

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

FORTIETH SESSION

Official Records*



MAY 19 1987

FIRST COMMITTEE
13th meeting
held on
Friday, 25 October 1985
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

UN/DA COLLECTION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 13th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia)

CONTENTS

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Dorn (Suriname)
Mr. Okun (United States)
Mr. Milad (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)
Mr. Butler (Australia)
Mr. Kasemsri (Thailand)
Mr. Simpson (Ghana)

*This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/40/PV.13
28 October 1985
ENGLISH

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

AGENDA ITEMS 48 to 69 AND 145 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. DORN (Suriname): Sir, as this is the first time my delegation has spoken in the Committee at this session, I should like to congratulate you most warmly on your unanimous election to its chairmanship. We are particularly pleased to be guided by a representative of Indonesia, a country with which my own country has historic and cultural ties and maintains friendly and diplomatic relations. Your accession to this high post is a tribute to your qualities as a skilled and seasoned diplomat. We should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee.

One of the questions addressed once again in statements during the course of the general debate in the plenary was the state of affairs of disarmament. Most, if not all, Member States voiced their concern at the rapidly deteriorating international situation, for the arms race, both in nuclear and conventional weapons, is continuing at an unabated pace. The production, stockpiling and deployment of weapons of all types is increasing dramatically. This situation of escalating tension is a major factor threatening peace and security in the world.

We firmly believe that there can be no durable peace without the elimination and destruction of existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons. Any use of nuclear weapons, whether limited or not, would inevitably escalate into a world-wide nuclear war.

We welcome in this respect the declaration by some States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. It is the duty of all States to co-operate in adopting concrete measures aimed at the prohibition of nuclear weapons. If we prohibit or limit the use of nuclear armaments and other weapons of mass destruction, we shall be taking the first step in creating an atmosphere of relaxation.

(Mr. Dorn, Suriname)

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) of 1968, which is considered the main pillar of the régime of non-proliferation, provides for a review conference every five years, within the framework of which the Third Review Conference took place in Geneva from 27 August to 21 September.

The Government of Suriname paid close attention to the outcome of that Conference, since we believe that nuclear arms pose the greatest threat to mankind. We are pleased to observe that after substantive debate the Conference succeeded in adopting by consensus a final Declaration that will serve as a further impetus to efforts geared to halting the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. With regard to articles I and II the Conference was of the view that with the declarations of the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty, they had fulfilled their respective obligations under the said articles, which represented one of the primary objectives of the Treaty. The Conference noted with satisfaction that the acceptance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards on all peaceful activities within the non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty was a major contribution to regional and international security. The acceptance of these safeguards has, inter alia, greatly helped to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and the Conference recommended that those States that have not yet concluded agreements with the IAEA do so as soon as possible.

Although the objectives of article VI, which calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to negotiate for nuclear and general disarmament, have not been fulfilled, my delegation welcomes the reaffirmation of the commitment of all States parties to the implementation of that article.

ed

A/C.1/40/PV.13

4-5

(Mr. Dorn, Suriname)

My delegation maintains its conviction that there should be a total and comprehensive prohibition of nuclear arms. For this reason it considers the NPT a vital and fundamental attempt to stop more countries from acquiring and producing such weapons. We certainly do not regard the Treaty as perfect, but, pending the attainment of the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament, we should support all efforts aimed at reinforcing the Treaty's authority and credibility.

(Mr. Dorn, Suriname)

With regard to conventional weapons my delegation wishes to state that one cannot deny a country its legitimate right to defend its territorial integrity. Nevertheless we hold the view that developing countries should refrain from taking part in the arms race. The reason is that the arms race appears to be detrimental to the financial, human and material resources that are highly necessary for developmental purposes.

According to estimates, 80 per cent of global arms expenditures are spent on conventional arms. In this connection we add our voice to those of Member States that advocate that a gradual reduction of military budgets on a mutually agreed basis - particularly by nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States - would contribute to the curbing of the arms race and would enhance the possibility of releasing resources from military expenditures in both developed and developing countries for development assistance.

We welcome the decision taken by the General Assembly in resolution 39/160 to set up a Preparatory Committee concerning an International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development to be convened next year in Paris. We are glad to learn that the aforesaid Committee has already submitted its recommendations to the General Assembly for adoption.

It is true that the problem of the nuclear-arms race poses the greatest threat to the existence of mankind, but on the other hand the unabated race in conventional weapons has already resulted in bloody and devastating geographically limited wars.

According to the Group of Experts on All Aspects of the Conventional Arms Race and on Disarmament relating to Conventional Weapons and Armed Forces, more than 20 million people have died in some 150 armed conflicts. The report also points

(Mr. Dorn, Suriname)

out that the conventional arms race seriously impairs international security, escalates military confrontation and could easily lead to the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. My delegation is therefore of the opinion that the question of conventional weapons must be constantly monitored.

Disarmament is not only a matter of the super-Powers. Every peace-loving nation has a vital role to play when international peace and security is at stake. It is for this reason that no Member State can keep silent and remain on the sidelines when disarmament matters are being discussed.

My Government attaches great importance to every effort to strengthen peace and security. One of the ways to attain this goal is through the establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this respect Latin America has set an example through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, to which my country is a party. My delegation welcomes the initiative and efforts of the Contadora Group to create a zone of peace in Central America within the framework of a regional approach.

The tendency to extend the arms race to outer space is also a matter of grave concern to the international community. This development must be prevented at any price. My Government is pleased to learn that the Conference on Disarmament has finally managed to establish the Ad Hoc Committee on the drafting of an agreement to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space, as the General Assembly requested in resolution 39/59. My Government will endorse all measures aimed at the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to assure you, Mr. Chairman, of its desire to co-operate fully with you in the fulfilling of your task.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): Sir, on behalf of the United States, and myself personally, I would like to extend to you my delegation's sincere congratulations on your unanimous election as Chairman. We are confident that your skilled guidance will provide a significant impetus as the Committee strives to reach clarity and coalescence in its demanding work. The United States delegation assures you of its fullest co-operation.

During this week, the States Members of the United Nations, and the Organization itself, have been commemorating the fortieth anniversary of this global system dedicated to pursuing the common aspiration to peace of mankind. It is not, of course, a celebration of undiluted pleasure and satisfaction. All too clear is the evidence of objectives not yet reached, of tragic conflicts still disrupting many regions of our small planet, of peoples not yet free of political and even physical bondage. Our recognition of the successes of the United Nations over the past 40 years is tempered by the realization that these 40 years are more a prologue than a mature period of productivity.

The United Nations has many objectives incorporated into it. To serve these objectives the United Nations has many organs and institutions. They range from the Security Council to specialized bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency. Speakers in other forums have addressed the accomplishments and the future agenda of other parts of the United Nations system. As representatives of our Governments to the First Committee, we are charged largely with the consideration of disarmament issues.

Yet even as we devote ourselves to this task we must never lose sight of the more fundamental premises, namely, the rights of every human being to be free, the sovereign rights of every Member State and the obligation of every Member State to refrain from the threat or use of force in accordance with the Charter. Clearly,

(Mr. Okun, United States)

the success or failure of the international community to come to grips with these issues influences other efforts. If there is no determined defence of international order now, there may be no future in which efforts to control and eliminate armaments can be brought to fruition.

I have spoken of the past 40 years as a prologue. None of us is prepared to claim that the present international system is a very secure system, although, thankfully, a number of factors have contributed to the absence of a global nuclear conflagration in these four decades. None of us believes that the present situation, in which thousands of persons die each year in the ferocity of the so-called conventional conflicts, is acceptable or could not be greatly improved if the aggressions and injustices fueling these conflicts were stopped. None of us here in the First Committee would argue that disarmament efforts have achieved more than a beginning of the urgent process of making deep reductions in nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

As we take stock of the first 40 years of the United Nations in the field of arms control and disarmament, we need to recognize that the continued and strengthened functioning of the United Nations depends on adherence to the United Nations Charter. Of special relevance are paragraph 4 of Article 2, and Article 51. The United States has repeatedly stressed the need of all States to adhere strictly to these provisions. We do so once again to make clear our views: first, that refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State is the bed rock on which our efforts to build the structure of international peace and security rests; secondly, that States have the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed aggression occurs. As all States accord these provisions greater respect, our work in this Committee and in other disarmament forums will be more productive.

We should reflect, and act, upon these solemn undertakings. We should encourage specific steps to support and to strengthen the structure of existing international agreements and restraints that promote peace and stability.

One of the most productive and reliable of such steps available to all nations is also one of the simplest. It is a step that can be expressed in a single word: openness. To seek openness among our fellow humans, and by extension among nations, is not only a noble and very human trait; it is also a hard-headed and practical realization that openness with others invites a reciprocal willingness to be open, to co-operate, to tolerate, to build further on a relationship in which, if there is not trust, there is at least greater understanding. The United States Government seeks to be as open as it possibly can about its policies and its objectives in international affairs. Indeed, its own citizens demand this. We believe that all will benefit from a greater degree of openness on the part of

(Mr. Okun, United States)

States that traditionally cloak their intentions and activities in secrecy and denial.

Why is it that some nations can publish considerable amounts of accurate data about their military forces and provide reliable information about such things as economic production without thinking that their national security is thereby dangerously jeopardized? Secrecy about such matters may once have been used to conceal weakness from real or imagined enemies. Today, only the gullible can believe that a State with scores of divisions, tens of thousands of tanks and artillery pieces, fleets of warships and submarines, thousands of missiles, aircraft, and nuclear weapons and a sky filled with satellites is too weak to provide information about its activities comparable to that which other States readily make available. The United States would not ask for more information of others than it provides itself. Moreover, the insistence on withholding information has been, and remains, a significant obstacle to successful arms limitation and disarmament agreements. Secrecy begets suspicion, suspicion begets fear and fear can beget conflict rather than co-operation.

The time is long past when we can afford ignorance in dealing with issues of international security. All persons, in every land, have a need for complete information about the actions of their own and other Governments so that they may responsibly contribute to the development of policies in support of arms control and disarmament.

There is a second step to build on the foundations already laid down in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. That is to defend and to strengthen the framework of existing agreements by ensuring that their obligations are complied with fully. This is another matter about which the United States of America has expressed growing concern over the past several years and one to which we continue to attach the greatest importance. If States parties to existing agreements lack

(Mr. Okun, United States)

confidence that other parties are complying fully with the terms of these undertakings, they will surely be less ready to join in new agreements. But the record of compliance with existing agreements concerns non-parties as well. If they rely on the restraints embodied in an agreement, their security cannot help but be adversely affected by the failure of a major State to honour its obligations - be they bilateral, as with the strategic arms limitations, or multilateral, as with toxin and other chemical weapons.

Moreover, even when questions and charges of non-compliance are not definitively proved but yet go unresolved, basic confidence in an agreement is weakened, thereby diminishing its value in helping to maintain international peace and security. This problem serves to point out the importance of appropriate and effective verification measures for determining compliance with arms-control agreements.

There is yet another building block in the foundation of international security on which we seek to erect a more comprehensive and farther-reaching arms-control structure, and that is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), this year observing the fifteenth anniversary of its entry into force. It is encouraging that this Treaty - with 130 parties the most widely adhered to arms-control agreement in history - is one of the success stories of the international community. We can all join in satisfaction over the results of the third NPT Review Conference, which was concluded some five weeks ago under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Shaker of Egypt. In an honest and balanced assessment of how well the provisions of the NPT have been implemented, the parties at the Conference recognized how much there is that unites us in our views of the importance and functioning of the Treaty. The States participating in the third review found that they shared the conviction that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was

(Mr. Okun, United States)

vital to international peace and security, just as they shared a dissatisfaction that so much of the task of nuclear disarmament remained to be completed. In our view, the NPT is important to the future of the international security system. The United States of America strongly urges those States not yet adhering to the NPT to give further and serious consideration to the benefits of doing so.

In this context I want to take due note of the entry into force this past June of the safeguards agreement between the Soviet Union and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as well as the recent announcement by China that it also will accept IAEA safeguards on some peaceful nuclear facilities. Those arrangements mean that all five nuclear-weapon States now have undertaken, on a voluntary basis, to accept safeguards on a number of their peaceful nuclear facilities. For its part, the United States believes that these arrangements do not have an undue impact on peaceful operations or compromise industrial secrets.

Let me turn now from the present to the future. The United States of America fully realizes its responsibilities to seek bilaterally negotiated, effectively verifiable reductions in the nuclear weapons of the two Powers possessing the great majority of those weapons. Within the last year bilateral negotiations between ourselves and the Soviet Union, to our regret broken off in late 1983, have resumed. The new negotiations are devoted to seeking solutions to the questions of strategic nuclear forces, intermediate-range nuclear forces and defence and space weapons. Above all, the United States hopes that it will be possible to achieve truly significant reductions of nuclear weapons, especially those that most affect the stability of the strategic balance, such as large, multiple-warhead ballistic missiles. The United States also hopes that it will be possible to achieve significant reductions - down to zero - in the levels of intermediate-range nuclear forces. In this regard, the United States has made far-reaching proposals in these negotiations that would provide for such reductions in a balanced and equitable way.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

The United States has also been listening with attention in the nuclear and space talks in Geneva to the description of the recent proposals made by the Soviet Union. It is too early to indicate a detailed response to these proposals. Their overall structure appears one-sided and clearly would not be an acceptable outcome of the negotiations. However, certain elements in the proposals appear to be positive and give hope for a genuine process of give and take.

Delegations here will follow with interest the forthcoming meeting between the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan, and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev. While arms control is the item on the agenda of that meeting that is most relevant to our work, it will not be the only one. As President Reagan said just yesterday, he looks

"to a fresh start in the relationship of our two nations. We can and should meet in the spirit that we can deal with our differences peacefully. That is what we expect." (A/40/PV.48, p.5)

With regard to the bilateral negotiations one issue has been subjected to a considerable amount of hyperbole, and that is the issue of the appropriate use of outer space. We have been subjected to some of that hyperbole here, with assertions that new United States activities will militarize outer space. Space has been utilized for military purposes for more than two decades, in particular by the Soviet Union. Orbiting overhead are some 800 satellites belonging to that country, compared to some 400 satellites belonging to all Western nations. That is a ratio of two to one and, unlike in the West, the overwhelming majority of Soviet satellites have had military missions. Then there are the operational Soviet anti-satellite weapons. Finally, intercontinental ballistic missiles travel through the outer-space environment.

We have heard the claim that this United States research effort, which is being undertaken to assess the possibility that the menace of nuclear ballistic

(Mr. Okun, United States)

missiles could be reduced or even made obsolete through defense-weapon technologies, threatens efforts to negotiate large-scale reductions of offensive nuclear weapons. Even more incredibly, we hear that this effort is one aimed at achieving strategic superiority, at acquiring a first-strike capability.

Such claims are without foundation. The United States of America does not seek superiority. In fact, the United States is ready, if the technology for strategic defense proves feasible and cost-effective, to consider integrating defensive systems into the forces of both sides in the context of a co-operative, balanced and verifiable environment. Such an environment would reflect a mix of offensive and defensive forces in ways that reduce existing arsenals while strengthening security and stability. We seek even now to discuss with the Soviet Union the relationship of offensive and defensive forces and a possible future transition to greater reliance on defensive systems. Any future deployment of defensive forces would be a matter for discussion and negotiation, as appropriate, as provided for in the ABM Treaty. In brief, we envision the opposite of an arms race or superiority. We envision serving the security interests of all States by preventing an arms race in space, and terminating it on earth.

It is, moreover, difficult to understand why ongoing research programs in defensive technologies should block agreement significantly reducing offensive nuclear weapons. Were that the case, the United States would have had good reason for many years to refuse to negotiate, in light of the long-standing defensive-systems programme of the Soviet Union.

Despite all of these developments related to the military use of space, we now hear that further international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space - co-operation in which the United States has been and remains most

(Mr. Okun, United States)

active - should be linked to the willingness of States to forgo research programmes undertaken with a view to removing the threat of nuclear weapons.

The United States of America has always supported international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. It believes that such co-operation should be expanded, and it has made a number of proposals to this end, including bilateral proposals to the Soviet Union. The United States has also made specific proposals along these lines in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

The proper forum to address the questions of outer-space arms control multilaterally and without artificial linkage to peaceful co-operation is the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference created an ad hoc committee this year to consider these questions thoroughly. Much work remains ahead for the Conference on this item.

Another multilateral arms-control issue deserves more urgent attention. That is the pressing need to complete the negotiation of an effective and comprehensive ban on chemical weapons. The threat of the further use of chemical weapons in war remains large. Lethal chemical weapons have again been used, in violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, against Iran, an action already condemned by the United Nations Security Council. With this use, following other recent use of these terrible weapons in the Gulf war and in Afghanistan and South-East Asia, the United States believes that the use and availability of chemical weapons in an increasing number of national arsenals is a most disquieting and urgent matter. These developments should prompt the redoubling of efforts in the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a comprehensive chemical-weapons ban. Progress to date has been painfully slow, much too halting for the urgency of the task. We ask the First Committee to join in urging expeditious completion of the negotiations, as well as in taking all appropriate interim action to prevent the further use and proliferation of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

It has been alleged that the United States of America seeks unreasonable provisions for the verification of compliance with such a ban and that it does so to ensure that it may produce new chemical weapons. The facts say different. During the self-imposed United States moratorium on the production of chemical weapons, which has now lasted 16 years, the offensive chemical-weapon capabilities of the Soviet Union have grown continuously. The United States takes the threat posed by Soviet chemical weapons most seriously. Our objective is the earliest possible conclusion of a complete and effectively verifiable agreement banning these weapons. Existing stockpiles would then be destroyed. Pending that achievement, the United States is determined to retain a modest capability to deter a chemical attack.

With regard to the framing of a chemical-weapon ban, it will require verification measures of the level and effectiveness that the United States proposes in order to give adequate confidence to the parties. Instead of raising spurious complaints about the intentions of the United States, other should consider the potential disaster that could result from an ineffective agreement. We have made our proposals in the negotiations with complete seriousness, and we expect the response of other nations to reflect a comparable commitment to eliminate effectively this entire class of weapons. Let those who criticize respond with proposals of their own.

On the question of a nuclear test ban, the views of the United States remain unchanged: a complete cessation of nuclear explosions is an important objective. However, the central and most urgent arms control objective of the United States is radically to reduce nuclear weapons, and our proposals in the bilateral negotiations in Geneva have been directed towards that goal. This is the best,

(Mr. Okun, United States)

most direct course towards the long-term goal of eliminating nuclear testing and, indeed, nuclear weapons.

In the nearer term, verifiable limitations on nuclear testing can play a useful, although more modest, role. President Reagan took an initiative in this regard last year in his address to the United Nations General Assembly when he proposed reciprocal visits of American and Soviet experts to each other's test site for the purpose of measuring the yield of a nuclear-weapon test. On 29 July of this year he invited the Soviet Union, without pre-conditions, to send observers with any instrumentation they deemed necessary to measure a nuclear test. The President extended this invitation with a view to initiating a process that would enable the United States and the Soviet Union to establish the basis for effectively verifying limits on underground nuclear testing. This approach, in our view, is more effective than one that would rely on such measures as an unverified moratorium. Experience has shown that such moratoriums have failed to further progress in achieving test limitations.

The United States of America has also supported further substantive work related to a nuclear test ban at the Conference on Disarmament, including an examination of such issues as scope, verification and compliance. We have endorsed and supported, with both financial and technical resources, the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts in seismology and data exchange. That Group has made significant progress in the exploration of new ways to exchange seismic data on a global basis in support of verification of a comprehensive test ban.

Earlier in my statement I noted the need to address the insecurity in the world. That insecurity manifests itself not only in the requirement for deterrence, including nuclear deterrence, but also in the increasing accumulation

(Mr. Okun, United States)

of conventional weapons in many regions of the world. No hostile use of nuclear weapons has occurred during the life of the United Nations. Yet millions of casualties and untold human suffering have been caused by conventional weaponry. It remains incumbent on all States to address the root causes of such wars and to seek such measures as are feasible to prevent their occurrence. The United States seeks to contribute to the prevention of war at every level. We do this to assist others, but also because we recognize the danger that regional conflicts can contain the seeds of wider conflagration.

In central Europe, in an effort to reduce conventional forces and armaments, the United States and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have been negotiating with the Warsaw Pact countries in Vienna at the mutual and balanced force reductions talks. Both in Vienna and in Stockholm, in the Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, the United States and its allies have introduced measures designed to build confidence and to reduce the risk of surprise attack. Such measures may not be ends in themselves, but they have promise as tools for building trust. Trust will be built not on high-sounding words and promises but on concrete deeds.

It is clear that the weeks and months ahead will be full ones in the task of arms control, and the United States intends to work hard to make them productive ones. We in the First Committee can all join in a common effort to make our contributions to such progress.

I suggest to my colleagues that one painstakingly negotiated consensus resolution on a difficult disarmament subject is surely worth more than 10 that do no more than register a clash of views.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

One hundred years ago in Denmark the great physicist Niels Bohr was born. He was a man of exceptional vision. He helped spark and guide, and lived to witness the consequences of, the discovery of nuclear fission. He turned his talents as well to accommodating the revolutionary changes that that discovery wrought in international life. Twenty-five years ago he wrote a letter to the United Nations, and it is a most appropriate way to sum up our own desires for the future of this Organization, and in particular for the success of the work entrusted to this Committee, for me to quote from his words. He wrote:

"The goal to be put before everything else in an open world where each nation can assert itself solely by the extent to which it can contribute to the common culture and help others with experience and resources. The forceful admonition in this respect which we have received in our time cannot be left unheeded and should hardly fail in resulting in common understanding of the seriousness of the challenge with which our whole civilization is faced... The efforts of all supporters of international co-operation, individuals as well as nations, will be needed to create in all countries an opinion, to voice, with every increasing clarity and strength, the demand for an open world."

Mr. MILAD (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic):

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the delegation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, I am pleased to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that with your great ability and skills, you will lead the work of our Committee to success. Also, I should like to congratulate, through you, the other officers of the Committee.

The work entrusted to this Committee is demanding and vast, namely, the examination of all vital aspects of disarmament and international security. Thus the Committee, as you indicated, Mr. Chairman, is annually facing a tremendous burden which is to respond to the aspirations of the international community regarding the vital issues of disarmament and international security. Also, we share your view that, because of a lack of mutual trust and stability, thus far we have failed to live up to those aspirations despite the strenuous efforts made and still being made in this sphere.

General and complete disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear weapons have become ever more urgent because of the mounting tension throughout the world and the destabilization in several regions, the deteriorating current global economic crisis which has hit especially and directly the third-world countries, in particular the African nations, because of their crucial need to improve their declining economic conditions and the requirements of development in the various spheres as well as the fact that those nations have been the target of aggression and exploitation by the imperialist Powers.

Genuine disarmament has not yet materialized and the nuclear-weapon States have redoubled their efforts to develop and refine their destructive weapons of all kind. This led to a growth in military budgets, thus giving rise to tension in the world and jeopardizing international peace and security.

(Mr. Milad, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

The policy of aggression pursued by colonial and imperialist countries has led to the proliferation of focal points of tension, the creation of armed disputes and the destabilization of international security as well as of several regions in the world, namely, Central America, the Middle East and the Mediterranean region, Africa and Asia.

The arms race, especially the nuclear-arms race, is the most dangerous single issue facing the world. Since it appeared on the international scene in the Second World War, it gave a new dimension to the concept of war. Ever since, it has caused anxiety, alarm and terror for all peoples of the world. What compounded the dangers of that nuclear weapon, as I indicated a little while ago, is the persistence of a very few countries to manufacture and stockpile such nuclear weapons. As a result, new security concepts have emerged such as the balance of terror and deterrence, peaceful coexistence, collective security. All those concepts are perceived as if they were means to strengthen security. This has been illustrated in the second chapter of the Secretary-General's report on the disarmament study entitled, "Study on concepts of security" (A/40/553).

The security of a given State or a group of States is often pursued at the expense of one or other State under the aforesaid concepts. Usually the question of the security of most of the nations falls hostage in the hands of a few countries that have the largest arsenals of weapons. This makes those countries pay heed to no interest but their own and that of their allies, without paying attention to the welfare of other nations and peoples. This runs counter to the principles of the right of peoples to freedom, independence and equality. Also, this type of security is in contravention of covenants and principles to promote international peace and security.

(Mr. Milad, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

The stockpiling and development of nuclear and other weapons does not strengthen international security, including the security of those States which possess such weapons, for should a nuclear war break out there will be no winner or loser, rather, we shall see the total destruction and annihilation of mankind.

My country is a signatory of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in keeping with its policy which advocates disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear weapons, under effective international control and in accordance with the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in particular. Compliance by the nuclear-weapon States with their obligation to halt their nuclear-arms race and nuclear explosions is conducive to the creation of an atmosphere of confidence, security and stability throughout the world. The reduction of military budgets and the channelling of the resources related to development and world economic recovery should alleviate the suffering of millions of human beings throughout the world who are languishing in poverty, hunger, disease and deprivation.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the conclusion of agreements on the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons as well as conventional weapons, are all factors conducive to the promotion of international peace and security and facilitate the creation of international relations founded on mutual respect and co-operation. My country will support all efforts made in that direction.

As we strive to achieve disarmament and to halt the nuclear-arms race, we find that a new door has been opened ushering in a new race in outer space. The international community should take the necessary measures to stop such a race as soon as possible. Outer space is the common heritage of mankind which must be used for peaceful purposes in the interests of the peoples and countries of the world.

AP/ap

A/C.1/40/PV.13
29-30

(Mr. Milad, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

The persistence of some imperialist States in continuing that race confirms their evil intentions and failure to accede to international conventions.

The forthcoming meeting between the American and Soviet leaders should represent a step forward towards disarmament and the prohibition of the arms race in order to ease and subsequently eliminate focal points of tension, and reduce the stockpiles of armaments.

(Mr. Milad, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

As stated by Mr. Treiki, the Secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison, in his address to the General Assembly on 3 October 1985:

"However, as small peoples, we must not merely be observant; we must not accept any solution of these problems at our expense. We as small peoples have a right to live. We cannot allow one or two States to shape the destiny of the world. We support peace; we support the reduction of armaments. However, at the same time, we believe that the United Nations must be a partner in the achievement of peace and that without the United Nations no such activities can be undertaken. We believe that the Non-Aligned Movement, which represents the aspirations of many peoples of the world must play an important role in this field. The arena should not be left open only to an exercise in insanity by some Powers in pursuit of domination and hegemony."

The nuclear capability of the two racist régimes in Pretoria and occupied Palestine has now become an actual and dangerous fact. Several studies have confirmed that those two racist régimes do possess nuclear weapons and thus pose a threat not only to the peace and security of Africa and the Middle East, but also international peace and security. This has been possible because of the constant, unlimited support provided by colonial and imperialist Powers. Furthermore, the collaboration between those two régimes in the exchange of military nuclear experts and information has increased the threat to the peoples of those regions in particular and to the world in general. The possession by those two racist régimes of such weapons is contrary to the resolutions calling for the establishment of Africa and the Middle East as nuclear-weapon-free zones.

(Mr. Milad, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

In conclusion, my country will subscribe to all efforts aimed at disarmament, and at curbing the nuclear, chemical, biological, conventional and naval arms race. We also support all endeavours to end the arms race in outer space. Furthermore, we shall vote in favour of all draft resolutions on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, just as we have on similar occasions in the past.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): I begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. It gives my delegation great confidence to see you in the Chair, and we pledge our full support to you in your work. It also gives us great pleasure to see in the Chair a representative of a country with which we have such a close and neighbourly relationship.

This general debate takes place in a unique context: the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The Charter has provided the rules for the conduct of modern international relations. It has established the community of nations. It has provided the order that was required following the chaos of the Second World War. Under this Charter over 100 States have attained their freedom and independence and - let there be no mistake - the great movement of decolonization is one of the truly significant achievements of our age.

Under the Charter we are all committed to the maintenance of international peace and security; but today that goal of irreducible importance is deeply threatened by an arms race that has ground on relentlessly during the last 40 years. That arms race has brought with it a terrible cost in economic and human terms. It has come to cast a long and dark shadow over all of us.

Whether it is fully recognized or not, we have during the past 40 years continually reaped the benefits provided by the Charter and this Organization. We owe something in return, and that is to stop and reverse the arms race and to enter into real and substantial measures of disarmament, because they are vital to the maintenance of peace and security.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

The Charter speaks of the necessity of "disarmament and the regulation of armaments", and it links this directly to the maintenance of international peace and security. But the Charter was written at the beginning of the nuclear age. It has needed supplementation in order to take account of the savage reality of the nuclear arms race. Such supplementation has been provided through, for example, the range of resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly in the field of disarmament, in particular the decisions of the Assembly made at its special sessions on disarmament. There is also the existing corpus of arms control agreements which were concluded largely in the 1960s and early 1970s.

But little has happened since that time and this is a matter of grave concern. If one is to look for lessons of historical importance from the last 40 years one lesson is surely that in the absence of arms control and disarmament agreements there will be an arms race. We cannot rely on self-restraint. Either we negotiate effective disarmament agreements or we shall face a mounting threat to peace and security and, indeed, to life itself.

Increasingly we are offered comfortable scientific assurances that everything is firmly under control and that tomorrow's more modern, updated, high-tech weapons systems will remove the problems posed by the systems which threaten us today. No one should accept such assurances. If anyone prefers a placebo to real medicine, he does so at the price of ignoring the facts of the modern arms race.

Let me cite just two examples of those facts, and there are many more. First, the early period of the development and then use of nuclear weapons was characterized by cast-iron scientific assurances about how little radiation would be caused by nuclear detonations. Those who gave those assurances proved to be misinformed. The facts of radiation-caused death and long-term injury in Japan

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

testify to this fact. Secondly, it is also true that only 15 years before the first flight testing of intercontinental ballistic missiles testimony was given before the Congress of the United States to the effect that it would simply not be possible to build such missiles. There is no reason to assume that those assurances were not given honestly, but peace and security built on the basis of such assurances would be a house built on sand.

Nothing should be more important to us than to maintain international peace and security. None of our human goals can be achieved unless we live in a framework of peace. We have to work together to build and maintain that framework. The facts of the arms race of the past 40 years demonstrate this beyond doubt. What is required if we are to remove the terrible and possibly now terminal threat posed to peace and security by the arms race is the negotiation of effective arms control and disarmament agreements.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

Let us recognize, during this fortieth anniversary session, that the negotiation of such agreements is called for in the Charter and in subsequent repeated decisions by the United Nations.

A critical area of concern to us all, in which, fortunately, negotiations have resumed, is that of achieving early and radical reductions of the nuclear arms held by the United States and the Soviet Union. Both parties to those negotiations have stated that their aim is greatly to reduce the size of their nuclear-weapon arsenals and, ultimately, to eliminate those weapons. Those goals must be achieved.

Deterrence through mutually assured destruction is not a safe or satisfactory long-term proposition for humankind. Nuclear deterrence has the distinction of being the only security system in history which fails totally if it succeeds 99 per cent of the time. To believe that nuclear war will assuredly be permanently avoided through perpetual fear of annihilation not only is a consequence of despair at not being able to find a better way, but requires a faith in human infallibility which defies rational belief. Even the remotest risk of nuclear war is unacceptable.

These concerns are heightened by the ongoing development of improved offensive nuclear weapon capabilities which lead to apprehension about an effective first-strike capability and the political consequences that would follow.

The situation is further complicated and destabilized when the concept of anti-ballistic missile defence is introduced, or at least becomes substantially feared by one or other side.

Thus, Australia supports the stated purpose of the bilateral nuclear arms negotiations taking place at present between the two major nuclear-weapon States. We believe that, if those negotiations focus squarely on the goal of reducing and ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons and if they take fair account of the valid

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

interests of each side in the maintenance of stability, it should be possible to identify the numbers and types of nuclear-weapon systems which can be made the subject of early and radical reductions. We need to recognize, however, that this process will be made extremely difficult, and possibly hopeless, if the negotiations are not entered into and conducted in the fair and serious way I have just described. They would also be made more difficult, if not impossible, if agreement on such radical reductions were made conditional on other issues. If too complex a web of linkages is established we may well find ourselves snared and never able to break through to achieve the key goal of radical reductions in offensive weapons.

While those negotiations continue, there must be continued adherence to, and compliance with, existing nuclear arms control agreements. It is of basic importance that the limits and agreements set in the SALT I and SALT II accords continue to be complied with. In this context, the anti-ballistic-missile Treaty also remains of very great importance.

The bilateral negotiations also have within their terms of reference the question of outer space. The Australian Government does not endorse the United States programme known as the strategic defense initiative, or the Soviet Union's long-standing research into similar technologies. We would prefer to see the preservation of the anti-ballistic-missile régime while maximum attention is given to eliminating existing nuclear-weapon systems, and an enhanced international effort to ensure that human activities in space remain exclusively for peaceful purposes.

The arms race we have witnessed here on earth must never be transferred to space. In our view there should be no weapon systems in space. If there is an honest difference in interpretation of what constitutes permissible research under

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

the ABM Treaty, then surely those who want to preserve the ABM régime should be able to work out those differences and thus ensure that that régime is maintained and complied with.

The Soviet Union has proposed to this Assembly that we should take a new step towards international co-operation with regard to space. The Australian Government is studying that proposal carefully and critically. By way of preliminary comment may I say that we support one of the concepts involved in the Soviet proposal, that is, that we should seek to enhance international co-operation with regard to the peaceful use of outer space. But the other dimension of the Soviet proposal causes us most serious concern. This is the linkage drawn between further international peaceful co-operation and what the Soviet proposal terms the non-militarisation of outer space. We presume that, in more accurate terminology, this means the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

On this basis, we ask a fundamental question. Of the two goals - international co-operation and the prevention of an arms race in space - which is the top priority? Which should be the focus of attention and effort? In our view, the answer is clear: the prevention of an arms race in outer space should be the top priority. This is where the urgency lies. This is the objective that is slipping away from us.

The issue is a complex tangle involving the state and trend of the balance in offensive nuclear forces, the intensifying interest in strategic defences, and the development and deployment of anti-satellite weapons. Our view is firm: there should not be an arms race in outer space. But clearly we are well past the point where declarations to that effect will be sufficient.

We are concerned that the Soviet formulation makes further progress on the peaceful uses of outer space conditional upon our accepting its concept of non-militarisation. We reject that linkage. We should squarely face the fact that

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

the prevention of an arms race in outer space is an issue that must be addressed directly and in its own right.

We hope that the Soviet Union will consider reformulating its proposal to clarify these aspects and to give appropriate emphasis to the priority task of preventing an arms race in space and to the great responsibility it shares with the United States in achieving that objective.

Another goal of unquestionable importance in our search for the elimination of the nuclear danger is an end to all nuclear testing. We are aware of arguments about whether or not an end to testing would have any impact on nuclear disarmament. I want this to be plain: those arguments are unconvincing. The fact is that the nuclear-weapon States would not continue to conduct nuclear tests if they were not militarily significant, that is, if they did not contribute to the nuclear arms race. Furthermore, the fact is that any State seeking to acquire nuclear weapons would have to be able to test.

Until a comprehensive test-ban treaty is in operation, we have in mind asking States which conduct nuclear tests to register their tests publicly and to inform us why they were conducted.

A comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty has been a declared objective of the world community for some 30 years. There should be no further delay, no further procrastination, in responding practically to that call. Nuclear weapons must be eliminated and no State should seek to acquire them for the first time, and this requires serious negotiations on effective nuclear arms control measures. It requires the maintenance and strengthening of, and universal adherence to, the Non-Proliferation Treaty régime. It requires a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty banning all nuclear tests by all States in all environments for all time.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

Australia has placed before the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva a programme of work in accordance with which the Conference could begin immediate negotiations towards such a treaty. We are working now with New Zealand on a draft resolution to be submitted to this Assembly, and its purpose will be to facilitate practical work on a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

At the Third Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, a call was made on the nuclear-weapon States to resume negotiations on a comprehensive test ban as a matter of urgency. We appeal to all nuclear-weapon States to respond to that call, and I want to reiterate now the appreciation of the Australian Government for the decision announced by China, in the Conference on Disarmament this year, that it would be prepared to participate in practical work on a comprehensive test-ban when that work is started.

The harsh reality of nuclear testing is brought home to us in Australia by the continuing French nuclear testing programme in the Pacific. Contentions about the safety of that programme fall into the category of the comfortable but incredible scientific assurances I have already referred to. Simply, the long-term effects of that testing programme, whether radiological or geo-physical, cannot be calculated. France's actions in the Pacific are rejected by all of the self-governing and independent States of that area. It gives us no pleasure to join issue with France on this matter. But the French Government should know that we who live in the South Pacific will not desist in our opposition to its nuclear testing programme, and we reject utterly any suggestion that we are showing insensitivity to the question of the security of France. Tens of thousands of Australians gave their lives twice in this century in defence of France. The same is true of New Zealanders. All nuclear testing should cease wherever it is conducted. France should stop its nuclear testing in the Pacific.

An important achievement in arms control was registered on 6 August this year in the Pacific region. On that day, the member States of the South Pacific Forum endorsed, and opened for signature, the Treaty for a South Pacific nuclear-free zone. That Treaty covers a truly significant portion of the surface of this

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

earth. It is contiguous with two other major treaties: the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Antarctic Treaty. Nuclear-weapon States have been asked to adhere to the protocols of the South Pacific Treaty, and it is our earnest hope that they will add their strength to this important arms control treaty by acceding to the relevant protocols.

Any discussion of the arms race which has so lamentably characterized the past 40 years would be incomplete without reference to the conventional arms industry and trade. That industry and that trade have reached scandalous proportions. Too much of the world's resources are devoted to arms, and this is especially and tragically true with regard to the many States that can least afford any diversion of resources from real human needs. This is not just an East-West problem; it is one which threatens us all, and it has a particularly ugly face in its North-South dimension.

Reining in the conventional arms trade and industry is something for which national Governments have a particular responsibility, but it is a fitting subject for greater multilateral concern and co-operation. We should explore that possibility.

Progress in reducing the arms industry and trade would contribute to the maintenance of peace and security and should particularly benefit the countries with the largest problems of economic and social development. It would also help reduce the awful link which exists between conventional war and the possibility of nuclear war.

Another major issue of disarmament to which the Australian Government attaches high priority is the conclusion of a comprehensive convention which would ban the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. Chemical weapons

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

are abhorrent. They are also distressingly cheap and easy to make. Regrettably, there have been recent cases of the use of chemical weapons. It is also disturbing that there are signs that a chemical weapons proliferation problem may be emerging.

There is an urgent need for concerted action by the world community on the issue of chemical weapons. Existing international agreements on chemical weapons are, and will continue to be, important. The 1925 Geneva Protocol has served us well for 60 years, but what is required now is a stronger universal régime. The basis for such a universal convention has been laid down in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. The Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has done much useful work in recent years under its distinguished chairmen.

We attach particular significance to the achievement this year of agreement that the convention should include a provision prohibiting the use of chemical weapons. Such a provision is one of the cornerstones of the convention. We are, however, concerned that the pace of the negotiations has not been faster. We are convinced in fact, that the conclusion of a convention is within reach. What is required is a genuine, concerted effort of negotiation - a fresh impetus - on the few remaining, and admittedly difficult, issues. So, I appeal to all States to make that effort, to include extending the work of the Ad Hoc Committee throughout the year, to give this world community the convention we so urgently need.

The urgency of our task should not be underrated. In the absence of a convention, there is a real risk that chemical weapons might be used again, that they will spread, and that their production will continue. These are alarming prospects, but we can ensure that they do not materialize, by concluding a comprehensive and verifiable weapons convention.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

Our multilateral machinery for the negotiation of arms control and disarmament agreements has been revised on several occasions. But if results are to be the acid test, as they should be, then it is clear that our machinery is not working well. This is partly a consequence of the unwillingness of some to work that machinery effectively.

The delegation of Cameroon has brought to our attention the need for us to study again the operation of our multilateral machinery for negotiation of arms control and disarmament agreements. We are grateful to that delegation for the action it has taken. We look forward to working with it to try to make our machinery operate more effectively.

If we look back over the past 40 years, it is clear that much has been achieved. But we should also ask ourselves what jobs have been left undone, especially from amongst those we solemnly pledged to get done. Surely the great job we have left undone is the job of disarmament. Our failure in this regard has raised, credibly and seriously, the question of how much longer any of us will be around to do any jobs, or to leave any jobs undone.

The plain fact is that competition in arms will continue unless we unite to stop it. We must join our efforts in fulfilment of the fundamental purpose of this Organization: the maintenance of peace and security, and we must do this by negotiating effective agreements on arms control and disarmament.

Mr. KASEMSRI (Thailand): It gives me great pleasure to extend to you, Sir, on behalf of the Thai delegation, as well as my own behalf, our warm and heartfelt congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee during the fortieth anniversary session of the General Assembly. Your election to this important post demonstrates the recognition shared by all of us here of your outstanding diplomatic skills and your valuable contribution in the field of disarmament. It is also a tribute to the active role played by your country, the Republic of Indonesia, in the promotion of international peace and security. My delegation is confident that, under your able guidance and vast experience in the Committee's work, our deliberations on the various crucial issues before us will yield productive results. My delegation's sincere congratulations go also to the two Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur on their election to their respective high offices. The Thai delegation wishes you, Mr. Chairman, and all the other officers every success in your enormous and important responsibilities.

There is no doubt that the task facing all of us here in the First Committee is a crucial and indeed very difficult one, for we have been entrusted with the responsibility of dealing with issues which affect our survival, and on which little progress has been made. In this regard I cannot help but share the concern that, although disarmament has been on the agenda of this Committee since the early days of our Organization, there has been no real disarmament. Instead, in this Committee and other international forums, we are all too often accustomed to hear, in your words, Mr. Chairman,

"a litany of accusations, rationalizations of position and of strategic doctrines, and mutual apportionment of blame".

It is therefore the ardent hope of my delegation that our deliberations on crucial issues in the weeks to come will proceed in a spirit of full co-operation and shared responsibility, and with a common purpose and a sense of genuine commitment.

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

Even today, as we observe and celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the founding of our Organization, we are still living in the "peace of fear". Although a nuclear conflagration has not yet occurred, the dangers stemming from the accelerating arms race are all too apparent. The arms race is undeniably a factor contributing to the outbreak of conflicts, their prolongation and their escalation. It threatens to bring inestimable destruction, untold human suffering and death to any nation's doorstep, whether such nation is a belligerent or not. But worst of all, those who often suffer the most are the civilian population who become innocent victims of armed conflicts; for artillery shells, rockets and bullets make no distinction between military and non-military targets. Examples are not hard to find, for instance, in the Iran-Iraq conflict, in the situation in Afghanistan and, equally vividly, in Kampuchea.

For the past seven years we have witnessed the sad plight of the Kampuchean people who have lost their lives and homes and who have been forced to seek temporary refuge in my country. The spill-over of the fighting has also resulted in casualties in the part of Thai villagers as well as in damage to their homes and property. Moreover, there have been innumerable armed incursions into Thailand in violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, causing a significant number of deaths and amount of destruction.

My delegation wishes to support the view of our colleague from Singapore that this Committee should pay more attention to conventional conflicts, to the conventional arms race and to the export of conventional weapons to third-world countries by the industrialized countries. We also believe that if such weapons were intended or used only for self-defence and not for acts of aggression the problem would be greatly lessened. Moreover, more effective means should be found to help deter nations from settling differences by force of arms.

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

The statements made on disarmament at successive sessions of this Committee and the General Assembly, as well as the vast number of resolutions on disarmament adopted in the course of the past four decades are a clear confirmation of the international community's yearning for the halt and reversal of the nuclear arms race. Yet nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction have grown both quantitatively and qualitatively. Even though the present generation of nuclear weapons is highly advanced in terms of destructive capabilities and delivery systems, various nuclear-weapon States have continued to test nuclear weapons in order to develop more advanced and powerful ones, as if what they possess now were not sufficient to destroy the human race many times over in the event of a nuclear holocaust. Therefore, a comprehensive prohibition of future nuclear tests would be an important step towards nuclear disarmament.

Although the partial test-ban Treaty has been in existence for over two decades, and although the number of State acceding to the Treaty has increased satisfactorily year by year, it is regrettable that we have to remind ourselves that nuclear weapon tests have continued to take place in various parts of the world and that a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, of which an overwhelming majority of Member States of our Organization is in favour, has not yet been concluded. My delegation notes with concern that if nuclear tests were to continue as in the current situation, not only would the existing test-ban treaty be weakened, but the nuclear arms race would be intensified, with the development and deployment of more sophisticated nuclear arms, and the risks of nuclear holocaust would be increased. In this regard, my delegation believes that priority should still be accorded to the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. Such a treaty would contribute towards the ending of the development, improvement and production of more sophisticated and destructive nuclear weapons. Furthermore,

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

it would constitute a vital element in the success of efforts to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race.

Despite the fact that the Conference on Disarmament has made little progress in negotiating a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, my delegation is cautiously optimistic about the possibility of the successful conclusion of such a treaty. As a party to the Treaty on a partial test-ban concluded in 1963, Thailand would like to reiterate its appeal to the nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so, as well as all other States, to participate fully, and to contribute constructively to the achievement of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The successful conclusion of the Third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons recently held in Geneva reveals the importance of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is designed to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons and to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy for economic and industrial purposes.

It is very heartening to see that the substantive Final Declaration was adopted by consensus. This clearly demonstrates not only the importance that the parties attach to the Treaty but also the kind of progress that could be attained by adhering to the spirit of common purpose, co-operation and compromise. My delegation values the Non-Proliferation Treaty as an important international instrument aimed at ensuring that nuclear-weapon States make a sincere and genuine effort in negotiating and reaching an agreement on disarmament which would ensure security for all, including the non-nuclear-weapon States. In turn, the non-nuclear-weapon States are committed to refrain from developing or acquiring nuclear weapons on the understanding that they are fully assured of their opportunity to utilize nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

Nevertheless, my delegation notes with concern that, although this Treaty has been in force for 15 years now, its main objectives have not been achieved. On the contrary, the production, development and stockpiling of more sophisticated nuclear weapons have increased in number and momentum, and the assurances given to the non-nuclear-weapon States have not been fulfilled. In today's complex world, any increase in the number of nations having nuclear-weapon capabilities would foster international and regional instability and heighten the risk of nuclear war.

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

Thailand, as a party to the Treaty, would like to urge the nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty to fulfil their obligations in nuclear disarmament negotiations and to refrain from assisting non-nuclear-weapon States to apply nuclear technology for non-peaceful uses. My delegation would like also to call upon all nuclear-weapon States to place their nuclear energy facilities and installations under the safeguards agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and to urge States which have not yet become party to the Treaty to do so urgently. In this connection, I wish also to refer to the 9 July 1985 Joint Communiqué of the eighteenth Ministerial Meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), held at Kuala Lumpur, which demonstrates the attention and concern of the ASEAN member countries regarding the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons:

"The Foreign Ministers expressed their concern over the unbalanced implementation of the essential elements of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Foreign Ministers urged the nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty to fulfil their obligations under article VI of the Treaty to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and on nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

My delegation believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world would make a constructive contribution to limiting the proliferation of nuclear arms. The proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia has been endorsed by the Association of South-East Asian Nations since July 1983. We accordingly welcome the signing by nine South Pacific countries of the Treaty creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific on 6 August 1985, the date which marked the use of the first nuclear bomb on Hiroshima 40 years ago.

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

My delegation remains concerned about recent reports regarding the use of chemical and biological weapons in certain parts of the world, including South-East Asia. In view of their inhumane and indiscriminate effects, Thailand reaffirms its strong opposition to the production, development and stockpiling of these weapons and their use in any circumstances.

My delegation is appalled that these weapons have been a subject of continuing concern due to the fact that the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the 1972 Convention on banning chemical weapons contain no provisions for verification. If the prohibition of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons is to be effective, an agreed verification system has to be enforced and adhered to. Furthermore, on-site and timely inspection of areas where such weapons are allegedly used should be rendered possible. Thailand fully supports an early convening of a second review conference of the States Parties to that Convention.

Furthermore, my delegation wishes to reaffirm the willingness of the Royal Thai Government to provide co-operation and assistance to the United Nations and interested Governments in any way it can in their investigation of activities which may have constituted a violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol or the relevant rules of international law. We hope that the efforts of the international community regarding the alleged use of such weapons in other parts of the world will receive similar support from all concerned.

The Thai delegation attaches particular importance to the establishment of zones of peace in various parts of the world. We strongly believe that the establishment of such zones can contribute to the preservation of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States in each region, and to the prevention and elimination of interference from outside the region. We believe it would also help to create conditions conducive to intra-regional co-operation in the fields of economic and social development. In line with the aspiration to the

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, Thailand and other members of ASEAN have endeavoured since 1971 to bring about the early establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia. At the eighteenth ASEAN ministerial meeting held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 8 and 9 July this year, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their determination to continue to pursue actively this ultimate objective. We are convinced that the establishment of such peace zones can be achieved only through the full co-operation of regional States, in particular by their commitment to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, together with an assurance from the major Powers to forgo rivalries in such areas.

Without such co-operation and support, the progress in this regard would certainly be slow. Thus it is regrettable to note that although the United Nations has for several years put a lot of effort into preparing for the convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, the proposed conference has not yet materialized. Thailand, as a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, would like to reaffirm its support for the convening of that conference as soon as possible.

Last week many statements in this Committee made reference to the influence of East-West relations on disarmament. My delegation concurs with you, Mr. Chairman, that the nuclear-weapon States, especially the super-Powers, must bear the primary responsibility for preventing a nuclear war and for making serious efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament. Moreover, my delegation is convinced that any success in arms reduction, both nuclear and conventional, greatly depends on the two super-Powers. My delegation therefore warmly welcomes the resumption of talks between the United States and the Soviet Union in Geneva earlier this year. There is no doubt that any progress made in their bilateral negotiations, which include nuclear and space arms, will contribute positively to efforts in multilateral forums

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

as well as to the lessening of international tension. In this regard, we share with a large number of delegations here the conviction that a positive outcome of the summit meeting between President Reagan of the United States and General Secretary Gorbachev of the Soviet Union, to be held in Geneva next month, would help lay the groundwork and pave the way for subsequent bilateral talks on arms control and other important international issues.

No one here would disagree that the arms race is costly and that the development of new types of weapons normally entails enormous expenditures. Sometimes one cannot help wondering how much more we could do to feed the hungry, to cure the sick and to help the poor all over the world with only a small portion of the resource being spent on military expenditure by all nations combined. Indeed, we can and should do a lot more to alleviate the plight of poor and hapless people. As a developing country, Thailand is very concerned about the diversion of precious financial, material and human resources from development and welfare to armament, which stems in part from increasing international tension and which, in turn, heightens further the level of tension. My delegation therefore welcomes the decision of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly to convene an international conference on the relationship between disarmament and development. We believe that the release of additional resources, through disarmament measures, for development purposes, would greatly benefit not only the developing countries but the developed countries as well.

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

Several speakers before me have already emphasized our responsibility to mankind in dealing with disarmament issues. Some have reminded us of the role of disarmament in the attainment of the noble goals set out in the Charter, while others have reaffirmed their countries' desire to work towards world peace and security. For its part, the Thai delegation shares their views and wishes to reiterate its strong pledge of full co-operation and support to you, Mr. Chairman, in the performance of your complex and challenging duties.

Mr. SIMPSON (Ghana): Permit me first of all, Sir, to extend to you, on behalf of my delegation, our sincere congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. My delegation echoes the compliments that previous speakers have paid to you; they are more than well-deserved owing to your outstanding professional and personal qualities.

It is worth remembering, on this historic anniversary of the birth of the United Nations 40 years ago, that our Organization was created in part to deal with the trauma of the first use of atomic bombs, on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Thus, by a stroke of fate, the new hope that the United Nations Charter held out to mankind, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, already bore, in the advent of the atomic bomb, the seeds of its own denial and frustration. So it is that since then the dismal failure of the international community to bring about effective disarmament has led inevitably to the addition of a new and dangerous dimension to the arms race: that of nuclear weapons.

Mankind and, indeed, our planet itself now face an ever-present threat of extinction from nuclear weapons. All nations and peoples are at risk. Whether it occurs by accident or design, the folly of nuclear war will result for all of us in certain and total annihilation. Yet there are some incurable warmongers who think that the vast and ever-growing accumulation of nuclear arms can be put to limited and controlled use to their advantage. That is a dangerous and potentially suicidal illusion, which bears the seeds of terminal catastrophe for all mankind.

(Mr. Simpson, Ghana)

After 40 years of the United Nations, the greatest challenge facing the human race today remains the threat of nuclear weapons to our very survival. Unless all nations commit themselves irrevocably to the prevention of nuclear war, the wide-ranging achievements and progress made through international co-operation in the developmental, economic, social and humanitarian fields throughout the world will be meaningless and will ultimately come to naught.

It is this stark realization that has confirmed Ghana's conviction that the time is long overdue for all nations of goodwill, for all nations responsive to the crying desire of their peoples to live their daily lives free from the depressing burden of the nuclear threat, to commit themselves first to a nuclear-weapons freeze. Nuclear-weapon States cannot hope to reverse the arms race by endlessly piling up mountains of ever more sophisticated and devastating instruments of mass destruction in the name of their pet theories of deterrence. It seems to us obvious, that a freeze should be the logical first step towards the eventual goal of general and complete disarmament.

We consider that a second essential step should be a pledge by all nuclear-weapon States not to be the first to resort to the use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. This would contribute immensely to the reinforcement of trust and confidence among nations. The overwhelming support given last year to General Assembly resolution 39/148 D on this subject is a reflection of the international community's well-founded apprehensions concerning the threat of nuclear weapons. We urge the United States in particular, and other nuclear-weapon States as well, to follow the example of China and the Soviet Union, and to commit themselves openly and unequivocally to a pledge of non-first-use of nuclear weapons, and to work towards an international instrument to that effect.

(Mr. Simpson, Ghana)

We believe, thirdly, that there should be a serious, negotiated effort to effect deep, all-round cuts in the existing levels of nuclear armaments. In this regard, we welcome the Soviet Union's recent initiative in proposing a 50 per cent reduction in long-range nuclear weapons by the two super-Powers. We believe that the proposal should be examined on its merits and within the context of other related matters in bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States. It would be unfortunate for it to be dismissed out of hand.

But all these important measures, even if agreed upon and taken by all concerned, would be in vain in the present circumstances when there is no effective ban on all nuclear-weapon test explosions, including underground tests. The need, therefore, for a comprehensive test-ban treaty totally prohibiting nuclear-weapon test explosions is more urgent than ever before. Endless testing, leading to greater refinement and modernization as well as to the quantitative expansion of arsenals, has fuelled the nuclear arms race, which is now in danger of being extended into outer space. We call fervently upon the Ad Hoc Committee set up by the Conference on Disarmament to redouble its efforts to reach an agreement on its negotiating mandate for a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Given the necessary political will, the question of scope and the problems of verification and compliance should be amenable to agreement through negotiations.

(Mr. Simpson, Ghana)

We are, moreover, concerned at the possibility that a "star wars" programme could have a destabilizing effect on existing arms-limitation agreements such as the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. That would be a retrogressive development and must be avoided.

It is pertinent to recall in this regard the following statements made in the Delhi Declaration adopted by six Heads of State or Government, from Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania, at their meeting in New Delhi on 28 January 1985:

"We reiterate our appeal for an all-embracing halt to the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. Such a halt would greatly facilitate negotiations. Two specific steps today require special attention: the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

"Outer space must be used for the benefit of mankind as a whole, not as a battleground of the future. We, therefore, call for the prohibition of the development, testing, production, deployment and use of all space weapons. An arms race in space would be enormously costly, and have grave destabilizing effects. It would also endanger a number of arms limitation and disarmament agreements." (A/40/114, annex, p. 4)

Let me add Ghana's voice to that timely appeal, particularly with regard to outer space. Ghana is opposed to the extension of the arms race to outer space. We wish to stress that outer space should be preserved for peaceful purposes exclusively. On the evidence of the history of the arms race, we cannot believe that the deployment of nuclear weapons in space would do anything but accelerate the arms race and add to it a dangerous new dimension with incalculable risks, and with waste of human and material resources. The ultimate security it is supposed to ensure will remain as great an illusion as ever before.

(Mr. Simpson, Ghana)

We join others in applauding the successful review last month of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In contrast to the last review conference 10 years ago, the Third Review Conference was able to conclude its work with the adoption by consensus of a Final Declaration.

We remain none the less gravely concerned by the selective application which the nuclear-weapon States have so far made of the provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to suit their own narrow and short-term commercial interests. For instance, the well-known nuclear collaboration between certain prominent Western countries and Israel on the one hand and racist South Africa on the other has seriously undermined the Treaty. The continued refusal of racist South Africa to place its nuclear activities under the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards poses a grave danger not just for the African continent but also for the international community as a whole. Those who have helped South Africa acquire a nuclear capability bear a heavy responsibility for their action. They have acted in full knowledge of the aggressive nature of the apartheid South African régime and of the brutal military terror it practises against its neighbours. They have acted in utter disregard of the wishes of member States of the Organization of African Unity, which in 1964 committed themselves to keep their continent free of nuclear arms by adopting the historic Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. South Africa's nuclear collaborators have indeed not only acted in breach of the Non-Proliferation Treaty but have also posed a serious threat to international peace and security.

We are, however, happy to note that in another region, the South Pacific, there is now a Treaty establishing a nuclear-free zone. We believe that such regional initiatives contribute positively to the practical and active prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons as well as strengthening efforts in that field at the global level.

(Mr. Simpson, Ghana)

We must at the same time register our disappointment that France, which has otherwise adopted a progressive attitude to disarmament issues in general and to the question of the relationship between disarmament and development in particular, should still persist in carrying out nuclear-weapon tests in the South Pacific, in spite of the strong objection to them voiced by the countries in the region and by many others outside it. We take this opportunity to join others in appealing once again to France to put an immediate end to its scandalous activities in the South Pacific.

Finally, let me now touch briefly on a subject of special significance to Ghana and to Africa, a subject to which I have just alluded: the relationship between disarmament and development. The framers of the Charter, as evidenced in Article 26, had hoped that resources could be weaned from armament and channelled to the peaceful ends of social and economic development. Alas, after 40 years, their hopes have remained forlorn and nowhere near realization. Indeed, over the period, far more of the world's human, financial and material resources have been devoted to the production of all kinds of conventional armaments and nuclear weapons than ever before.

(Mr. Simpson, Ghana)

We are therefore gratified that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 39/160, a Preparatory Committee was finally set up. It met in New York from 29 July to 9 August this year to plan an International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. We look forward to participating fully in the deliberations of the Conference, which is expected to be held in Paris in June and July next year. We shall go to Paris with renewed hope, and the expectation that, at long last, one of the Charter's cardinal hopes, which had become almost a dead letter, has now been resuscitated and will be given a new lease of life in the forthcoming International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

The final outcome of the Conference will determine whether the new hope for the future aroused on the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations was well-founded or misplaced.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.