hope of the new era mean that the world community can start along that path.

This Committee can make an important contribution to the disarmament process by focusing global attention on the need for meaningful conventional disarmament, the successful conclusion of the long-standing negotiations on prohibition of the production of chemical weapons and the need to halt nuclear-weapon development.

The Holy See notes with appreciation the new reports that the Committee has received on nuclear weapons and the role of the United Nations in verification, along with the ideas put forward on strengthening the process of conversion from military spending to civilian production. A peace dividend for a world of great human need is now within reach, but more work is required to convince Governments that they make a greater contribution to true human security by spending on development rather than on arms. The world is moving swiftly, the signs of hope and the signs of danger intermingling in each newscast. Humanity craves the path of peace opened up by the immense amount of United Nations activity. We must work to ensure that the processes of militarism do not close that path.*

Mr. KOEFFLER (Austria): It is, of course, a great privilege to be speaking in this Committee after the Observer of the Holy See, and I take this opportunity to tell him that my delegation subscribes whole-heartedly to what has been said. We shall certainly follow his appeal to nations to work for the stability of the new era in order to root out the threats to peace. In this

* Ms. Morris (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Koeffler, Austria)

spirit, my delegation would like to complement our general statement of 16 October and make a few comments on chemical weapons, under agenda item 55.

A priority of Austria's disarmament policy is the earliest possible conclusion of a convention on chemical weapons, banning their development, production and stockpiling, as well as their use. To attain this goal we have been trying to make specific contributions to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference on Disarmament. This year an Austrian scientific advisory council has begun work to promote research on verification conducive to the ongoing negotiations. In support of this, laboratory facilities have been established. A documentation centre on chemical weapons has been set up. Discussions are beginning in Austria on the establishment of a national authority under the convention.

These measures are intended to accelerate the negotiations in Geneva. At the same time they indicate our earnestness in offering the international community Vienna as the site for a future organization on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has worked very hard during 1990. We compliment Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden on his activities and on his dynamism. We appreciate his taking the initiative yesterday to brief this Committee on what is being done in Geneva.

Despite considerable progress on legal and technical issues such as the order of destruction of stocks of chemical weapons, dispute settlement and the investigation of alleged use, the much-hoped-for political breakthrough on key issues has not materialized.

Divergent views on politically sensitive questions remain unchanged. The most important ones are the conduct of challenge inspections, or inspections on request,

(Mr. Koeffler, Austria)

of the need for additional ad hoc inspections, the composition and decision-making of the organization's executive council, assistance and protection against chemical weapons, security stocks, measures to redress a situation and ensure compliance - the expression formerly used was "sanctions" - and economic and technological development, a theme to which my delegation attaches importance in view of the aspirations of developing countries.

(Mr. Koeffler, Austria)

Thus, in our opinion, the real differences are on the table. They can be tackled in concrete terms. They can be overcome by political compromise. The solution of these issues may secure undiminished security and universal adherence to the Convention. The step from deterrence to co-operative security can be made.

We welcome the agreement of 1 June this year between the United States and the Soviet Union on the destruction of a substantial part of their chemical weapons stockpiles. We share the commonly held view that this agreement should be used as a catalyst for a total ban on chemical weapons. We realize at this stage also that the rolling text on the subject of the order of destruction has benefited from the formulations in the bilateral agreement. Pending the entry into force of a complete ban, we support the position of the Netherlands that the authority of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons should be strengthened.

Austria produces neither chemical weapons nor key precursors for a chemical-weapons capacity. We take part, however, in international efforts to control and monitor the increasing cross-boundary movement of key precursors. This international co-operation, however, can only be complementary to a chemical-weapons convention. Delegations here have spoken out vigorously for the early conclusion of a convention. Delegations have equally welcomed a meeting, at the ministerial level, at the Conference on Disarmament in 1991, well prepared and timed, to agree on a package solution. Austria joins these delegations.

In conclusion, we see no insurmountable problems in the negotiations if there is a willingness to compromise. Success is considered by the international public to be long overdue. It is an urgent necessity.

(Mr. Koeffler, Austria)

Austria will continue to work for a convention that is comprehensive in scope, one that provides for verification on the basis of an inspection régime upon request, universal and non-discriminatory. The year 1991 is the tenth anniversary of the negotiations on the global convention. We hope for a nice birthday party.

Mr. TAEB (Afghanistan): I am pleased to convey the congratulations of my delegation to Ambassador Rana and to his country, Nepal, a fellow member of the Asian Group, on his well-deserved election to preside over the work of the First Committee at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. We have full confidence that under his able guidance the work of the First Committee - in which a new spirit of co-operation and understanding has emerged - in the spheres of disarmament and security will be fruitful.

I wish also to express our felicitations to the other members of the Bureau on their election to serve the Committee under the chairmanship of Ambassador Rana.

The decade of the 1990s has made a good start. The cold war era is over. International relations are now taking a new course. The improvement of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States is making a great impact on the world political climate as a whole.

The ideal of the democratization of international relations and of every nation, a non-violent world, respect for the rule of law in solving problems between nations, and a balance of the legitimate interests of nations based on justice have permeated the minds of statesmen, parliamentarians, scientists and millions of people all over the world. A reversal of these positive tendencies would obviously be undesirable.

Since the meetings of the First Committee at the last session of the General Assembly, the international community has witnessed some momentous developments, such as the peaceful transformations in Europe, the reunification of Germany and of Yemen, the independence of Namibia and the continuation of the joint effort of the

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United States and the Soviet Union to overcome their differences on a number of issues. Unfortunately, some regions still remain tense and explosive.

We express our deep concern with regard to the recent crises in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. We sincerely hope that the explosive situation in those areas will be resolved by political means.

In our region, the military establishment of Pakistan, which in fact rules and controls the political life of that country, adhering to its traditional policy of interference and intervention in the internal affairs of its neighbours, remains a source of instability and tension.

Nuclear disarmament is at the top of the agenda we are discussing. The mass destructive power of nuclear explosives and their consequences need not be explored here. At the present time, according to a recent study of the United Nations, 50,000 nuclear warheads are deployed around the world. The United States and the Soviet Union possess more than 95 per cent of the existing nuclear weapons. Therefore, the two major nuclear Powers bear the main responsibility for saving civilization from a nuclear catastrophe that might occur even by a technical accident.

The United States-Soviet Union summit held in June and the follow-up ministerial meeting of the two countries have narrowed the gap and brought those countries closer to possible agreements in respect of conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE) and a reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons. We are encouraged by these developments and we hope that agreements on both questions will be concluded before the end of this year. We welcome the Protocols on Verification to the 1974 and 1976 Treaties, signed by President Bush and President Gorbachev during the June summit, which enabled Washington and Moscow to ratify the threshold Treaties. My delegation attaches great importance to legally binding assurances by

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nuclear-weapon States on the non-use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an important multilateral instrument that has served the cause of the nuclear disarmament process for many years. Regrettably, the Fourth Review Conference of the NPT could not produce a final declaration owing to the absence of consensus on some issues. While expressing our dissatisfaction, we generally consider the outcome of the Conference to represent net progress on a number of aspects of the NPT régime.

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It is worth mentioning that consensus has been reached on some key elements relating to safeguards and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as, to some extent, on negative security assurances.

A comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban is essential to prevent the escalation of the nuclear-arms race to new qualitative dimensions and to strengthen the NPT régime. In this connection, we have heard the view that a comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban is a long-term goal. My delegation cannot understand how we should interpret "long-term goal". Do some of us still want a green light to produce new and more advanced weapons of mass destruction and achieve military superiority? Do the nuclear-weapon States consider that their present nuclear arsenals are not sufficient to meet their defensive needs or, perhaps, their offensive doctrine? If the answer is yes, then one may ask what the purpose is of the hard, tough negotiations on the limitation or elimination of nuclear arsenals if we do not want to halt the production of new ones. Maybe some of us are trying deliberately to mislead the world public by destroying outdated nuclear weapons while intending to replace them with new, advanced classes of such weapons. My delegation sees no other explanation.

We believe that these are some of the questions that must be addressed early next year at the Conference on the amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty. We hope that the States parties to the Moscow Treaty of 1963 will be able to overcome the difficulties and will make every effort to achieve a consensus on a comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban treaty at the forthcoming Conference in New York.

My delegation consistently supports the efforts aimed at establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions of the world as an integral part of global nuclear disarmament. However, we note with concern that the nuclear capability of the racist régime of South Africa, the Zionist régime of Israel and

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some others stands in the way of the process of denuclearization in various parts of the world.

My delegation's position with regard to the draft resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, proposed by Pakistan, is clear. We have serious misgivings about the ill intentions and double-standard approach of its sponsor, Pakistan. The Pakistani delegation tries, by proposing the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, to divert the attention of the world community from Pakistan's continuing attempts to obtain facilities capable of producing nuclear weapons. The recent investigation by the United States authorities, which was revealed to the world public by the mass media, once again clearly proved the intention of the Pakistan authorities to acquire nuclear weapons. For this reason, Pakistan continues to refuse to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty. We call on the international community to exert on Pakistan pressure similar to that exerted on South Africa and Israel in order to stop its plan to produce nuclear weapons. Pakistan should make an unambiguous commitment to the international community by acceding to the NPT and accepting International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards on its nuclear programme.

The delegation of the Republic of Afghanistan welcomes the steps taken by the United States and the Soviet Union with regard to chemical weapons. The Soviet-American bilateral agreements on the destruction and non-production of chemical weapons and on measures to facilitate the conclusion of a multilateral convention banning chemical weapons, which were signed in June 1990, should contribute greatly to the conclusion of a multilateral convention at the Conference on Disarmament in the near future.

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We urge the Conference on Disarmament to speed up its work on the completion of the convention on chemical weapons. We fully share the view expressed by the majority of States that the chemical-weapons convention must be comprehensive, verifiable and universal. There must be no conditions that postpone the decision on the total elimination of chemical weapons and its full implementation.

We take note of the progress in negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures and on the reduction of conventional armed forces in Europe. It appears that there is a good possibility of concluding an agreement on conventional armed forces in Europe and completing a new set of confidence- and security-building measures in the near future.

My Government's position with regard to outer space is consistent and clear. We categorically oppose the militarization of outer space as a result of scientific discoveries in the field of armaments. Outer space should be used exclusively for the peaceful purposes of mankind.

Nearly all developing countries have no capability to manufacture arms and munitions. To satisfy their defence needs, they are dependent on the major arms-exporting States. Consideration of the issue of arms transfers covering a variety of transactions that in many cases impose serious problems on national sovereignty, internal and regional stability and socio-economic development, particularly in developing countries, raises some delicate questions, one of them being who should make decisions on the quality and quantity of the military needs of a sovereign State, and how. We believe there is need for deep and thorough study of the issue in all its aspects.

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In its statement last year in the First Committee, my delegation elaborated on one aspect of international arms transfer and its consequences, based on our region's experience. In fact, it is the illegal trafficking and delivery of different types of weapons, including very sophisticated and destructive ones, to irresponsible anti-Government groupings which is destabilizing the situation not only of Member States but of entire regions.

Regrettably, I have to inform the Committee that the military establishment of Pakistan has turned the territory of that country into a place where extremist elements and anti-Government groupings from neighbouring countries are purposely trained, armed, equipped and financed for the destabilization of Afghanistan and India. Continuous violations of the Geneva agreements by Pakistan are so obvious that they need no elaboration. The flow of arms supplies continues to reach Pakistani soil, where the weapons are distributed to the extremist elements of neighbouring States, mainly by the inter-service intelligence of Pakistan.

My delegation expresses its support for the proposal by the Soviet Union on registration within the United Nations system of international arms sales and transfers, and recommends the Organization to undertake a comprehensive study of all aspects of the issue.

My delegation once more stresses the importance of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and of its implementation. We note that significant progress has been made by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean on the preparatory work for the Colombo Conference, in particular the completion of its draft agenda, during the 1990 sessions. We call on all delegations to redouble their efforts and demonstrate the necessary political will in order to facilitate the convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean in Colombo in 1991.

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My delegation appreciates the progress made by the Disarmament Commission during its substantive session this year. The General Assembly, by adopting resolution 44/119 C, contributed significantly to enhancing the effective role of the Commission through rationalization of its work. We take note of the positive outcome of the work of the Commission on some issues on its agenda, as reflected in its report (A/45/42).

My delegation attaches particular importance to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament issues. We welcome the decision of the Conference on Disarmament on the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. We hope that the Ad Hoc Committee will start its substantive work on this important issue next year.

Finally, my delegation would like to express its thanks and admiration to the United Nations for its outstanding role in the field of disarmament, and in particular to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, Secretary of the Committee, and their staff in the Department for Disarmament Affairs for their tireless efforts.

Mr. KATSIGAZI (Uganda): Allow me to start by expressing my delegation's delight that Mr. Jai Pratap Rana of Nepal is our Chairman and is guiding the deliberations of the First Committee in this important post-cold-war session of the United Nations General Assembly. His personal qualities of patience and skilful diplomacy will, I am sure, lead to the successful conclusion of our work. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their well-deserved election.

For the last couple of years our statements in the First Committee and the plenary meetings of the General Assembly have been embellished with expressions of hope, as the level of understanding and co-operation between the two super-Powers

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has begun to rise. We have welcomed their bilateral initiatives on destroying or reducing some of the weapons of mass destruction which threaten the very existence of the human race. But now we have gone beyond mere expressions of hope; monumental events have taken place.

The Berlin Wall came crumbling down at this time last year. The principal protagonists in the world divided into East and West have declared that they no longer consider themselves to be adversaries. They have declared the end of the cold war. We now talk of positive changes in the international political arena. However, pertinent questions are being asked about what these changes will mean for the citizens of the world. Will they mean that nations will truly come together and seek collective solutions to the ills of the world? President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda asked the same questions when he was addressing the Royal Institute of International Affairs - Chatham House - in London on 27 September 1990. He asked:

"Where do the current changes in the world leave the third world? It is now being said that the second world has joined the first world. How will this affect Africa? There are two possible effects. The developing consensus among the two super-Powers and the anticipated peace dividend may liberate resources that can help the underdeveloped countries in Africa and other backward areas of the world. Alternatively, some interests in the industrialized countries may take the view that the backward countries of the world now have fewer options and may become less accommodative of the idiosyncrasies of the latter. The peace dividend may not easily materialize for the simple reason that conflicts may outlive the bipolar world of the West and the Soviet Union. In other words, accommodation between the capitalist and socialist camps may not bring the anticipated peace. This is already happening in the Persian Gulf. This further reveals the falsehood of the

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conception that interests that caused polarization and conflicts in the past were only those of the big Powers. It will become more and more apparent that the present international situation has been, for some time, characterized by a myriad of interests that must be accommodated in a just manner if we are to enjoy universal peace.

"If, on the other hand, the industrialized Powers become more arrogant vis-à-vis the backward countries on the understanding that the latter have few options open to them now, this may create new problems for world peace."

It is clear from the foregoing that in the post-cold-war era we have to focus on the burning issue of the technology gap between the developed North and the developing South. We have to stop and reverse the current situation, in which resources flow from South to North. Africa's external debt stock today is upwards of \$260 billion. This figure represents 328.4 per cent of the continent's total gross domestic product. As Susan George argues in her book A Fate Worse Than Debt, these massive transfers from South to North are simply wrong; the North has to recognize that trade surpluses eked out by the South under present conditions cannot go on for ever. The food riots which we hear are taking place in various capitals in the South are the outcome of the harsh policies of structural adjustment dictated by the Bretton Woods institutions to squeeze payments of interest on external debt by the poor countries in the South. The effect of these riots is that Governments spend large sums on armaments to contain them. This makes essential services - schools, health clinics, immunization programmes, safe water projects, and so on - suffer, as resources are diverted to maintain law and order.

During the thick of the cold war certain nuclear-weapon States adopted military postures and doctrines which, viewed now in the post-cold-war period, were

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unsaleable. That the United States and the Soviet Union have declared themselves no longer adversaries renders such doctrines highly questionable.

In his report to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly the Secretary-General rightly observes that we are in a period

"in which political developments have fast overtaken the cautious pace ... to limit arms and armaments. The doctrines which dominated military thought and planning throughout the decades following the Second World War have suddenly lost their relevance and applicability. Appropriate security structures need to be found to replace the adversarial strategies of the past". (A/45/1, pp. 17, 18)

The continued position of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that nuclear weapons are indispensable to a State's security against conventional attack simply incites and invites more and more States to seek to acquire them. This undermines the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is high time Britain and the United States adopted the doctrine of "no first use" and moved without further delay to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty with other nuclear Powers.

It is the hope of my delegation that when the partial test-ban amendment Conference convenes in New York in January 1991 the three depositary Governments will be positive and demonstrate their full support for efforts to achieve a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty before 1995. It is important, in the view of my delegation, that the right mood be created at the January 1991 Conference. If an objective post mortem on why it was not possible to agree on a final declaration at the end of the Fourth Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons last month in Geneva is carried out by the three depositary Governments and the mood of the majority of members parties to the

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Treaty is carefully examined, my delegation is pretty sure that a positive outcome of the 1995 non-proliferation Treaty extension Conference can be expected.

At this time last year we were all hopeful that, following the January 1989 Paris Conference on chemical weapons, a strong momentum had been generated to hasten the conclusion of a draft convention prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. We are now disappointed to learn from the report of the Conference on Disarmament that some issues still remain controversial and the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has thus slowed down.

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In order for the Ad Hoc Committee to be reactivated, there must be flexibility and compromise in the negotiations. Furthermore, those who possess chemical weapons should take bold steps to destroy all their stocks, without insisting that they should keep small quantities until all States with a chemical-weapon capability adhere to the convention. In a world otherwise free of chemical weapons, any chemical-weapon State itching to manufacture them would be easily isolated and subjected to legitimate international and diplomatic pressure. In a situation where there were strictly no nuclear or chemical weapons, few nations would want to be the first to produce them again.

South Africa's continuing nuclear weapons programmes, which have the full collaboration of some Member States, remain a matter of grave concern to my delegation. In August 1988, the Foreign Minister of South Africa stated publicly that his country had nuclear capability and could produce nuclear weapons if it wanted. This open admission by a Cabinet Minister, and several attempts by South African agents to steal technical devices needed to produce nuclear weapons, prompted this Committee to put forward what became resolution 44/113 B of 15 December 1989. Regrettably, the report of the Secretary-General called for in that resolution has not yet come out; we hope that when it finally does so, it will unambiguously expose those who have helped the racist régime produce missiles with nuclear warheads.

In the mean time, pressure must be kept up for South Africa to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to place all its nuclear installations under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, and it should do so with no preconditions. My delegation totally rejects the preconditions set by the racist régime that it would be willing to accede to the NPT but only in the context of an equal commitment by other States in

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the southern African region. Putting the racist régime on an equal footing with the other States in the region, while calling upon those other States to accede to the NPT at the same time, is a negation of those States' well-known and principled stand against the policy of apartheid. South Africa's nuclear weapons programme - which it is clear exists - is aimed at entrenching apartheid, destabilizing the front-line States and frustrating the 1964 Cairo Declaration of African Heads of State and Government on the denuclearization of Africa.

Wars of aggression and destabilization, including proxy wars, sponsored by the apartheid régime against members of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) in the years 1980 to 1988 cost SADCC member States the staggering sum of \$60 billion, close to \$10 billion per annum. This is twice the annual gross domestic product of the entire subregion, whether expressed in the form of grants, soft loans, export credits or commercial loans per annum. The extent of the human cost and suffering cannot be measured; close to 1.5 million lives were lost in the process, and half of them were children's. With this picture of excruciating loss, how can any upright person call in the same breath on racist South Africa and the front-line States to accede to the NPT at the same time? My delegation is of the view that if any Member of the front-line States wishes to accede to the NPT, it should do so at its own pace and leisure.

Nuclear-free zones are very important building blocks in constructing a strong nuclear non-proliferation régime. We support the zones which have been created, and those which Member States have indicated they wish to create. The view of my delegation is that in creating the nuclear-free zones, the security interests of the States in a given region should be the determining factor.

Efforts to turn the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace have dragged on for years because extra-regional States have shown a total disregard for the interests

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of the States in the region. In the case of Africa, as I have said, South Africa has been used by outside forces to frustrate the legitimate aspirations of the people of Africa to keep their continent free of nuclear weapons in accordance with the 1964 Cairo Declaration. My delegation would like to see serious, specific steps taken to implement that Declaration, and we therefore call on the United Nations to make the necessary resources available to enable the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to hold a meeting of experts in Addis Ababa in 1991 to start work on implementing the 1964 Cairo Declaration.

Peace and development are inseparable. Where peace prevails, resources are devoted to socio-economic development. As a practical measure, we have re-examined the mandates of our regional and subregional structures to see how, in the changing circumstances, they can be used to contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts. In this way, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is currently engaged in the process of finding a peaceful solution to the tragic conflict in Liberia. My delegation wishes to appeal to the international community to support ECOWAS in this noble cause.

In my own subregion of eastern Africa, the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), which groups together the States of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda to tackle issues of agriculture, food security, drought, environmental protection and development, has changed its character and added to its mandate a new role, that of promoting peace, security and stability in this conflict-ridden area, the Horn of Africa. The new role of IGADD as a catalyst for peace is reflected in document A/45/410.

These developments clearly demonstrate that confidence-building measures are gaining ground and are increasingly being appreciated as viable means for promoting peace. They deserve our total support. We also recognize the invaluable

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contribution of the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and in Asia and the Pacific, and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in the development of confidence-building measures. They too must have the encouragement and support they need from us.

My delegation would like to express its deep appreciation of the Department for Disarmament Affairs for its dedication to the cause of peace and disarmament.

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian SSR) (interpretation from Russian): We understand that delegations' patience is not unlimited on a Friday afternoon; however, we do hope that enough patience does remain for them to listen to our statement.

Today I would like to explain our views on the question of the impact of the military use of recent achievements in science and technology on international security. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR has been devoting a significant amount of effort to this issue for about ten years now. Thus, it was as long ago as 1982 that the General Assembly adopted resolution 37/77 B, proposed by the Byelorussian SSR, which formulated the problem of the renunciation of the use of new discoveries and scientific and technological achievements for military purposes in as general terms as possible, and which was perhaps before its time. That resolution was not built on further, owing to the apparent lack of readiness on the part of many States to tackle a problem of that kind. We nevertheless kept on bringing up the matter in our statements to the General Assembly and in letters on the subject we addressed to the Secretary-General, and also to other forums.

I can say quite sincerely that for a number of years our delegation, as far as this issue was concerned, has not had the feeling that it is a voice crying in the wilderness. Our satisfaction is therefore that much greater when we see that the appreciation States have of the importance of this problem has begun to change, and

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now, as many of the statements we have heard in this discussion show, a great deal of attention is being given to it. We are convinced that in years to come, the world community will have to develop and agree on specific measures putting limits on the most dangerous trends in the military use of the latest achievements of science and technology.

The reason for this can be found in real life. The internal dynamics of the arms race at the present time have undergone substantive changes in recent years. One can say, with some degree of confidence, that the arms race now is primarily qualitative in nature.

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Furthermore, this feature has already become characteristic of many regions where tensions exist and there is military rivalry. The data cited in the yearbooks of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reaffirm an accelerated growth in the 1980s of expenditure for military research and development. In the work of scientists and experts in this area today there are already long-range plans to ensure the continuation of this trend. Despite all the different views expressed on the subject, the changes in military technology - both the present changes and the expected ones - will have the most serious impact on the security situation, changing ways and methods for carrying out military actions and the very nature of potential military clashes and thereby undermining predictability and stability.

The unlimited qualitative development of weapons is creating a situation of uncertainty and is arousing an increased sense of threat, which in turn can lead to a renewal of tensions. A trend is thus generated that counteracts the present positive changes in the international situation. All this can have a negative effect on efforts in the disarmament field and on the course of present negotiations and the outcome of future negotiations.

For a number of reasons, a new category of weapons with increased mobility, dual functions, opportunities for concealment, a reduction in dimensions, and so forth, as a rule significantly complicate the problem of verification comparison. It becomes objectively more difficult to limit and to eliminate them.

In addition, for various reasons it has become more difficult politically to make new types of weapons the object of negotiations. They are "protected" by the kind of inertia inherent in recently adopted decisions. This is most clearly expressed by interest groups that do not fully recover the expenditure for research and development - and for modern weapons systems this means increasingly greater

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sums. The development of a number of types of weapons designed to reduce the possibility of defence against such systems leads directly to the erosion of stability and predictability.

In the context of the erosion of predictability and verification possibilities, one source of alarm is the recent report concerning the newest type of technology that can ensure virtually full concealment from all means of radar and tracking.

Furthermore, that factor and the growth of the destructive force and lethal nature of weapons in themselves also make more onerous the consequences of their use, including accidental or unauthorized use, which in turn renders more difficult the possibilities for a balanced and adequate reaction to such use and reduces the possibility of preventing a situation of serious tension from turning into a large-scale or global conflict.

The ever-growing degree of the computerization of new weapons systems creates the threat of the loss of control at a critical moment as a result of the transfer of important control functions to artificial-intelligence systems.

The constellation of threats arising from present capabilities in genetic engineering, biotechnology and bacteriological (biological) weapons, and their impact on genetic mechanisms have, in addition to purely military consequences, most serious humanitarian ones. In addition, we cannot disregard the particular danger of the potential use of such means for terrorist purposes.

With this clearly expressed trend, the significant reduction in the time of delivery of warheads to a target provided by the newest categories of delivery vehicles severely limits the possibility for careful analysis of such a threat and

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the taking of a balanced decision, thus increasing the risk of an unforeseen development of events.

One of the important trends is the growth of strike accuracy and, combined with the enhancement of destructive capability, this ensures the destruction of targets which formerly could be ensured only through the use of nuclear weapons. Moreover, unlike the latter, this provides the possibility of selective strikes.

Operational possibilities of a new generation of weapons are drastically increased by combining them into large-scale systems that function in a maximally co-ordinated way. This is done on the basis of the newest combined radar systems for locating targets for attack, together with sophisticated computer systems for command, control and communications. With the use of appropriate delivery vehicles and new types of conventional weapons and systems for their control, there has been an unprecedented expansion of the geographical boundaries for conducting military operations.

Finally, the new possibilities given to weapons systems has resulted in the emergence of new methods, and consequently doctrines, for carrying out military operations owing to the fact that certain new technological weapons are showing a clear trend towards the domination of such attack characteristics or dual possibilities for use, and new methods for military actions are leading at the very least to the erosion of boundaries between defence and offence. Therefore the basis for the creation and implementation on a practical plane of promising concepts for the strengthening of international peace and security and the transition to genuine disarmament is being undermined - concepts such as reasonable defence sufficiency, a purely defensive structure of military forces, and non-threatening defence. Weapons are now being given new characteristics, on a

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qualitatively different level. This is not a limited, but a recurring phenomenon, encompassing virtually all categories of weapons.

Dizzying scientific technological progress is fraught with the danger of the creation of new types of weapons of mass destruction. That was considered as a real possibility by the international community more than 40 years ago. This is attested to by the definition of new types of weapons of mass destruction adopted in 1948 by the Commission on Conventional Weapons then operating in the United Nations.

Now, more than ever before, we cannot close our eyes to this problem. The problem of banning the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction is also particularly relevant because in the area of real disarmament there has already been genuine progress; there are clear signs of it. In fact, while intensive efforts are being made to eliminate nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and radiological weapons, it would be unreasonable - to say the least - to leave the door open for the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction. That view, which is relevant today, will be doubly relevant to a non-nuclear and non-violent world. The building of such a world is a goal shared by a very wide range of States. A situation is possible in which there would be movement towards increasingly smaller - down to zero - levels of existing weapons of mass destruction as a result of scientific discoveries or technological achievements. There may be a dangerous intention drastically to tip the military strategic balance, including on a regional level, through the acquisition of new means of mass destruction that are inaccessible, and will be so at least for a certain period, to other parties.

Furthermore, the creation of new types of weapons of mass destruction may seem to be rather attractive from the point of view of military stereotypes if such

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weapons turn out to be less costly, more easily deliverable to the target and also more capable of destroying human resources of the adversary, with fewer and fewer long-lasting consequences for the material resources and the environment, than nuclear weapons, for example. The non-nuclear nature of such weapons may also make it seem more acceptable on a moral and political level than nuclear weapons. The last of these factors will lead to a reduction of the threshold for unleashing war in particular regional conflicts with the use of weapons of mass destruction.

As is well known, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic for a number of years has been working towards the consolidation of the efforts of States to develop international procedures for carrying out the timely control of the development of new types of potential weapons of mass destruction. To this end the General Assembly has already adopted a number of draft resolutions submitted by the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. We intend once again to submit an appropriate draft resolution to the General Assembly on this matter.

In summarizing this brief survey, we should list the following among the number of possible and predictable adverse effects of the development of new technologies and types of weapons: a reduction in the threshold level of global military conflict, a new type of arms race, difficulties in ensuring means of verification and of compliance with agreements, and an increase in the gap between the development of military technology and the strengthening of international efforts to eliminate weapons. A singular feature resulting from such qualitative and profound changes in the area of military technology is the danger of the erosion of strategic stability. It is clear that in such conditions the international community cannot fail to look ahead; it cannot disregard the qualitative aspect of the transformation of weapons; it cannot maintain in this area the significant gap in its co-ordinated efforts in the disarmament field.

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The task of drawing up and agreeing, at the international level, on measures to limit or halt the use of new scientific and technological developments for the creation of weapons is extraordinarily complex for both technical and political reasons. Here we need to be clearly aware of this. The complexity is obvious, but it can be successfully reduced, as can the difficulties of achieving agreement on the qualitative and quantitative reduction of weapons. The difficult nature of the goal, the complexity of possible measures and the lack, at the present stage, of sufficient international agreement concerning the role of the qualitative factor in the arms race clearly show the need for a preliminary international study of this problem in a broad context. Such a study should promote greater understanding of the nature of the impact of the qualitative transformation of weapons on international security, should define possible areas for appropriate action on the part of the international community and, what is very important, should disseminate, at the international level, knowledge concerning this aspect of the arms race. In any case, it is clear that not all areas of the use of scientific and technical achievements for military purposes should be banned or limited. Some of them can have a rather positive impact on stability - for example, the improvement of technical means of verification, communication, warning and so forth. Therefore, it would be useful, on the one hand, and dangerous on the other, to define acceptable areas of scientific and technical progress in the military sphere. This in itself would mark an important step.

A fundamentally important element in the problem under consideration is the need for a preventive approach. It is hardly reasonable to wait until some new kind of weapon takes its place in military arsenals. The experience of all of us over past decades has demonstrated that it is significantly more difficult to

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eliminate existing weapons than to come to an agreement on the prevention of the creation of new ones. Moreover, the preventive approach does not rule out the possibility of identifying weapons to a sufficient degree of accuracy for purposes of agreement.

The Byelorussian SSR is the initial sponsor of two resolutions adopted at the forty-third and forty-fourth sessions of the General Assembly - resolutions 43/77 A and 44/118 A - which were introduced by India and which charged the Secretary-General to follow, with the assistance of qualified consultant experts, scientific and technological developments, especially those which have potential military applications, and to evaluate their impact on international security. The recently published report of the Secretary-General (A/45/568) on this issue is of significant interest and requires further time for study.

We hope that the efforts undertaken will allow us to go in this problem in greater depth and expand the sphere of agreement. The Conference held this year by the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs in Sendai in Japan should also serve these goals.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR would like to note that effective steps in the area of preventing the creation of new and dangerous types of weapons in addition to a significant strengthening of international security in its military aspect will play a major role in another important dimension as well. They will promote efforts to create and use promising sophisticated technology, which at present is to a significant extent military in nature, towards goals of development, a decision to promote the expansion of international co-operation to the noble goals of global and universal human problems.

The CHAIRMAN: I have received requests from delegations to speak in exercise of the right of reply. Before calling on them, I should like to recall

(The Chairman)

the procedures agreed to at a previous meeting. The number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting shall be limited to two per item. The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation and on any item at a given meeting shall be limited to 10 minutes and the second one to five minutes.

I now call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan): We have been astonished to hear the statement made by the representative of the Kabul régime speaking in the name of Afghanistan in which he has made wild references to my country. Here is the representative of a régime foisted on a decent people by force of bayonets, foreign bayonets at that, responsible for one of the greatest tragedies of our time, whose hands are bloody with the deaths of 1.5 million of his own compatriots and countless others maimed and tortured, with a third of its population sitting outside his own country in neighbouring Iran and Pakistan, 5 million to be exact, and another 2 million displaced within his own country, having been forced to abandon their hearths and homes. This representative has the temerity to lecture us on disarmament.

He has referred in the first place to some self-perceived military establishment of Pakistan that in fact rules and controls the political life of the country, this two days after national elections in Pakistan freely observed by 4,000 impartial journalists and foreign observers, who have attested to the fairness of the elections.

He has then spoken about our proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, a proposal which has been endorsed by the vast majority of the members of this Committee and of the General Assembly. Pakistan has reaffirmed time and again, and at all levels, the rationale of its proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

zone as it has also attested to its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We are committed to these peaceful uses of nuclear energy, but we believe - as do many other countries - that Pakistan has the right to develop its peaceful nuclear programme and should have access to, and be free to acquire, nuclear technology, materials and equipment for this purpose. This right, might I remind the representative of the Kabul régime, has been unambiguously affirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 32/50.

In the third place, he has made reference to Pakistan having turned the territory of its country into a place where extremist elements and empty Government groupings from neighbouring countries are purposely trained, armed, equipped and financed for the destabilization of neighbours.

Pakistan, unlike Afghanistan, is a free and open society. Diplomats, journalists, observers are all free to move around to see and judge for themselves. None of them has seen evidence of the type fantasized by the representative of the Kabul régime.

He has then spoken of continuous violations of the Geneva Agreements which, he says, are so obvious that they need no elaboration. All of us know that the Geneva Agreements addressed only the external aspects of the situation in Afghanistan.

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

The internal aspects of the situation have been, and are, for the people of Afghanistan themselves to judge and decide upon. To begin with, the people of Afghanistan have voted with their feet. As I have said, 5 million of them have moved out of their country and voted by being present in Iran and Pakistan. Secondly, rectification of the internal situation depends on the formation of a broad-based Government, foreseen by resolutions of the General Assembly, adopted by consensus over the past two years, specifically calling for the formation of a broad-based Government. The quicker the régime in Kabul recognizes that fact and hands over power to a broad-based Government, the quicker peace will return to an unfortunate country and a noble people.

May I end by sharing with the Committee our pain over the events in Afghanistan. No amount of wild allegations and efforts to externalize the problems can conceal the conditions inside the country nor disguise the terror that a régime disavowed and rejected by its own people has wrought on a law-abiding, peaceful, and noble population.

Mr. TAEB (Afghanistan): My delegation had no intention of speaking at this late hour, but is doing so because the representative of the military circle of Pakistan made irresponsible, slanderous and baseless allegations. He repeated - and I give him credit for perhaps being a good poet - outdated allegations that are in contradiction of the ongoing reality in my country as well as of the present international climate.

For the record, I should like to make the following remarks.

The representative of Pakistan described his country as having a democratic and open society. In that regard I should say that almost since its emergence on the world map Pakistan has been ruled by the military establishment. The names of Marshal Ayub Khan, General Yahya Khan and General Zia-ul-Haq as the military rulers

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

of that country are familiar to all. There is no doubt about it. Equally, the situation in that country today and the role of General Aslam Big, the Chief of Staff, is obvious to all, including Ambassador Kamal. The role of Pakistan's military system in the tension in our region from the 1950s to the present day has been so clear that there is no need for elaboration.

The representative of the military circle of Pakistan reacted to my statement, in which I mentioned Pakistan's continuing interference and intervention in the internal affairs of my country, Pakistan's continued blatant violation of the Geneva Agreements, and Pakistan's attempts to make a nuclear weapon. The representative of Pakistan tried by his fabrications to mislead the world community once again and draw attention away from what Pakistan is really doing, with its negative impact on regional and international security.

My delegation wishes to draw attention to Pakistan's intention and policy in regard to Afghanistan. This is best done by referring to a secret document obtained by my country at the beginning of this year, a document prepared for the Pakistan Government by the head of Inter-Service Intelligence, famous as the ISI. It is addressed to the late military ruler, General Zia-ul-Haq. Pakistan's plans and intentions are revealed in the following words:

"it is imperative that Pakistan should set up a confederation with Afghanistan. This may be done under the banner of rallying Islamic countries for the sake of peace, security and stability in the region ...

"All pre-conditions are available to perpetrate this idea. Leaders of the seven-party alliance depend fully upon us. Some of them have been working with us and have pledged their firm support ...

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

"We must promote the mujahideen's complete victory. Pakistan must render all possible military and political aid to the seven-party alliance and above all to basic Hekmatyar grouping which is especially influential, powerful and reliable."

Here I should like to read another quotation related to Pakistan's nuclear programme, where the same intentions towards Afghanistan are revealed:

"Within the framework of this confederation frontiers must be abolished and a common economic structure established. This will permit access to Afghan uranium fields and will make our nuclear programme virtually independent from foreign suppliers."

I shall give the representative of Pakistan a copy of this document so that he may thoroughly examine it.

The military establishment of Pakistan does not want to accept the defeat of its plans, which have included attacks on Jalalabad and Khost, the abortive coup and the recent failed attack on Kabul. It is continuing its futile attempt to achieve its real aim, which is incapable of accomplishment.

I would stress that Pakistan's attempt to obtain facilities for the manufacture of nuclear weapons is not fresh news for the world's public; it goes back to the early 1970s. During the 1980s the United States Government waived the application of its law prohibiting the provision of United States military and economic aid to countries with a nuclear programme that involved attempts to obtain the capability to produce nuclear weapons. It did so because of its super-Power rivalry and military confrontation in the region.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

I should like to quote the following from an article published recently - on 10 October - in The Washington Post, which revealed information in documents now at the disposal of the United States Government and Congress:

"Pakistan, working through its Embassy in France and intermediaries in Canada and Switzerland, tried at least three times this year to buy American-made high-temperature furnaces that can be used in manufacturing nuclear weapons, according to documents furnished yesterday to Administration officials and congressional investigators".

In another part of the article it is stressed that

"Pakistan has steadfastly denied for years that it possesses nuclear weapons or maintains a nuclear-weapons programme. But Administration officials and lawmakers are now greeting these assurances with greater disbelief".

And all of this comes from a traditional ally of Pakistan, which has now reached the aforementioned conclusion in this regard.

I should like to emphasize in this respect that the newspaper correspondent tried to obtain some response from officials of the Pakistani Government in Washington, D.C., but, as he said in the article,

"No one was available at the Pakistani Embassy here to comment on Pakistan's efforts to buy furnaces".

This means that they had no intention of saying anything on the matter.

With regard to what has been said about democracy and the democratic society of Pakistan, I must stress that Pakistan has never been a democratic society and still is not a democratic society. Let us see if Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan will try to deny this. I should like to remind him that his direct boss is a general who long ago put his uniform away in a closet and took up his new post as Foreign Minister. Since the times of General Zia, he has avoided calling himself "General". That has been his clear intention.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

When the Government of Benazir Bhutto was elected two years ago, that General, Yakub-Khan, was a part of the deal with the military establishment that removed the Bhutto Government some months ago.

With regard to my country, I am sure that the representative of the military establishment of Pakistan is aware that in the Republic of Afghanistan the government system is functioning in accordance with the Constitution and other national laws. He knows that the President of the country was elected by the highest legislative body, the Loya Jirga; that the Parliament of the country is functioning; and that the present Government - headed by Mr. Khaliqyar and composed mostly of non-party and independent personalities - received a vote of confidence in Parliament last May. The representative of Pakistan has no right to lecture us about democracy.

We recognize that we have problems with our opposition. But the Government has made a number of proposals for solving these problems through peaceful means, including dialogue and elections supervised by the United Nations. If the Pakistani representative challenges that, we are ready to defend the sincerity of these proposals.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Pakistan, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan): At this late hour, I would not wish to prolong your agony, Sir, which is indeed the agony of us all. The judgement on the remarks made by the representative of the Kabul régime will not ultimately be given either by you or by the rest of us here. That judgement will be given by the people of Afghanistan themselves. Unfortunately, 1.5 million of them are dead and cannot be brought back to life. But the remaining 5 million, who are in Iran and Pakistan, have already given that judgement. We in Pakistan would welcome their return to Afghanistan in conditions of dignity and safety and honour. When that day comes,

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

we shall thereafter happily accept the credibility of the comments and views of the representatives of Afghanistan.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Afghanistan, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. TAEB (Afghanistan): I believe that if the representative of the military establishment of Pakistan openly recognizes that it is for the people of Afghanistan to decide their own destiny, Pakistan should stop its interference and intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

For the record and for the information of representatives here, I should like to refer to some remarks made by Sebghatullah Mujadedi, head of the so-called Interim Government of Pakistan, which was designed and created by the Inter-Service Intelligence of Pakistan in Rawalpindi last year. The representative of Pakistan has spoken so proudly of this.

Sebghatullah Mujadedi gave an interview this month in which he disclosed that attacks on Kabul City and other strategic cities of Afghanistan had recently taken place in the framework of a plan drawn up by the military authorities of Pakistan. He added that the Government of Pakistan was exerting pressure on Afghan opposition groups to participate in those criminal operations, threatening that if they did not they would have to leave the territory of Pakistan. Mujadedi also disclosed the delivery of 700 truckloads of new weapons and equipment by Pakistan to the Islamic Party of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. He expressed his concern over the increasing involvement of the Pakistani military and its intelligence service in planning, organizing and directing military operations inside Afghanistan, particularly in the operation nicknamed "Attack on Kabul".

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

These facts speak for themselves. Those who have been created by the military circles of Pakistan can no longer bring any pressure to bear. If the Pakistani Government wishes to see the people of Afghanistan living in peace and harmony, it should stop those activities against my people.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like once again to remind representatives that in accordance with the Committee's programme of work and time-table the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under disarmament agenda items 45 to 66 and 155 is Tuesday, 30 October 1990, at 6 p.m.

As the Committee will recall, at our previous meeting the Secretary of the Committee drew the Committee's attention to the text of a letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee which has been officially circulated as document A/C.1/45/6 of the First Committee. The letter concerns the request to the Main Committees of the General Assembly, including the First Committee, to communicate their views to the Fifth Committee on the relevant programmes of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992 to 1997.

If any members of the Committee wish to express their views on the subject-matter, they should transmit such comments to the Chairman in writing by Monday, 5 November, so that he can forward them to the Fifth Committee as requested. Otherwise, he will inform the Chairman of the Fifth Committee that the First Committee has no comments to make.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.