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Chairman: Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55.

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STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL DEBATE

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to draw the Committee's attention to a new document which has been circulated today, document A/C.1/40/INF.1. This was prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the officers of the Committee and with my encouragement in order to facilitate the work of the First Committee. It lists documents of the First Committee issued as of 23 October 1985 and will, of course, be updated as appropriate. I trust that it will be of assistance to members of the Committee.

Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): Allow me to reiterate my congratulations on your election to the chairmanship. You have succeeded another eminent Chairman, Ambassador Souza e Silva of Brazil, to whom my delegation also wishes to convey its great appreciation of the competent and objective way in which he conducted the work of the Committee at the thirty-ninth session. Your long diplomatic experience, bolstered by your precision, frankness and perspicacity, is a major asset in ensuring that the work of our Committee, in this anniversary year and at a time of high-level meetings, will bring concrete and satisfactory results.

An extremely complex series of changes is now taking place in which a number of elements are involved, ranging from economy to strategy and encompassing the phenomena of societies and the appearance of new generations, not to mention the third technological revolution, which has had a decisive impact on the military sphere.

Strategic realities at the end of this century make it essential that we carry out a thorough revision of our thought patterns on each of the terms of the following equation: the place of nuclear weapons, the stability of deterrent force and the financial effort of the nuclear Powers.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

The nuclear challenge is closely linked to a longing for military and technological superiority while nurturing the hope of prevailing and eventually achieving victory over the other side. The concept of nuclear deterrence, which is deemed by some Powers to be immoral and dangerous, is gradually giving way to a mixture of the space umbrella and so-called smart weapons, which have in common the fact that they will help to continue to help to prevent war but in another way - not by the threat of the apocalypse by its prevention.

Increasingly, the build-up of nuclear arsenals is impelling the nuclear Powers, as they think longingly of disarmament but also of technological superiority, towards an essential point at which the very principle of nuclear weapons is called into question. All the nuclear Powers, without saying so openly, recognize the negative nature of nuclear deterrence.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

For, on the one hand, the imbalance of the 1945 relationship of forces when only one Power had that terrifying weapon, has since been broken thus neutralizing the use of nuclear force by one party because of the risk of immediate reprisals which would cause a conflagration with devastating consequences for the two antagonists and, on the other, because of the increasingly massive cost of nuclear ventures. Leaders concerned with economic, financial, military questions posed by the economies of their countries must provide an appropriate response. The economists of certain countries are coming to recognize more and more that the reduction of the deficits in the balance of payments involves deep cuts in military and particularly nuclear expenditure.

In 1981, American military expenditures were estimated at $157.6 billion, but in 1986 it will be $301.8 billion or nearly twice as much as five years ago. The Soviet Union earmarks between 11 per cent and 18 per cent of its gross national product to defence, depending on the estimates used. One can therefore wonder whether the notion of nuclear deterrence is not aimed at a single final objective, namely the avoidance of all war, whether nuclear or conventional. The two super-Powers must surely recognize that the improvement of the living standards of their citizens and those of other peoples of the world suffering from poverty, squalor and famine may depend to a very large extent on diverting the resources now devoted to disarmament to priority humanitarian expenditure.

Even if nuclear-weapon technology is changing and being refined at the price that I have just referred to, it is still true that the social and philosophical constant of non-war, dear to the peoples of the whole world, still remains valid. Proof is provided by the major demonstrations organized in 1981 in Bonn (250,000 people), London (175,000), Rome (200,000), Madrid (400,000) and Amsterdam (300,000), after the opening in 1981 of the Geneva negotiations on Euro-missiles together with the United States proposal for a zero option.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

A second illustration of the will of the peoples to stop the nuclear arms race made itself felt on 12 June 1982 when the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament was being held in New York, where an historic large-scale demonstration involving nearly one million people paralyzed the downtown area.

In 1947 George Marshall stated:

"Our policy is not aimed at a country or a doctrine but against hunger, poverty, despair and chaos. Its objective should be the resurgence in the world of a healthy economy making it possible to establish political and social conditions within which free institutions can exist."

It is true that great men always appear at particularly turbulent times in the history of mankind. But while Marshall had in mind economic power as a way of building up the world after the Second World War, Stalin, for his part, in 1921, after the First World War, drew attention to the vulnerability of certain powers in the matter of resources were concerned. He said:

"If Europe and America can be considered as the front, the non-sovereign nations and the colonies, with their raw materials, their fuel, their food supplies and their vast stocks of human resources, form the rear, the reserves of imperialism."

This gives one an idea of the paradox of the international community of the present day with its concerns for security, which prevail over those of the underdevelopment of certain countries.

In the early 1960s, the United States and the USSR chose two different approaches to nuclear deterrence. The choice was either to separate deterrence from defence or to steer arms programmes towards a possibility of waging and winning a nuclear war and surviving.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

Strategic nuclear superiority and the attempt to limit damages in the case of a nuclear war were replaced by deterrence inevitably implying widespread civil destruction. The theory of limitation which essentially restricts the role of nuclear weapons to deterrence alone, a threat of reprisals against the society of an aggressor proved later to be difficult to accept notwithstanding the invention of different systems of nuclear weapons - strategic (with a range of 6,400 kilometres), intermediate-range (2,400 to 6,400 kilometres), medium-range (800 to 2,400 kilometres) and short-range or tactical (800 kilometres or less). The phenomenon of the graduated escalation implied by the corresponding riposte makes it possible to challenge this theory of limitations.

At the present time the world has more than 50,000 nuclear warheads with a nuclear explosive power evaluated at the equivalent of 1 million Hiroshima bombs, and stockpiles of conventional weapons, including 140,000 battle tanks, more than 35,000 war planes, more than 21,000 helicopters, more than 1,100 large surface warships, and more than 700 attack submarines.

According to a recent study of conventional disarmament, four-fifths of the total world's military expenditure is spent on conventional weapons and armed forces. Over 150 conflicts, involving conventional weapons, with a death toll of 20 million, have taken place.

Considering these self-evident facts can anyone doubt the threat of war posed to our societies. One thing is certain, according to Pierre Lellouche, author of The Future of War:

> "From now on nothing is going to be the same as in the past. A revolution is on the way, upsetting both war combat techniques, military doctrines, political and psychological balances. This revolution carries within it a new world strategic order which is gradually emerging from the chaos."

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

The former President of the United States, Richard Nixon, in his book The Real War stated:

"The Third World War started before the Second World War was over. Even while the allied armies were doing to death the Nazi forces in Europe, Stalin had his gaze firmly fixed on post-war objectives. This new war is not like the wars of the past; anyone who occupies a territory imposes his own social system. Each one imposes his own system as far as his army can range. It cannot be otherwise."

On 14 October last, Mr. Chairman, you clearly stated unambiguously:

"The General Assembly has adopted hundreds of resolutions on one aspect of disarmament or another; there have been proposals and counter-proposals in abundance; there have been countless statements, declarations and appeals. All have been to little avail." (A/C.1/40/PV.3, p. 6)

When reviewing the work of the Committee, Ambassador Souza de Silva, your predecessor, commented:

"The international climate is at its lowest point, and the anxiety expressed by some about the increase in the number of resolutions from year to year are due to the lack of progress on disarmament and the paralysis of bilateral and multilateral disarmament negotiations. The day when negotiations resume and make progress, I believe the number of resolutions is bound to decline when negotiations resume and move forward."

Does one perceive a gleam of hope? I hope so. May the meeting between Gorbachev and Reagan on 19 November 1985 in Geneva give the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission a new impetus, a new dynamic and positive approach to disarmament.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

It is difficult to forecast the results of those direct negotiations between the two super-Powers. However, my delegation believes that it is very much overdue, for a number of reasons.

In the Conference on Disarmament, while the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space has been set up after intensive consultations, which certainly represents progress in the consideration of substantive questions, nothing has yet been decided about the creation of ad hoc committees on items relating to a nuclear test ban, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters.

The same is true of the enlargement of the Conference's membership and proposals to improve the efficiency of the working of the Conference, the study of which has been postponed to the spring of 1986.

I now return to the nuclear test ban issue. My delegation believes that the conclusion of a treaty on a general and complete nuclear test ban would substantially limit the possibility of improving nuclear armaments, help reduce nuclear arsenals and contribute to the strengthening of the non-proliferation régime. My delegation has noted the decision taken by one nuclear weapon Power unilaterally to halt all nuclear explosions from 6 August 1985 to 1 January 1986. That moratorium will remain in force as long as the other nuclear super Power also refrains from carrying out nuclear explosions. The forthcoming meeting of the super Powers in Geneva will be an ideal opportunity for a definitive consensus to emerge on that proposal, particularly as such an agreement would promote their national interests and the vital interests of all the peoples of the world.

With regard to the prevention of nuclear war, including all the related issues, we regret to have to say that certain countries continue to oppose the creation of a subsidiary body to consider the question in depth, in accordance with the draft mandate presented by the Group of 21.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

As for chemical weapons, the delegation of Zaire congratulates the Ad Hoc Committee set up by the Conference on Disarmament, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Stanislaw Turbanski, of Poland, on having submitted to the Committee the preliminary framework of a chemical weapons convention. That draft convention is a useful tool which, when completed at subsequent meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee, will be able to govern the development, manufacture, stockpiling and destruction of chemical weapons. The convention will reaffirm the principles and objectives of the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925, whose 60th anniversary the Conference celebrated in Geneva.

I now turn to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Ad Hoc Committee under the chairmanship of Ambassador Saad Alfarargi, of Egypt, has explored the possibilities for the first time. In that respect, it recognized the use by some space Powers of reconnaissance and surveillance satellites to obtain information of vital strategic importance concerning countries with no means of controlling such information or having access to it. Instances have been reported of satellites having been used to support military operations against developing countries. That situation had significant implications for the security of the majority of countries, and showed a lack of recognition of the common interest of all mankind in the progress of the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, to use the wording of the 1966 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI)).

The work of the Ad Hoc Committee mandated with drawing up a comprehensive programme of disarmament began with a positive suggestion by its Chairman, Ambassador Garcia Robles, of Mexico, in which he looked forward to the completion of the drawing up of that programme during the 1985 session for presentation to the fortieth anniversary session of the General Assembly. But, as usual, the lack of

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

political will of certain countries has slowed down the progress of work on the matter to the point where it has become impossible to carry it out. My delegation continues to hope that at its forty-first session the General Assembly will at long last have the comprehensive programme of disarmament before it.

If there is one item my delegation cannot overlook it is that concerning the denuclearization of Africa. Despite the adoption of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa by the Organization of African Unity in 1964, South Africa has achieved a nuclear capacity, with the aid of its allies. At a time when the attention of the international community is fixed on the atrocities, State terrorism and barbarities of the white racist minority in South Africa, it would be most fitting if sanctions commensurate with the gravity of the horrors committed by that régime were considered by all the countries that maintain relations with that handful of terrorists, particularly in the nuclear sphere.

In conclusion, my delegation declares its support for the draft resolution on the holding in Paris in July 1986 of an international conference on the relationship between disarmament and development.

Mr. RIVERO ROSARIO (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation will deal today with agenda items concerning nuclear questions - specifically, the prevention of nuclear war, the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

If we asked one of the survivors of the bombs that fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 how much death and destruction they caused and what were the consequences of that tragedy, deliberately caused by man himself, and if we tried to discover his impression of what might be the results of using nuclear weapons today, taking into account their destructive potential, the existence of enormous stocks and the qualitative development of those means of mass annihilation accumulated over the past 40 years, there would undoubtedly be only one reply: mankind would annihilate itself several times over.

(Mr. Rivero Rosario, Cuba)

That is the conclusion not only of the victims of that sad episode, which began the nuclear arms race, but also of political leaders, scientists, military authorities, physicians, intellectuals and diverse sections of international public opinion. However, the world is continuing along a path from which, upon reaching the abyss, there will be no turning back. Of course, no one can doubt that there will be no possibility of repenting, of telling what happened, or drawing conclusions, because we shall all have ceased to exist, as a result of the nuclear explosion itself or because of its devastating consequences, including the nuclear winter.

Our top priority, therefore, should be to avoid a world conflagration, which would be nuclear. The top priority and concern of all political leaders and rulers today must be to work non-stop to avoid that war and to eliminate the weapons and means that might bring it about.

(Mr. Rivero Rosario, Cuba)

It is clear to all of us that, although every State must help to achieve this goal, the primary responsibility lies with those States which possess nuclear weapons, and among them with the two countries which possess them in the greatest numbers. Renunciation of the first use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a measure which would unquestionably contribute to the prevention of nuclear war. But only two nuclear-weapon States, China and the USSR, have undertaken such a commitment, while the United States and the other two nuclear Powers continue, despite the international appeal, to block the effective implementation of that measure.

The final and total prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests - an objective which has been promised since the adoption of the 1963 Moscow Treaty on a partial test ban, but which has again and again been put forward as a necessary and major contribution to halting qualitative improvement and growth of nuclear arsenals and to eliminating nuclear weapons, and as a basic element of the process towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control - has yet to become a reality which could make possible agreement on a general nuclear-weapon-test-ban treaty.

This has come up not only in the innumerable resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and other international forums, but also, to mention but a few of the more recent examples, in the Delhi Declaration of the Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Mexico, Sweden, the United Republic of Tanzania, Greece and India and in documents adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, both at its summit meetings and at its meetings of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, such as that held just two months ago at Luanda, the capital of Angola.

Bearing in mind this demand of the international community, we must acknowledge and welcome the measure adopted by the USSR unilaterally to suspend underground tests from 6 August this year to 1 January 1986, a moratorium which

(Mr. Rivero Rosario, Cuba)

will remain in effect so long as the United States, for its part, refrains from carrying out such explosions.

Thus, the next move is for the United States. Moreover, it must act in accordance with the obligations and commitments it has entered into in various international agreements and in declarations of intent on negotiations. Perhaps it will match this initiative, thus demonstrating the necessary political will. Perhaps it will decide not to suspend its testing, but it will thus show itself in the eyes of the international community to be the main element preventing the adoption of a total test-ban treaty. There is already evidence of this. Its position - or rather the retrogression of its position on this issue in the trilateral and multilateral negotiations - proves it.

My delegation believes that a freeze on nuclear arsenals at their present level as a step towards the reduction and subsequent elimination of nuclear weapons is another necessary measure. But, along with the great majority of the international community, we must express a feeling of reproach at the fact that no concrete measures have been adopted either to halt the nuclear arms race or to find solutions which could lead to reductions in that sphere.

In June 1979, when the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) was signed after intense efforts, it seemed that a new period was beginning, which could have borne fruit in connection with halting the arms race. But the scene today is a sombre one.

Since that time those important agreements have not been ratified, and, moreover, the nuclear spiral has intensified and we have all seen new additions to the nuclear catalogue as well as decisions and actions regarding the MX missiles, the B-1 bomber, the deployment in Europe of 572 medium-range Pershing 2 and cruise missiles, new and more modern Trident submarines, Midgetman missiles and so forth.

(Mr. Rivero Rosario, Cuba)

These have caused those who obviously feel their security threatened to take the logical countermeasures.

If that were not enough - and demonstrating how deeply rooted in the minds of military strategists, national security advisers and all other elements of the military-industrial complex is the false and mistaken notion that there will be a winner and a loser in a nuclear war - planning and experimentation is under way in the most dangerous adventure of recent times: the use of outer space as a new arena for the arms race. Names such as "strategic defence initiative" or strategic umbrella or shield are actually naive labels. "Star wars" - or, better, "star terror" - much better defines the new invention of the United States Administration.

My delegation joins all others in this Committee which have called insistently for all these nuclear questions to be tackled with due political will not by one but by all the parties, and for a serious and constructive negotiating position in the Conference on Disarmament, eliminating all the obstacles and ruses which have been used to avoid discussing these problems in the various ad hoc committees, which are merely intended to conceal interest in the development of new armament plans.

We trust that, rather than evading questions which are of the greatest importance for all countries and for mankind as a whole, the Geneva summit to be held in some two weeks' time will end in concrete results for us all.

One delegation, referring in this Committee to the work of the United Nations, stated that his Government's appreciation was tempered by the awareness that the past 40 years are a mere prologue. Judging by its acts and its lack of will, it is clear to my delegation and to many others that what it is really preparing is the epilogue of the United Nations and of mankind as a whole.

Mr. NEYCHEV (Bulgaria): This year's fortieth anniversary session of the General Assembly has confirmed that the maintenance of lasting peace and security requires further efforts by all States, that the cessation of the arms race should be pursued along all paths and that all types and systems of weapons based in outer space, in the air, on land or at sea should be the subject of limitation and reduction.

In the Declaration of the Political Consultative Committee of the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty adopted on 23 October 1985 in Sofia, the leaders of those States have once again reaffirmed that

> "There is no type of weapon that they are unwilling to limit, reduce or withdraw from their arsenals and destroy for ever under an agreement with the other States, while abiding by the principle of equality and equal security". (A/C.1/40/7, p. 8)

That is equally true as far as the question of curbing the naval arms race is concerned which, although it is relatively new on the United Nations agenda in the field of disarmament, has assumed a great political importance and become a significant integral part of efforts to avert nuclear war.

From time immemorial the world's seas and oceans have served as a means of peaceful communication among peoples. Today their importance is immensely greater both for international trade and as a repository of most valuable resources. The task is to ensure peaceful co-operation of peoples in the rational exploitation of seas and oceans. In essence, the approach of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the other socialist countries to the problems of using seas and oceans is that these problems should be solved exclusively by peceful means on the basis of multilateral co-operation of States and not by means of unilateral or other separate, sometimes arbitrary, actions.

The all-round development of international maritime navigation and transportation and the exploitation of maritime resources are possible only in

(Mr. Neychev, Bulgaria)

conditions of peace. For that reason, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the other socialist countries have repeatedly put forward proposals for the reduction of naval armaments and the limitation of naval activities and for reaching agreements on the extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans, especially to regions with the busiest international sea lanes or to areas of tensions and conflicts. The same motives have led the People's Republic of Bulgaria consistently to support the idea of turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace and the completion of the preparatory work for convening a conference on the subject in the first half of 1986, as well s the transformation of the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Practice has shown that given the political will even the most complex issues related to the peaceful uses of the world's seas and oceans can be successfully resolved. This is supported also by the conclusion in February 1971 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof.

The constructive proposals of the socialist countries are particularly timely since certain circles are increasing their naval armaments and trying to use the seas and oceans for military purposes. Vast regions of the world's seas and oceans that have been proclaimed "spheres of vital interest" have now become the scene of increasing naval presence and large-scale naval activities used as demonstrations of force and as an instrument to exert blackmail and pressure against sovereign States and for open armed interventions and acts of international terrorism, such as the mining of foreign ports and attacks against national assets on the high seas or in the air space above them.

The endless build-up of maritime might and the intensification of naval presence and activities, which are posing a direct threat to the security of many countries, is not the way to strengthen peace. We need honest, constructive and businesslike negotations leading to the conclusion of mutually acceptable

(Mr. Neychev, Bulgaria)

agreements in the field of naval armaments. As the Sofia Declaration of the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty pointed out:

> "The States represented in the session call once again for the holding of concrete negotiations with a view to reaching agreements... on curbing the race in sea-based armaments." (A/C.1/40/7, p. 8)

The many concrete proposals put forward by countries of various political orientations testify to the honest interest of countries in curtailing the military threat to mankind posed by the militarization of seas and oceans. These proposals are in keeping with the obligations of States for the maintenance of world peace and security as set forth in the Charter and other instruments of internatinal law which also contain an obligation to maintain internatinal security in seas and oceans.

With the adoption of General Assembly resolution 38/188 F, Member States have expressed justified concern at the growing military confrontation at sea, which has seriously aggravated regional tensions and the international situation as a whole, at the ever more frequent use of naval forces for threatening or using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States and at the adverse effects of the growing naval presence and the intensification of naval activities on peaceful navigation and the exploitation of maritime resources. As a sponsor of that resolution the People's Republic of Bulgaria is pleased to note that a number of States have communicated to the Secretary-General their views concerning the modalities for holding negotiations on limitation of naval activities and reduction of naval armaments. In this connection I should like also to emphasize that the individual and collective proposals the countries of the socialist community have put forward particularly for the purpose of lowering the level of naval confrontation at sea and curbing the naval arms race are still on the table. In welcoming the positive attitude of one of the nuclear-weapon States and a major naval Power - the Soviet Union - to the holding of such negotiations,

(Mr. Neychev, Bulgaria)

we should like to underline explicitly that the constructive participation of other nuclear-weapon States in the solution of this problem is a prerequisite for achieving positive results.

The consideration of the question of curbing the vaval arms race in the Disarmament Commission has proved useful from the viewpoint of its further elaboration. The discussion that took place with the participation of a number of States, as reflected in the relevant section of the Commission's report this year, has shown that further deliberations on the issue in an appropriate subsidiary organ of the Disarmament Commission could furnish the necessary conditions for agreeing on a concerted approach and identifying the areas of common interest with the aim of opening direct negotiations with the participation of all major naval Powers and other concerned States.

All proposals made heretofore, the views contained in the communications of Member States to the Secretary-General on this issue, working papers and any proposals still to be announced could represent major contributions in this respect. The same holds true regarding the essence of concrete measures which could be undertaken in the field of naval armaments and naval activities, as well as the ways and means of further work on this question.

I wish also to stress the Bulgarian delegation's view that now that the expert study relating to naval armaments has been published it is difficult to justify any further delay in opening concrete negotiations on curbing the naval arms race.

We consider that at this early stage States - particularly the major naval Powers - could address the possibility of reaching agreement on refraining from intensifying their naval activities in areas far from their own shores. It is especially necessary, in particular, to limit a naval presence in regions of conflicts and tensions.

(Mr. Neychev, Bulgaria)

The agreement on and the extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans would be of substantial importance in avoiding conflict situations and in strengthening the security of international sea lanes.

A businesslike and concrete consideration in the Disarmament Commission of such preliminary steps, however modest they may be, and also of all other views and proposals would create the prerequisites for gradually proceeding to negotiations on the significant issues directly related to naval armaments.

(Mr. Neychev, Bulgaria)

As I have already mentioned, all major naval Powers and other States concerned should take part in those negotiations. One possibility is that the negotiations could be held in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. The possibility of having separate multilateral negotiations on this set of issues should also be considered. Of course, the holding of multilateral negotiations should not exclude or hamper the discussion of those questions on a bilateral basis as well.

We should also make full use of the opportunities offered by the regional approach to the limitation and reduction of naval activities and naval armaments.

In conclusion, I should like to state that the delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is well aware of the complexity of the issues under consideration. However, it continues to believe that mutually acceptable solutions can be achieved only through negotiation. We should like once again to express our hope that all States will approach the problem under discussion in a business-like and constructive manner and thus contribute to eliminating the danger of nuclear war and to ensuring lasting peace and security. We also hope that the draft resolution we will submit under this item will receive the necessary understanding and support.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Today my delegation would like to refer in its statement to the World Disarmament Campaign.

Discussions in the First Committee have shown that many delegations regard the implementation of this important international action as one of the major accomplishments of the United Nations, and we entirely share that view.

The Soviet delegation has thoroughly studied the report submitted by the Secretary-General on the World Disarmament Campaign, document A/40/443. We note with satisfaction the work of the United Nations Secretariat within the framework

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

of the Campaign. We wish to emphasize that in 1985 this Campaign was enriched by new measures designed to enhance its effectiveness, and ensure that it had a broader impact and greater publicity. We are convinced that the impact of United Nations activities connected with the Campaign could be further increased if they were directed towards the development of close co-operation with the largest and most representative organizations comprising peace-loving public opinion. It is our hope that the United Nations will continue to serve as a useful instrument for the mobilization of public opinion in support of peace and disarmament. That is particularly important in connection with the proclamation of 1986 as the International Year of Peace. As was noted in resolution A/40/L.6, adopted on 24 October 1985 on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, the International Year of Peace offers an opportunity to Governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations and others to express the common aspiration of all peoples for peace. In that same resolution, the General Assembly called upon "all peoples to join with the United Nations in resolute efforts to safeguard peace and the future of humanity".

The scope and manifold aspects of the measures to be carried out by the United Nations in 1986 within the framework of the World Disarmament Campaign and the International Year of Peace have considerable implications, such as the need for greater co-ordination of the efforts of all the Secretariat departments concerned.

A role of considerable importance in the mobilization of international public opinion for disarmament is played by the annual holding of Disarmament Week on the basis of the initiative of the Mongolian People's Republic. Experience with the organization of the Week in various countries clearly shows that it plays a useful role in increasing support for disarmament goals, as can be seen from the report of the Secretary-General in document A/40/552.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

We consider it important not just to support those activities connected with the implementation of the Campaign which have already become traditional, but also to welcome new ones. Specifically, the idea of declaring, under United Nations auspices, 6 August as Hiroshima Day has been widely entertained so that the tribute paid to the memory of the victims of the tragedy suffered by that city might serve to mobilize public opinion in the fight to avert a nuclear catastrophe and to bring about disarmament. The Soviet Union considers that the tragedy of Hiroshima must never be allowed to be repeated and is taking practical steps to ensure that it does not happen. Our unilateral moratorium on all nuclear explosions has been in force since 6 August 1985, the anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima.

The idea of proclaiming 6 August as Disarmament Day is also very much alive and active; it was presented by the Japanese Foreign Minister, Mr. Sonoda in 1978 in the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament. This was confirmed by the extent of the anti-war and anti-nuclear movement in Japan and other countries during August of this year, the fortieth anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Soviet Union, for its part, would be prepared to support the proposals of the Japanese delegation and other delegations aimed at implementing this idea of the Japanese Foreign Minister.

The Soviet Union would repeat what it has said on many occasions in the past concerning the importance of conducting the World Disarmament Campaign as a method of stimulating the activities of all those who support peace on earth and getting people of good will to raise their voices in support of the adoption of resolute measures to improve the international situation. The danger of a nuclear disaster has made a sinister intrusion on the lives of peoples and States and has naturally caused alarm about the future of the world.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The attention of politicians, scientists, physicians, publicists and broad public opinion of various countries has been riveted on the problem of the prevention of war. Today one can without exaggeration say that the awareness of world public opinion of the calamitous consequences of a nuclear war for mankind has caused a decisive shift in mass psychology which, in turn, is promoting the development of a powerful anti-war movement. That movement unites a broad spectrum of social forces of all people of good will who understand that the most important thing today is to preserve civilization as such and to fight for the most basic human right, namely, the right to life. When we are talking about life on earth, differences of a political or ideological nature recede in the face of a common determination to preserve the peace.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

It is important that this resolution of the broad masses of world public opinion should be reflected in the policy of States and in daily foreign policy actions. In other words, it should act as an important factor in international relations at the present time. We see in this the profound sense and humanistic principle of the World Disarmament Campaign being implemented through the United Nations. A clear example of the acknowledgement of the contribution of the anti-war movement to public opinion in favour of the strengthening of peace was provided by the recent award of the Nobel Peace Prize to International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. Like many other delegations, we welcomed the tribute thus paid to the work of that organization.

The basic demands of the world public, so that we may solve the cardinal problems of our age, are the following: the prevention of nuclear war; prevention of the spread of the arms race to new spheres, particularly space; renunciation by all States of the first use of nuclear weapons; the freezing of nuclear arsenals and the shift to their substantial reduction, leading to their complete elimination; the halting of all nuclear-weapon tests; the preservation of the environment for the present inhabitants of the earth and for future generations; and the observance by States of international agreements on the limitation of the arms race.

The World Disarmament Campaign has certainly made itself felt in this because in a relatively short period - only three and a half years - it has become an important instrument for co-operation in the cause of peace and opposition to war. The Soviet Union not only welcomes the World Disarmament Campaign but has made a considerable contribution to its implementation, including a financial contribution. The Soviet Union was one of the first States to make a substantial contribution to the Campaign's Trust Fund.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

We took an active part in the preparation and holding of a regional conference on Soviet territory - in Leningrad in June last year. It was attended by representatives of more than 50 national non-governmental organizations of Europe, the United States and Canada, as well as of a number of inter-governmental organizations. The exchange of views at that conference helped strengthen co-operation between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations in the sphere of the elimination of the nuclear threat and the mobilization of public opinion to fight for the preservation and strengthening of peace.

I am sure that representatives will also be duly impressed by the fact that at the present time, within the framework of the World Disarmament Campaign, preparations are under way for another international conference of non-governmental organizations from the countries of Europe and North America, which will be devoted to the contribution of the United Nations to the prevention of war and the preservation of international security. This conference will be held in the Soviet Union in May of next year and resources from the Soviet contribution to the World Disarmament Campaign Trust Fund will be used for the purpose.

The Soviet delegation wishes, in its statement today, to inform the members of the Committee about the development of the World Disarmament Campaign in the Soviet Union. There is not another country in the world that has had to bear such grievous human and material losses through war as the Soviet Union. It is precisely for this reason that the struggle for peace and the World Disarmament Campaign have struck such a responsive chord among Soviet citizens.

We note with satisfaction that Soviet peace fighters are playing a leading role in the world anti-war movement,. I shall simply give a few figures on the most important actions taken by the Soviet committee for the defence of peace and other non-governmental organizations since the last session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The anti-war activities of the Soviet public in disarmament week in October 1984 were given very widespread dissemination and publicity. Within the framework of the week, the Soviet supporters of peace held more than 100,000 events involving 53 million people. It has become a tradition to observe every May in the Soviet Union the "Month for action against the threat of nuclear war", which has become a truly popular manifestation of the will of the Soviet peoples for peace. This year, the fortieth anniversary of the victory over Hitlerite fascism and Japanese militarism, the May "month" in the Soviet Union constituted a truly national referendum in favour of the strengthening of peace, when 93 million people took part in various anti-war rallies, marches and demonstrations.

For Soviet non-governmental organizations an important event in the year involving the supporters of peace was the Twelfth World Festival of Youth and Students, held in Moscow from 27 July to 3 August. As is well known, more than 20,000 delegates from 150 countries assembled there. The slogan of the festival, "For anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship", brought together representatives of the most diverse persuasions and views. Young emissaries from the five continents held a constructive and comprehensive exchange of views on ways to increase mutual understanding and strengthen unity in the fight against the threat of nuclear war for peace, the security of peoples and economic and social progress.

In August of this year in our country there was a week for action to prohibit nuclear armaments and for solidarity with the victims of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This took place under the auspices of the World Peace Council. Throughout the Soviet Union thousands of demonstrations and rallies were held involving many millions of Soviet citizems.

A distinctive feature of that Week was the broad participation of foreign delegations. For example, in a number of towns of the Soviet Union meetings

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

devoted to the struggle to halt nuclear tests were held in which 300 representatives of Japanese public opinion participated. In Kiev, Japanese emissaries took part in a rally involving 25,000 people at the memorial complex erected to the memory of Soviet citizens victims of the Hitlerites. An appeal was made for a comprehensive nuclear-test ban and the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

On 2 September the actions of Soviet partisans of peace wazs further developed during the traditional "lesson of peace", which was held in all the schools in the country. For the 45 million schoolchildren of our country the lesson of peace has become a lesson for the involvement of the young generation in concern for the fate of mankind. To that end an essay competition for schoolchildren on the theme "I vote for peace" was held and 70 million Soviet boys and girls took part.

The facts, which it would take me some time to list, convincingly show that the World Disarmament Campaign is considered by Soviet citizens to be of great importance.

The Soviet Union will continue to provide comprehensive support for United Nations efforts within the framework of the World Disarmament Campaign to promote solutions to the cardinal problems of our time.

In conclusion, we would like to report on some concrete action taken by the Soviet Union to support United Nations work in the field of disarmament.

First, our delegation is authorized to state that the Soviet Union has decided to make a voluntary contribution to the fund for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in the amount of 200,000 roubles for 1986. This decision was taken in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 39/148 H and is prompted by our interest in the establishment of a sound financial base for the successful operation of this United Nations body, which undertakes research into disarmament problems.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

We are further authorized to declare that participants in the United Nations Programme of fellowship on disarmament will be invited to visit the Soviet Union in 1986. A programme will be provided for them which will, of course, include meetings in Soviet public, scientific and civic organizations working in the field of disarmament.

Mr. RAHMAN (Bangladesh): My delegation wishes to address itself to agenda item 69 regarding the relationship between disarmament and development. The close and direct relationship between disarmament and development is universally recognized. The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament clearly established that link and underlined how scarce resources were continuously being diverted towards the armaments race, resulting in a universal social opportunity cost. The conclusions of the Thorsson Report on this question have reaffirmed this fact in no uncertain terms. The current global expenditure on armaments which is estimated to have reached the trillion dollar mark, seriously affects the development prospects of all nations, both developed and developing. As a least developed country, Bangladesh has particularly felt that the huge material, technical and human resources which are being wasted on such destructive purposes as the armaments race, could be more gainfully used to eliminate poverty, disease and hunger and promote development and co-operation all over the world.

In this connection, we completely share the views of the Secretary-General when he stated in his annual report

> "We must push for practical measures for multilateral disarmament, including regional plans, bearing in mind the link between disarmament and development." (A/40/1, p. 8)

Paragraph 35 of the Final Document is most relevant in this regard:

> "... resources released as a result of the implementation of disarmament measures should be devoted to the economic and social development of all nations and contribute to the bridging of the economic gap between developed and developing countries." (A/S-10/4, para. 35)

The Government of Bangladesh, bearing this in mind, has whole-heartedly supported General Assembly resolution 39/160, on the convening of an international conference on disarmament and development in Paris next year.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

Bangaldesh firmly supports disarmament linked with development as one of the foremost goals of the international community. In its commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons and the achievement of general and complete disarmament, Bangladesh will continue to work actively in the United Nations and other disarmament negotiating forums to promote vigorously the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

In this connection, my delegation would like to call the Committee's attention to the Secretary-General's report on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and military expenditures. This report also has unambiguously proved that scarce resources are continuously being misused in the armaments race, thus depriving the world's needy poor. The huge consumption of material, technical and human resources for potentially destructive purposes is in sombre contrast to the want and poverty in which two thirds of the population live. As a peaceful and stable world order depends on narrowing the gap between the developed and the developing countries, it is to be expected that practical measures be taken to achieve both disarmament and development. The economic and social consequences of the arms race are so detrimental that its continuation is incompatible with the implementation of an international order based on justice, equity and co-operation. The recent meeting to conduct the mid-term review of the Substantial New Programme of Action in Geneva is a case in point; although certain targets were fixed for narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor, particularly the least developed countries, at the Paris meeting in 1981, no significant change could take place in this regard because of the non-availability of resources. The mid-term review on that Programme has adopted certain recommendations whose implementation would be made much easier if disarmament measures were implemented.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

The Bangladesh delegation looks forward to playing a constructive role in the Conference on disarmament and development in order to ensure a successful conclusion of that meeting in Paris next year.

Mr. ISSACHAROFF (Israel): Mr. Chairman, as this is the first substantive statement of the delegation of Israel, I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election to your high and eminent office and express our appreciation of your skilled and competent direction of this Committee's deliberations. I should also like to offer our best wishes to the other officers of the Committee.

Over the years, Israel has consistently supported genuine and effective measures designed to promote disarmament on both a global and regional scale. Disarmament has been defined by an academic observer, basing himself on Clausewitz's famous dictum as the: "... continuation of politics by a reduction of military means".

It would seem, however, that the efforts made on a multilateral level actually to reduce the military means, have generally reflected the continuation of politics to secure political or strategic advantage between States. The cause of disarmament has thus become embroiled in political conflicts instead of being fostered as one of the cardinal factors in their elimination.

The essential causes of the arms race - fear, suspicion, and insecurity - feed on each other, culminating in the very tension which increases the likelihood of war and further human misery. The late Raymond Aron eloquently depicted this vicious circle when, in 1968, he wrote:

> "... enemies by definition are prisoners one of the other, neither can trust the other, neither has the power to independently determine the volume of the forces he will engage, since the other can always outbid him."

(Mr. Issacharoff, Israel)

While the multilateral or global approach may provide essential normative guidelines in terms of promoting disarmament, it is the view of my delegation that a genuine and constructive regional dialogue dispelling mistrust and promoting peace can provide the only reasonable solution for the implementaion of significant disarmament measures based on directly binding and reciprocal commitments between the Governments concerned. It is only by adopting this course of action that we may foresee an end to the "auction of death" depicted by Aron.

That is of particular relevance to the region of the Middle East. Given the abundance of mistrust and suspicion, the absence of diplomatic relations between States, with the resulting lack of open channels for normal State intercourse, the consequent tensions, conflicts and wars are hardly surprising. Multilateral conventions in the field of disarmament, which do not necessarily imply direct and reciprocal legal constraints and obligations between States, cannot be effectively superimposed on such a region.

Moreover, certain disarmament measures do not apply in instances in which a state of war exists or, alternatively, express reservations are made to conventions declaring that accession to the instrument in question does not entail recognition of a particular State Party. This has unfortunately been done a number of times by certain Arab States in relation to Israel.

All these factors are of paramount importance, for an essential component and precondition of any military disarmament must be clear and unequivocal willingness first of all to engage in political disarmament. In short, should States not be willing to enter into direct and free negotiaions on a regional or bilateral basis on account of their political reservations, those exact political reservations will surely nullify and make ineffective any multilateral or indirect measure of disarmament.

(Mr. Issacharoff, Israel)

The regional negotiations to which I refer could constitute an important initial step towards the establishment of the confidence so sorely needed by the States in the Middle East. Israel feels that we would not be serving the interest of any cause or project if we allowed negotiations to be carried out by proxies or through intermediaries. On 3 June 1981 the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed a letter to the Secretary-General proposing the establishment of regional disarmament commissions made up of all States of the various regions. Their task would be to examine ideas and proposals in order to arrive at intergovernmental regional agreements on arms control and reduction. It may be soundly assumed that a smaller group of States which share certain regional interests might find it easier to arrive at a common agreement than would all the members of the United Nations simultaneously. Israel's proposal still stands, and it is our earnest hope that it will be acted upon before more valuable time is lost.

Regional dialogue also assumes a greater sense of urgency in view of three major disarmament challenges we face in the Middle East. The first is the substantial reduction of conventional arms in the Middle East. In this regard, Israel is deeply concerned by the accelerated supply of large quantities of modern and sophisticated weapons to a number of belligerent Arab States. That stockpile of killing power by those régimes can only serve further to undermine any chance for peace.

The second challenge relates to the eradication of chemical weapons, which have been used repeatedly in the Iran-Iraq war. Deadly gases have been used in that prolonged and bloody conflict, in total disregard, and, I may add, contempt, of solemn international legal undertakings contained in the Geneva Protocol of 1925 forbidding and outlawing the use of such warfare. It is ironic that the sixtieth anniversary of that Protocol should be commemorated in such a manner. That

(Mr. Issacharoff, Israel)

atrocious and repeated use of chemical weapons obliges us all to redouble our efforts to arrive at an early solution to this complex problem. Now that the genie is indeed out of the bottle, no State can remain indifferent to the grave implications of this development.

The third challenge, and perhaps the most important, remains in the field of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel, Mr. Yitzhak Shamir, reiterated to the General Assembly on 2 October 1985 Israel's commitment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, when he stated:

> "we believe that the most effective and credible barrier to proliferation in so sensitive an area as the Middle East is a freely and directly negotiated convention establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone, based on a system of obligations binding on all States concerned. Israel stands ready to begin such negotiations without delay or preconditions." (A/40/PV.18, p. 86)

During the course of the Committee's debates Israel has been referred to on occasion by various representatives in a manner which does not become the generally distinguished level of debate in this forum. My delegation has exercised deliberate restraint in this regard, and has chosen not to become party to tedious and banal name-calling and other exchanges, which can serve no useful purpose, in view of the important tasks which face the Committee. Those representatives have attempted to transform this body, designed to further the cause of disarmament, into a body which becomes another forum for the advancement of political warfare against my country. Their rhetoric and unfounded allegations plainly demonstrate that their self-righteousness is neither on the side of peace nor mutual understanding, but, rather, on the side of those forces standing between this body and the achievement of its noble goals. My delegation does, however, reserve the right to make its views known on these issues at an appropriate time.

(Mr. Issacharoff, Israel)

The delegation of Israel associates itself with the numerous representatives of other delegations who have expressed their hope that the forthcoming meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev will indeed lay the foundation for constructive and substantial progress in the reduction of all nuclear forces. It is hoped that such progress between the United States and the Soviet Union will, indeed, be fostered to ease regional tensions and encourage conciliation in the many other conflicts in the world. It would also be apposite that this renewed dialogue similarly inspire the timely diverison of the world's rare resources from the making of weapons to third world development, education and the feeding of starving peoples - thus finally fulfilling the vision of the ancient Hebrew prophet Isaiah that swords be beaten into ploughshares.

Ultimately, each of us must continue to pursue the attainment of peace, without which disarmament will remain an idealistic and unattainable goal. The Committee should concentrate on that objective if it is to remain instrumental in removing from the world the scourge of war. Even knowing the unavoidable limitations of a body such as this Committee in altering the course of events, we should be able to do more than quibble over the wording of repetitive draft resolutions, which at times reinforce intransigence rather than encourage concrete confidence-building measures which the Committee could initiate.

It is regrettable that this body has not as yet achieved the objectives with the attainment of which it was charged, and that, in addition, a great deal of time and numerous opportunities have been irretrievably lost. The true tragedy, however, will be if we, bearing in mind the lessons of the past, do not begin to reassess and re-evaluate the common interest in human terms - rather than in the terms of the narrow self-interest which has plagued the cause of disarmament to this day.

Mr. CESAR (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The Czechoslovak delegation would like to dwell on one of the most topical items on our agenda - the problem of the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons - and to state our views on ways and means of achieving that objective.

Chemical weapons are among the most dangerous methods of mass destruction after nuclear weapons; indeed, they are the next most dangerous means. Therefore, there must be no delay in implementing a comprehensive ban on such weapons and their complete destruction. The increased production of chemical weapons and their qualitative improvement adds a dangerous new spiral to the arms race and increases the risk of a nuclear conflict. That is a cause of concern and alarm, particularly in the light of the growing role of such weapons in attempts to upset the existing military strategic balance.

In that regard, it is well known that in the past few years a number of concrete steps have been taken. After the decision by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1979 to arm Western Europe with medium-range nuclear weapons, together with certain other measures designed to raise the level of military confrontation, related to the establishment and deployment of new systems of strategic and offensive space weapons, the United States Congress decided around the middle of this year to appropriate funds for the production of a particularly dangerous type of binary chemical weapon.

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

At the same time, plans were announced to deploy binary weapons in Europe. The latest decision is not the first deliberate step towards the creation of a new generation of chemical weapons making use of the new binary principle. It is no coincidence that, after 12 rounds of encouraging bilateral Soviet-United States negotiations on a joint proposal for the prohibition of chemical weapons, they were broken off unilaterally by the United States in June 1980 - the very month in which the United States Congress appropriated funds for the construction of a binary weapons plant. Preparations for the manufacture of binary weapons were approved by a Senate decision in May 1982.

It is important to stress in this connection that existing arsenals of chemical weapons are by no means negligible. According to estimates in the United States, there are 150,000 tons of toxic chemicals and 3 million individual shells. It is well known that between 2 and 4 per cent of that amount is stockpiled on the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany. And this refers only to substances that attack the nervous system and are deployed in the immediate vicinity of our frontier.

Specialists in the Pentagon and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have never doubted the tactical, operational and strategic criteria for the use of such weapons in Europe. The following was stated in the 7 October 1983 edition of the Frankfurter Rundschau of the Federal Republic of Germany:

> "If in the event of a military conflict the United States were to use the toxic agents stockpiled in Europe, the number of dead would amount to approximately 40 million".

Naturally, if the more advanced binary weapons were used, that number would be considerably greater.

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

The use of toxic chemical agents would have extremely serious consequences for the civilian population; according to some estimates, in the event of a conflict involving the use of chemical weapons the ratio between the number of soldiers and civilians killed would be 1 to 20. The policy of developing chemical warfare agents runs directly counter to the words of former President Franklin Roosevelt, who in 1943 described the use of chemical weapons as unlawful.

The cause of peace and security for all peoples demands that efforts should be further intensified to negotiate the complete prohibition of chemical weapons, the elimination of stockpiles of such weapons, and an appropriate international treaty. This is a most urgent problem, which has been awaiting a solution for 60 years - the 60 years which have elapsed since the adoption of the Geneva Protocol on the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare.

Czechoslovakia has resolutely and consistently advocated the prohibition of these weapons, their complete removal from the military arsenals of all States, and their physical destruction. We are convinced that only this radical solution can provide all peoples with a sufficiently reliable guarantee that these barbarous weapons will not be used in future. For our part, we and other socialist countries have made concrete proposals to this end within the framework of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, where the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons occupies an important place.

In our opinion, the solution to this question lies in the Soviet proposal on the basic provisions of a treaty on the prohibition of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction, which was submitted to the General Assembly in 1982 at its second special session devoted to disarmament. This has been supplemented by additional constructive measures

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

relating to the on-site verification of the destruction of stockpiles of chemical weapons.

Experience of the work of the Geneva Conference in this area shows clearly that, at least from the technical standpoint, the necessary prerequisites for progress have been met. That is also clear from the results of this year's meetings of the Geneva Conference's Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, which has embarked upon the task of drafting the text of a suitable treaty. This reveals the genuine interest of a large number of delegations at the Geneva Conference in the preparation of a just international legal instrument, in accordance with the principles of reciprocity, equal obligations and undiminished security for all parties. Unfortunately, to our deep regret, the achievement of real progress and tangible results in this regard continues to be blocked by the deliberate creation of obstacles. It is essential that, at the current session of the General Assembly, our Committee should take decisions that would substantially speed up the work of the Conference on Disarmament on the text of a treaty.

My country, located in the very heart of Europe, is deeply alarmed by the presence of chemical weapons in the densely-populated territory of Europe. We feel that this poses a serious threat to all States and peoples of our continent.

At a time when the general and complete prohibition of chemical weapons remains the subject of complex and prolonged negotiations, we are of the view that it is essential to take certain parallel steps at the regional level. An important contribution to the creation of the conditions necessary for the conclusion of a comprehensive treaty could be made through the gradual establishment of chemical-weapon-free zones in Europe. That would make it possible to reduce substantially the risk of chemical war on our continent, proceed to the reduction of arsenals of chemical weapons, and to strengthen security and mutual trust.

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

The proposal addressed on 10 January 1984 by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty to the States members of NATO on the need to rid Europe of chemical weapons is based precisely on that idea. And it is this idea that also underlies the joint proposal of the Governments of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the German Democratic Republic addressed on 12 September this year to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany concerning the establishment in Europe of a chemical-weapon-free zone, initially covering the territory of those three States.

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

As a State sharing a common frontier with the Federal Republic of Germany, Czechoslovakia intends to work to ensure that, in the Central European zone, joint concrete steps should be taken to guarantee peace and security by means of the limitation and reduction of armaments, including chemical weapons.

We are convinced that the proposal submitted by the Governments of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the German Democratic Republic can provide impetus leading to the conclusion of an appropriate agreement which, in turn, would lead to the elimination of chemical weapons from the territories of States directly on the demarcation line between the two military-political alliances. At the negotiations on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, which we have proposed to the Federal Republic of Germany should begin, we are prepared to submit proposals on a whole series of related issues.

We also wish to emphasize that we do not intend by this initiative to supplant the Geneva negotiations. Far from it, we aim thereby to support efforts to prohibit chemical weapons world wide. The conclusion of a regional agreement would be a first real step towards that end. Of course, in the case of a global solution, a good step would have been replaced by a better one. We consider as incorrect the artificial confrontation between a global solution of various regional problems and regional measures. We feel that such arguments are unfounded. We also do not think that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world contradicts efforts to secure nuclear disarmament generally or to devote attention to global solutions to these problems.

In our opinion it is essential to approach our proposal on the establishment of a chemical-weapon free zone in Europe in that spirit. The representative of the Federal Republic of Germany has already referred to the matter from the rostrum of the General Assembly, and we hope that our proposal will in due course provide

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

impetus for other interested European States and prompt them to become involved in negotiations on the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Europe.

In this connection we wish to draw the Committee's attention also to the far-reaching proposal of the member countries of the Warsaw Treaty, made a few days ago in Sofia, for the start of negotiations aimed at elaborating an international agreement on the non-proliferation of chemical weapons as a whole. As the Sofia Declaration points out, such an agreement would help bring about the complete prohibition of chemical weapons, and the member countries of the Warsaw Treaty are prepared to proceed to its elaboration.

As in the past, we are ready to engage in businesslike negotiations on all reasonable, realistic and constructive initiatives of other States designed to prohibit and eliminate chemical weapons. This is true of all proposals based on principles of reciprocity, equality and undiminished security for all sides.

As a participant in, and one of the initiators of, the conclusion of the Convention on the prohibition of bacteriological weapons, Czechoslovakia holds the view that such a convention is of the greatest importance as a first step towards genuine disarmament. It is thanks to that Convention that one of the types of weapons of mass destruction has been banned and eliminated. The ten-year existence of the Convention has shown convincingly that it has reliably promoted the purpose of ridding mankind of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons.

It is our view that it is essential further to strengthen the Convention and broaden the number of its participants. We are convinced that the review conference for the Convention, to be held next year in Geneva, will reach the same conclusions. In this connection we are disturbed by a certain tendency to revise this important document - a tendency which, in our opinion, is quite unfounded. We believe there are no grounds whatsoever for asserting that the mechanism establishment by the Convention for purpose of verification is ineffective or

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

inadequate. Such measures could only undermine this exceptionally important document, thereby weakening the entire system of international agreements on arms limitation and disarmament.

With regard to the questions to which we have referred, the political will of all States to take part in good faith in the elaboration and implementation of concrete measures and the attainment of practical agreements is of decisive significance. We hope that it will be manifested with regard to the solution of the acute problem of the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles and, indeed, of all types of weapons of mass destruction.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to remind members that we are drawing closer to Thursday, 7 November, which, in accordance with our programme of work, is the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions under disarmament items 48 to 69 and 145.

It would be highly appreciated, therefore, if delegations would kindly submit their draft resolutions, especially those containing financial implications, to the Secretariat for processing as soon as possible. This would certainly facilitate the work of the Committee and give enough time for members of the Committee to conduct necessary consultations and, if they wish to do so, make their comments before the Committee proceeds to act on the draft resolutions.

I should also like to invite members who are sponsors of draft resolutions kindly to introduce them, if possible, even during the current week.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.