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Chairman: Mr. LECHUGA HEVIA (Cuba)
(Vice-Chairman)

later: Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia) (Chairman)

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

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STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia): I had the honour to serve as Chairman of the Group of Experts, now dissolved, that assisted the Secretary-General in carrying out the study on the naval arms race, and I should like today to avail myself of the privilege to share with the First Committee some of my thoughts on the report containing that study, in document A/40/535.

Over the past two weeks this chamber has heard many quotations on the subject of disarmament. I do not apologize for adding another, for it is one that has particular relevance to the general subject of the naval study. It reads as follows:

"Productive labour is staggering under an economic burden too heavy to be borne unless the present vast public expenditures are greatly reduced. It is idle to look for stability, or the assurance of social justice, or the security of peace, while wasteful and unproductive outlays deprive effort of its just reward and defeat the reasonable expectation of progress. The enormous disbursements in the rivalries of armaments manifestly constitute the greater part of the encumbrance upon enterprise and national prosperity; and avoidable or extravagant expense of this nature is not only without economic justification but is a constant menace to the peace of the world rather than an assurance of its preservation."

That statement is 64 years old. It is taken from the formal invitation extended by President Harding of the United States on 11 August 1921 to what became known as the Washington Conference, which led to the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

It is regrettable and ironic that the situation described by President Harding in 1921 does not appear to have changed very much as we survey the armaments scene in 1985, the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. Wasteful and unproductive outlays on arms continue while the needs of social and economic progress become ever more acute.

When the Chairperson of the Swedish Disarmament Commission, Ambassador Mrs. Maj-Brit Theorin, introduced the subject of the study to the First Committee in October 1983, she stated that Sweden had proposed a broad study on various aspects of the naval arms race in order to provide valuable information and give impetus to disarmament and confidence-building measures in the naval field. My country was one of those that were happy to co-sponsor the Swedish initiative that led to resolution 38/188 G.

The resolution set a broad mandate for the study and in addressing its task the Group took care to deal with every aspect. It is the Group's hope that the report will be seen as a serious effort to bring together many disparate aspects of the naval scene and to present a reasoned and non-polemic account of the present naval situation. The report contains, I believe, enough information to give a useful picture not only of naval forces and naval arms systems but also of the resources of the sea and the vital importance they represent to the human race.

The report does not pretend to be a finely argued treatise on naval strategy or naval operations. Neither is it simply a catalogue of detailed statistics; on the contrary, the data given are very basic and are taken from openly published sources. It is intended to serve no more than an illustrative purpose so that the reader who may be unacquainted with naval affairs may readily form a general impression of various naval force capabilities.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

As required by the mandate, attention has been given to the aspect of maritime nuclear-weapon systems. How many of us, I wonder, are really aware of the fact that over 40 per cent of the world's strategic nuclear missiles are sea-borne, and that there are probably over 7,000 strategic nuclear missiles distributed among the navies of the five nuclear-weapon States, by far the large majority being on board the ballistic missile submarines of the two major military Powers. There are also tactical nuclear weapons and, now arriving in operational service, there are sea-launched cruise missiles, with nuclear or conventional warheads, that will make the situation even more complex and achievement of verifiable measures of arms limitation and disarmament more difficult.

In the report the Group recognizes the reasons why many States have developed naval forces even though many of those navies are small. In this uncertain world nations seek to ensure their security and protect their interests, and for many this has included the development of naval forces. Furthermore, a naval capability can have many useful and peaceful applications as well as having a primary function in time of war. The Group also accords great weight to the significant impact in the future of the United Nations Convention on the law of the sea. In chapter V of the report the Group attempts to set out the provisions of the law of the sea as they may affect maritime activities and naval operations. The concept of the exclusive economic zone represents the most important development for many coastal States and will bring significant areas of what have hitherto been high seas into the field of national jurisdiction. In turn, this is likely to bring added naval responsibilities to such States and in many instances a further need to develop naval capabilities. Pertaining to arms control and limitations there are many other treaties, agreements and declarations in existence that contain provisions having a bearing on circumstances at sea. In chapter V the Group has described in readable form the major elements of that maritime legal context.

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In a sense the first five chapters of the report set the scene. It is in the remaining three chapters that the Group of Experts makes political evaluations and discusses some possibilities for action. The political implications for security and the peaceful uses of the seas are brought together in chapter VI. In chapter VII the report presents a compilation of possible measures of disarmament and confidence building that have been suggested in recent years and offers some axioms for the discussion of arms reduction and disarmament in the maritime domain.

In the report's final chapter the Group of Experts draws several significant conclusions of a general nature. While recognizing the traditional freedoms of the high seas, the Group observes that the proliferation of nuclear weapons at sea, in particular the aspect of geographical dispersion of such weapons, will give rise to mounting concern. The Group recognizes that navies have legitimate parts to play in the exercise by States of the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence, but the development of naval capabilities has become a competitive accumulation and qualitative refinement with a momentum of its own. It is this aspect that constitutes the naval arms race and, as such, is part of the global arms race.

In the report's concluding paragraphs, two basic objectives for action are identified. First, achievement by negotiation of effective measures of nuclear disarmament at sea and measures to achieve security and stability at significantly lower levels of conventional naval arms and armed forces. Such measures must be considered in the overall context of halting and reversing the arms race in general.

The second objective is of a different nature. Year by year the world becomes more interdependent. Year by year the demands of an ever-increasing world population exert a greater pressure on the world's resources. The growing complexity of offshore activities will call for much improved national and international management arrangements if marine resources are to be exploited in a

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rational and orderly manner to the benefit of mankind. New resources, new developments, new activities, new responsibilities - all will demand more co-ordinated maritime policies, administrative machinery and policing capabilities. Within a framework of improved international security there is much that might be done by naval ships and aircraft, and by the experienced maritime States to assist, without interfering, in the peaceful uses of the sea for the benefit of humanity.

I would in this context in particular wish to draw the attention of members of the First Committee to the penultimate paragraph of the report. I quote again:

"It has been said that without development there will be no peace, and without peace there will be no development. Security in the maritime environment is therefore not just military in nature, but includes such other facets as food security, resource security, job security and ocean management security." (A/40/535, para. 325)

It is positive measures in these areas that the world needs, hand in hand with positive measures in halting and reversing the wasteful and unproductive outlays on arms which, to recall the words of President Harding - which I quoted before - deprive effort of its just reward and defeat the reasonable expectation of progress.

It has been an honour for me and for my country to have been elected by the experts to be Chairman of the Group. I wish on this occasion to pay tribute to the members of the Group for their knowledge, their wisdom and their breadth of vision. To widen the Group's awareness of the issues involved, it commissioned papers from a number of authoritative individuals and institutions and invited them to take part in seminars which we found to be of great value. I wish also, on behalf of the Group, to extend to them our deep appreciation. Finally I would like to express the Group's recognition and appreciation of the professional and technical knowledge of the two members of the Secretariat so closely involved with

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the work, Mr. Derek Boothby of the Department for Disarmament Affairs who was Secretary of the Group of Experts, and Mr. Dolliver Nelson of the Law of the Sea Secretariat.

Over 50 years have passed since the last multilateral negotiations on limiting naval arms. I believe it is time to look again at the issues involved.

The next action lies with the members of this Committee.

Mr. CARL (Sweden): In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 37/95 B of 13 December 1982, the Secretary-General appointed a Group of Experts to undertake the task of constructing military price indexes and purchasing-power parities of States voluntarily participating in this exercise. This task included, inter alia, in an introductory phase, assessment of the feasibility of such an exercise and the design of the project and methodology to be employed. I had the honour and pleasure to serve as the Chairman of that Group.

In the course of its work the Group submitted two progress reports; the final report, contained in document A/40/421, was unanimously adopted in June of this year and is now before the Committee.

The background of this exercise was the need for adequate and acceptable means and methods of comparing military expenditures over time and between countries in connection with possible future international negotiations on the reduction of military expenditures. The preceding Group of Experts had stated in its 1982 report that general price indexes and prevailing exchange rates in fact constituted rather poor instruments for intertemporal and international comparisons of military expenditures. It suggested, however, that specifically constructed price indexes and purchasing-power parities of military expenditures would make possible much more accurate comparisons. That Group also concluded that the successful demonstration of the feasibility of constructing military price indexes and purchasing-power parities for different States would contribute much to preparing the ground for future negotiations on a reduction of military expenditures.

Thus, the Group considered that the purpose of its task was to throw light on the question whether such instruments of comparison as just mentioned might be successfully constructed in the context of future negotiations with a view to facilitating agreements among the parties. A practical exercise of this kind might

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also provide experience that can be useful in connection with future negotiations. However, that experience came to be limited because of the lack of participation of countries with different budgeting and accounting systems and at very different levels of economic development. The following countries chose to participate in the exercise: Australia, Austria, Finland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

To carry out the Group's task there was an obvious need for a certain amount of relevant statistical data. Part of these were expenditure data of the same kind as those annually reported to the United Nations in the framework of its international system for standardized reporting of the military expenditures of Member States. In addition to such data, the Group also had to request and collect data concerning prices and descriptions of a selected number of military goods and services. For this purpose the Group elaborated a few questionnaires that corresponded closely to the structure of the reporting matrix.

The data received from participating States in response to the Group's requests were rather abundant with regard to operating costs, that is, the cost of such resources which are used for the basic training and maintenance of soldiers; on the other hand, information on items which fall within the procurement category, that is, weapons, weapon systems and other military equipment, not unexpectedly turned out to be much less available.

The limited amount of available data on military hardware presented a major problem for the Group. That problem was further aggravated by the fact that only a few of those already scarce data could be regarded as being comparable with each other. Thus, quite a few of the data submitted concerning procurement had to be disregarded, because they could not be matched with similar data from other countries.

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It should therefore be acknowledged that the purchasing-power parities that the Group managed to construct for military hardware are based on a limited amount of data and may, as a consequence, be less reliable. However, the main point is that the method itself proved to be feasible also for the hardware category and that the results could be largely improved, given greater availability of relevant information. It might seem somewhat speculative but, nevertheless, the Group concluded that States participating in future negotiations on agreements to reduce military expenditures might well be more willing to exchange among themselves more information on characteristics and prices of military goods and services compared to what they were willing to publicize under present circumstances.

Another major problem that the Group faced was the comparison of conscripted and enlisted soldiers. Those two categories of military personnel are undoubtedly meant to fulfil about the same functions in the case of a war. On the other hand, it is clear that conscripts undergoing the first part of their basic training are far from being as skilled and experienced as the average professional soldier. Upon careful examination of this question the Group finally decided to regard conscripts with a training of six months or more to be comparable, by and large, to the average enlisted soldier. Thus, total maintenance costs for each one of these conscripts, including daily pay, food charges and cost of accommodation, were compared with the average salary of enlisted soldiers. On this basis purchasing-power parities were also constructed for that category of personnel for all participating States.

The results of the Group's exercise as presented in its report are as follows:

(a) Military price indexes have been constructed for all participating States, both for their total military expenditures and for a great number of

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different expenditure categories and sub-categories. These results are also compared with two types of general civilian price indexes.

(b) Military purchasing-power parities have been constructed for all participating States, both for their total military expenditures and for some expenditure categories and sub-categories. These results are also compared with exchange rates and a set of civilian purchasing-power parities as constructed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

However, to achieve those results the Group had to use a limited number of surrogate indexes and parities, which were provided either by the participating States themselves or in some cases collected from other sources.

With reference to the military price indexes, the Group believes that it has arrived at fairly reliable results, as some of them come very close to those obtained through extensive national efforts in the respective countries. This seems to be an interesting observation and it may be worth noting that the Group has obtained its results by means of a simplified method, using a relatively limited amount of information. This matter may also be of special interest in the light of possible future negotiations on the reduction of military expenditures, as a simple method and the use of easily verifiable data might greatly help to facilitate such negotiations.

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As for military purchasing-power parities, the Group believes that those for operating costs are fairly reliable, but, as mentioned earlier, those for procurement items could be considerably improved if more data were to be made available and if more time and effort could be devoted to the actual comparisons. Nevertheless, the Group is pleased to present the results it has achieved and feels that the price indexes and purchasing-power parities constructed by the Group would be much better used for the comparison of participating States' military expenditures than general price indexes and official exchange rates. The Group would also underline that another important result of this exercise is the experience and knowledge which it has provided and which should, in spite of the limitations imposed by the small number of participating States, prove to be useful in the event of future international negotiations on agreements to reduce military expenditures.

I now come to the Group's conclusions. To summarize, the Group has concluded: first, that the construction of useful instruments for intertemporal and international comparisons of military expenditures - namely military price indexes and purchasing-power parities - is feasible, given a sufficient availability of relevant statistical information and that good results can be obtained with a relatively limited amount of data, provided that necessary efforts are made to select and collect the information and to make the appropriate comparisons; secondly, that this exercise bears a clear relationship to the endeavours made by the United Nations to explore the link between disarmament and development, as in both cases the aim is to obtain a release of resources through a reduction of military efforts in real terms; and thirdly, that in addition to technical-statistical matters there are also other important aspects of the question of reducing military expenditures which would deserve careful attention. Such aspects are to some extent described in chapter V of the Group's report.

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On the basis of its conclusions the Group finally recommends: first, that the consideration of technical and other aspects of problems related to agreements to reduce military expenditures should be continued and that appropriate measures should be taken to promote and to facilitate international negotiations on such agreements; secondly, that all Member States should be invited to express their views on the present report, including the prospects of wider participation, in particular by countries with different budgeting and accounting systems and at very different levels of economic development, as well as on all matters dealt with in this report, and to suggest further steps on measures with a view to promoting and facilitating future international agreements to reduce military expenditures; thirdly, that a report on the above matters should be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-first session; and finally, the Group recommends that all Member States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States, should be urged to help create the necessary conditions for fruitful negotiations on agreements to reduce military expenditures, and to recognize that in this process and in the course of such negotiations a reasonable availability and exchange of statistical data would be required.

The Group recommends that, on this basis, Member States should start negotiations as soon as possible.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The exchange of views now taking place in the First Committee clearly demonstrates a growing awareness of the fact that today, more than ever before, the concerted efforts of governments and nations are needed in order to put an end to the arms race on earth and prevent it in space. Like most participants in this debate, we are convinced that space should remain peaceful and open for broad co-operation.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

In putting forward our proposal entitled "International co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space in conditions of its non-militarization", we took as our starting point the relationship between the non-militarization of space and the development within it of peaceful co-operation. This interrelationship was recognized specifically in General Assembly resolution 39/59 adopted by 150 Member States of the United Nations, which unequivocally pointed out the need for:

"... immediate measures to prevent an arms race in outer space in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international co-operation and understanding." (A/RES/39/59)

Our proposal is therefore entirely consistent with the letter and spirit of that resolution.

Today, by way of further explanation of our initiative, we would like to draw the Committee's attention to the following. Its main purpose, namely, to find an urgent, radical and practical solution to the dual problem of ensuring the non-militarization of space and reserving it for peaceful activities, is dictated above all by the emergence of the direct threat of the extension of the arms race into space. The implementation of the "star wars" plan is fraught, as is becoming evident even today, with the most dangerous consequences.

Should space-strike weapons be developed, the arms race would enter a qualitatively new stage and accelerate uncontrollably in all directions, thus increasing many times over the growth of military arsenals and bringing about changes in the structure of armed force and sharply increasing the level of military confrontation and the likelihood of war breaking out. Strategic stability would be destroyed and crisis situations would be much more likely to arise, including those caused by a misinterpretation of the situation, individual incidents and technical malfunctions. For example, if at present a satellite

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breaks down, this can only be the consequence of a technical fault and is perceived as such. If, however, space is saturated with weapons, this might be interpreted as the result of deliberate action on the part of the other side.

The process of arms limitation and reduction, as well as the machinery for negotiating on these questions and prospects of their political solution, would be disrupted. And we must realize that insurmountable barriers would be placed in the way of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space.

We note with satisfaction that many statements showing awareness of these dangerous consequences lead to the conclusion that action should be taken without delay to prevent the introduction of weapons into space.

Time flies and does not wait for us, as was so well pointed out by the representative of India, Mr. Swell. This reminder is particularly timely because the implementation of United Nations decisions on preventing an arms race in space is being obstructed by the gap between the words and deeds of some countries.

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They make speeches in favour of preventing an arms race in space, but in actual fact they are proposing to regulate it, and thus legitimize it. At the Conference on Disarmament those countries are obstructing the starting of multilateral negotiations directed to the conclusion of an effective agreement or agreements which would prevent the introduction of weapons into space, and are trying to substitute a purely general discussion of the problem for real negotiations. But it is obvious that discussion is no substitute for specific negotiations and practical efforts to produce a treaty on the subject, nor can it prevent an arms race in space.

At the same time - and I should like to draw the Committee's particular attention to this - obstacles are being placed in the way of a business-like and constructive solution to the question of preventing an arms race in space at the bilateral negotiations in Geneva. The multi-billion-dollar programme for developing space-strike weapons is forging ahead and includes the testing of a new anti-satellite system, this time against a real target in space, and also the testing of laser weapons.

In order to cover up the obvious discrepancy between words and deeds, black is shamelessly being called white and white black, in the spirit of the founder of the Order of Jesuits, Ignatius Loyola, a popular figure in some circles, who recommended to his followers that they should:

"believe what we see as white is in fact black if that is what the hierarchical Church calls it."

A characteristic example is the allegation recently publicized that the Soviet Union is already allegedly carrying out programmes similar to the American strategic defence initiative. And this is being said in total disregard of the official Soviet statements that the Soviet Union is engaged in the development of

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space-strike weapons, and that it will not be the first to go into space with such weapons. In actual fact, the country which is taking this first step is the United States, and this incidentally clearly follows from the word "initiative" in the official title of the star wars programme. It is noteworthy that when that initiative was first put forward no one made any attempt to depict it as a response to Soviet space programmes. The American delegation can confirm this for us here. This was done subsequently, when the need arose for arguments to justify the star wars plans.

Those statements and other similar assertions are clearly intended as a manoeuvre to divert attention from all that is being done by the United States, primarily in the development of space-strike weapons, and at the same time to facilitate the accelerated implementation of the star wars programme. It is precisely for that purpose that attempts are being made to prove that the work done under that programme is quite legitimate and even authorized by the Soviet-American Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM). There are even attempts to prepare, with the help of illegal "new interpretations" of the Treaty, a so-called legal basis for the development, testing and deployment of anti-missile weapons based on "other physical principles", that is to say, laser, beam and other kinds of space weapons.

None of this does anything to contribute to the protection and strengthening, or even the observance, of the existing arms control agreements, of which the ABM Treaty is one of the most important. It would be no exaggeration to say that the ABM Treaty is the very foundation upon which both strategic stability and international security are based. The Soviet Union strictly complies with all its obligations under the Treaty and is doing nothing contrary to its provisions.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

What the provisions of the Treaty require is banning the development of space-strike systems, and this includes research, testing and deployment. Of course, there is no question of banning fundamental research in space. It is one thing to conduct studies and research in the laboratories and quite another thing to develop mock-ups, prototypes and test systems of space weapons. Our approach is also justified and realistic in that activities outside the laboratory can be verified by national technical means. If this process is stopped at the initial stage of research, the very possibility of developing space-strike weapons will disappear. It is important to assess the situation objectively and to see clearly that the first stage of an arms race in space would be the development of strike systems for attacking targets in space, for attacking targets on earth from space and for attacking space targets from earth.

When we speak of the non-militarization of space, we have a number of clear ideas in mind. Specifically, we mean by this the renunciation by States of the development of space-strike weapons, including research, testing and deployment. That would firmly close the door to the deployment of weapons in space. Our proposal on the destruction of existing Soviet and United States anti-satellite systems, including those for which testing has not been completed, remains in effect.

As for the satellites already in space which are used for communications, navigation and early warning of missile attack, they are not weapons in the proper sense of the word. They pose no threat of a direct attack in space, furthermore, they contribute to maintaining stability, specifically by depriving the opposite side of the ability to launch a surprise disarming nuclear strike. Therefore, the existence of military-purpose satellites should not be interpreted as meaning that space has already been militarized.

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That is why reaching agreement on banning space-strike weapons, that is to say, the non-militarization of space, is a key question of high-priority and of fundamental issue. It is a kind of litmus test that reveals the real attitude of States to the issue of preventing an arms race in space and ending it on earth. We associate ourselves with those who wish to adopt at this session a resolution on preventing an arms race in space that would enjoy the broadest support, or still better, could be adopted by consensus. But this should be a genuine consensus and not just a cover-up for the reluctance to arrive at a real solution of the problem.

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As we see it, that means that, following the example set last year, the resolution should contain clear provisions on preventing the militarization of space, including a provision on starting negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament with the aim of preventing an arms race in space and rapidly producing an agreement or agreements to that effect.

I wish now to say a few words about the specific provisions in our proposal. It has sometimes been suggested in private discussions that our proposal is premature, since it anticipates the course of Soviet-American negotiations on nuclear and space arms. That is not so. The new Soviet initiative has been put forward fully in accordance with the agreed objectives and the subject of those negotiations, an integral part of which is the obligation to produce effective agreements to prevent an arms race in space. On the basis of that agreement in principle, which was worked out at the Foreign Minister level between the United States Secretary of State and the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, our proposal makes a contribution to producing such agreements and fulfilling the mandate of the negotiations. We bore all those considerations in mind in preparing the draft resolution (A/C.1/40/L.1).

In operative paragraph 1 we have deliberately formulated the idea of the non-militarization of space in terms of general principle, since the specific problem of preventing an arms race in space will be the subject of a special resolution which is now being drafted by the developing countries, including in particular Egypt and Sri Lanka.

Some delegations have suggested that we should strengthen our language in order to emphasize the high priority of the task of preventing an arms race in space. We are ready to do that.

There may be a need for a more detailed explanation of the second part of operative paragraph 1, which deals with wide-ranging international co-operation in

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the peaceful exploration and utilization of space. Here we have heard comments of a different type. It is said, for example, that the Soviet Union is making the non-militarization of space a pre-condition for the development of peaceful co-operation in space. At the same time, attempts are being made to convince us that the "star wars" programme will not lead to an arms race in space and that it is designed to prevent the use of space for military purposes and for developing peaceful co-operation in space. At least, that is how one could understand the remarks of the representative of Italy.

We proceed on the basis of the present state of affairs, which is that there are no strike weapons in space now. That situation will continue if no one is the first to take the step of putting them there. Therefore, it is not the Soviet Union, but the champions of the "star wars" plans, that are calling into question the preservation of peaceful outer space and the further development of international co-operation there.

But how can one seriously speak of co-operation in space in conditions of its militarization? Will co-operation develop in the Procrustean bed of the arms race, which would divert from development purposes enormous financial resources, the minds of scientists, computer time and expensive materials, while the groups now being organized to develop advanced technologies, including space technology, will be increasingly isolating themselves?

The Soviet "star peace" plan implies, instead of the arms race, a qualitatively new - I stress that - and radically different stage in international co-operation in outer space, different in terms of the magnitude of the tasks and the increased financial resources for those purposes, which would not be swallowed up by a race in space weapons.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

That is necessary because the present level of science and technology is opening up breathtaking prospects for the use of outer space for the good of mankind. But it is something no country can do alone. What is needed, of course, is a much higher level of interaction.

The Soviet proposals are designed to use space technology and the results of space research and experiments in the interests of all nations, regardless of their social system or level of development.

Even today one can envisage such diverse fields of co-operation as biology, medicine, remote sensing of the earth, weather forecasting, communications and the study of climate and the environment.

At the same time, we propose that co-operation should be extended to fundamental research in outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, the joint launching of spacecraft for those purposes, as well as developing and using space equipment, including large orbital scientific stations and manned spacecraft of various types.

We are convinced that all of that would yield concrete and tangible results for the economic development of States and contribute to solving such pressing global problems as eliminating hunger and disease and overcoming economic backwardness and the position of dependency of the developing countries in science and technology.

With regard to the question of helping a large number of States to participate in sharing the achievements in space exploration, we believe that mankind should enter the space age as one family of peoples. The heavy burden inherited from colonialism should not be permitted to continue to weigh on the young countries in space.

The interrelationship between preventing an arms race in space and developing co-operation in the peaceful exploration of space is not a fabrication or some kind

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of ploy. It is objective, and constitutes a concrete manifestation of the general interrelationship between disarmament and development and other global problems. That interrelationship has been recognized by the General Assembly and reflected in international treaties, such as the 1959 Antarctic Treaty and 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 (2222 (XXI)). The provisions of those Treaties relating to preventing an arms race are organically linked to the articles dealing with the peaceful utilization of the Antarctic and outer space. That is a surprise to no one; on the contrary, it is seen as the logical and comprehensive solution of the question.

A negative approach to the interrelationship between the non-militarization of space and co-operation can be shown only by those who are not ready to deal with either question in a businesslike manner. We wish to stress that.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The Soviet Union proposes that we proceed in a businesslike manner. We propose that a properly prepared international conference should be convened to consider, in its entirety, the question of the peaceful exploration of outer space in conditions of its non-militarization, and to work out agreed guidelines and principles for such co-operation, including the idea of establishing an international space organization.

How do we see the institutional framework for future international co-operation? It is our belief that there is no need to eliminate the existing framework or the structure of ongoing co-operation. We suggest a different course of action: co-ordinating co-operative efforts and making them more purposeful, and setting in motion all elements of co-operation permitting that co-operation to rise to a qualitatively higher level. It is important that the non-militarization of outer space and the unification of efforts in outer space be considered as a single whole.

We believe it would not be particularly difficult to come to an agreement on the type of forum that would consider our proposal.

We regard as constructive the proposal of the Polish People's Republic regarding the preparation by eminent experts, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, of a report on the consequences of the militarization of outer space. Such a report could also make a useful contribution to the preparation of the international conference we have proposed. We share the view of the sponsors of that proposal that the preparation of such a study should proceed parallel with intensified efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space and to develop peaceful co-operation there, and should contribute to those efforts.

The implementation of our proposal is envisaged on the basis of concerted efforts by all countries, capitalist and socialist, developed and developing, large and small, in mankind's common endeavour of exploring the boundless regions of

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

outer space, which should be free of weapons. Working together in that way would be advantageous to all: to each and every country and to mankind as a whole.

The Soviet initiative, which was unanimously supported by the Sofia meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the countries Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, is creative and non-confrontational, both in its overall essence and in each of its components. We believe that no State or group of States stands to lose from the prevention of an arms race in space and the development of peaceful co-operation there.

We are far from believing that our proposal provides ready-made answers to all the questions involved in the solution of the major problem it addresses. Quite the contrary: it will be impossible to solve that problem without a constructive contribution from all States. It is precisely for that reason that we propose that everyone should have an opportunity to ponder this matter and come to his own conclusions, and to communicate them to the Secretary-General.

I wish to conclude by citing the statement made by the Foreign Minister of the USSR, Comrade Eduard Shevardnadze, at this fortieth session of the General Assembly. In that statement, he stressed that

"The main problem, the problem of guaranteed peace for present and future generations, is still with us. Indeed, it stands out more sharply than ever before. Today, our planet is beset by troubles and anxieties, but the heaviest burden on mankind's shoulders is the arms race, which is inexorably bringing us closer to the edge of an abyss. It is our duty to stop and then to reverse it, to prevent it from spreading to space ...

"The Soviet Union is proposing a world without weapons in space".

(A/40/PV.48, p. 62)

That is precisely the purpose of our concrete proposal and of our work in the First Committee.

Mr. CAMPORA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): My statement today is a brief one, and concerns the question of the prevention of nuclear war, which, in our view, is the central point of our deliberations, for were nuclear war to break out it would probably signal the end of the human race. But this item, which has been on the agendas of the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament for years, has not been subjected to methodical scrutiny simply because we cannot agree on a method of dealing with it. The report of the Secretary-General on this subject, contained in document A/40/498, discusses extensively its long background in the history of the United Nations.

All delegations without exception have indicated here and in other forums that they are deeply concerned about the risk of nuclear war and that it is necessary to prevent it by various means. Thus, many delegations have put forward concrete proposals on the measures which should be taken to prevent nuclear war.

Some delegations are of the belief that to prevent nuclear war there must be a commitment to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons or a direct agreement on the prohibition of their use. Other delegations argue that the way to prevent nuclear war is through arms reduction through verifiable agreements or through the elimination of such weapons altogether.

Proposals have been put before the Conference on Disarmament by many delegations belonging to different groups and military alliances, proposals which are on the whole of great interest. Those proposals must be thoroughly analysed and examined in all their aspects, without any pre-conditions or prejudice. The proposals should be examined separately, as set forth in the documents submitted by each delegation. The proposals must be studied freely; no one must object to the consideration of any approach which a delegation might consider to be an appropriate measure for the prevention of nuclear war.

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

We cannot accept that positions on the question of the prevention of nuclear war are irreconcilable. Quite the contrary; we believe that there is unanimity on the need to prevent nuclear war. Differences arise with regard to the nature of the most appropriate measures and their order and priority.

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

The many documents on this item submitted to the Conference on Disarmament and the statements of delegations in this regard are sufficient proof of the attention this subject arouses.

Last year the General Assembly adopted resolution 39/148 P. We believe that above all this resolution addresses the issue of procedure. It seeks to indicate a method whereby the Conference on Disarmament is requested to create an ad hoc committee to determine the steps or measures deemed appropriate to promote effective action to prevent nuclear war. In this respect, we also believe that the ad hoc committee should, without prejudice and independently, examine the proposals on this question submitted by all delegations without exception.

We hope that, in the light of our suggestions at this time, the General Assembly will be able to adopt with the widest possible support the resolution on the prevention of nuclear war and that, at the same time, the Conference on Disarmament will be in a position to create the above-mentioned ad hoc committee next year.

We are most willing to listen to and study appropriate suggestions from delegations belonging to military alliances, as well as from other delegations which, along with the Argentine delegation, belong to the neutral and non-aligned group of countries.

Mr. MORENO-SALCEDO (Philippines): Since this is the first time my delegation has spoken in the Committee, allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. Your broad experience and consummate skills as a diplomat eminently qualify you for this most important task. Having worked with you in other undertakings, we know you will again bring these excellent qualifications to bear for our common benefit.

It is appropriate that in this fortieth year of the United Nations we should be meeting once more to discuss the topic of disarmament - for one of the main

(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo, Philippines)

reasons for the founding of the United Nations remains "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

Ironically, disarmament is still paramount on the agenda of the Organization. The common security of all nations, which ideally should have been achieved during the first decades of the United Nations, is still, unfortunately, our primary goal. The tapestry of Picasso's Guernica - an apt loan for the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations - still horrifies us with its calamitous warning of war.

It has been pointed out that one great lacuna in the United Nations is the absence of a distinct provision for disarmament in the Charter. The Security Council merely has the responsibility for the development of "plans ... for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments" (Article 26).

Despite this lacuna, we have seen progress made towards disarmament in the past 40 years. We saw the establishment in 1957 of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is devoted to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In the years since its founding, this Agency has proved its competence and expertise in assuring the regulation of nuclear facilities as well as the proper use and distribution of nuclear material for peaceful purposes. It must be said that, given the strict constraints offered by the present world situation, the IAEA is one of the bright lights within the United Nations system.

Through the work of the First Committee we have seen in the General Assembly numerous resolutions adopted with the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. The proliferation of weapons in the world outside has been paralleled by a proliferation of draft resolutions in this Committee. If disarmament has thus far not been realized, it has certainly not been due to a lack of good intentions, for these resolutions point out various creative ways in which general and complete disarmament could be achieved.

(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo,
Philippines)

Indeed, the United Nations has a more than adequate share of institutions and structures whereby disarmament could be achieved. To follow up on the work of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission meets in New York for about a month each year. Its last session in particular saw fresh proposals effectively to reach disarmament, as its report shows.

The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva was established in 1982 as the sole multilateral negotiating body empowered to meet on disarmament. Various proposals have been made to enhance its effectiveness. These include the addition of new members to the present 40 the better to reflect the composition of the world community - a proposal which the Philippines supports.

The Department of Disarmament Affairs, as well as the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), have provided us with thorough, well-turned out reports on various aspects of disarmament questions. The former has also been instrumental in disseminating material on this issue world wide and in providing resource personnel for national or regional meetings on this topic. Its regional seminars have been instrumental in awakening people to the pressing nature of this issue as well as to its technical aspects.

A system of multilateral treaties has also helped to maintain peace, including the Antarctic Treaty, the partial test-ban Treaty, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the sea-bed Treaty and others. These have helped to reinforce the bilateral efforts that nations can make towards disarmament.

But if the United Nations has still not brought about disarmament, it is most definitely not due to a lack of structures, institutions or treaties. The blueprint only awaits concrete action to give it flesh. It has been pointed out time and again that political will is the missing component in this undertaking.

(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo,
Philippines)

Together with the moves pursued in the United Nations, there is renewed and vigorous public interest on this subject. A "parliament of the streets" in many major cities of the world has called for the major nuclear-weapon States to end this senseless race towards extinction. Signatures and petitions have been collected, flags of peace unfurled. The constituencies members of this Assembly represent have rendered their verdict: a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. It is indeed a zero-sum game with the choice of humanity and its survival, on the one hand, and total annihilation, on the other.

(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo,
Philippines)

It does not take great political power or even sophisticated scientific knowledge to grasp this fact. We join those who paid tribute to the late Samantha Smith, a schoolgirl who at the age of 11 had grasped the fact that the future was dim for her and for many others like her and had tried to do something about it. Samantha Smith had only the briefest of lives to disseminate her message. It is up to us to take over where she left off. We must make the world safe for the Samantha Smiths of this world.

This could be a fitting leitmotiv for talks between the leaders of the two super-Powers scheduled later this year in Geneva, an event to which the world looks forward with expectation.

Like our predecessors, we in this forum have worked unstintingly to come forth with various proposals that could well be considered by the leaders of these two nations in their planned encounter. The special sessions on disarmament in 1978 and 1982 are manifestations of this public consensus on the need for an end to the arms race.

Among measures that have been put forward are a multilateral or bilateral freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and systems for delivering them; a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty; establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones; prevention of an arms race in outer space; reduction of military budgets; confidence-building measures; banning of chemical and biological weapons; the "no first use" of nuclear weapons. Any one of these proposals could be the starting point of a move towards genuine disarmament.

Barbara Tuchman, who in The Guns of August wrote about the senseless fratricide of the First World War, has pointed out in a more recent work the folly or hubris that sometimes overtakes those in power. Today's situation may only be described in Mrs. Tuchman's words as folly or "the pursuit of policy contrary to the self-interest of the State involved". If the 159 nations assembled here

(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo,
Philippines)

represent the majority of mankind, then our situation is potentially rife with folly or self-deception, for by persisting in the arms race we have worked against our common interest. In a very real sense we legislate for the global village. We steer planetship Earth into its next course.

If there is any single conclusion on which we seem to agree in this forum it is that the arms race is counterproductive and that it is our urgent task to deflect this action from its perilous course. To persist in the arms race is a folly from which mankind may never recover.

The non-nuclear-weapon States have manifested their willingness to prevent nuclear war in their support of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which underwent a third review in Geneva this year. They seized that occasion to remind the nuclear-weapon States of their side of the bargain, that is, to reduce existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons; to halt, in other words, the vertical proliferation of these weapons.

Looking forward to 1986, the International Year of Peace, a majority of States have taken the initiative to call a conference on the relationship between disarmament and development. The Philippines, which considers this a keystone in its economic development policies, has been steadfast in its support for this conference and views it as a constructive move out of the impasse in which the world finds itself. In deciding between guns and butter, between rockets and rice, the choice seems to be logical and obvious.

Today we live literally in a tinderbox that can ignite itself at any time. There are many flashpoints in the world where such a conflagration could begin, among them the Middle East, Central America and South Africa.

We in South-East Asia have done our share in attempting to reduce tension in this region. Having experienced bloody internecine conflict in this area for

(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo,
Philippines)

several decades, we know full well how valuable a goal peace is. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has also encouraged a dialogue among all parties in this region and proposed solutions. It consistently supports sovereignty and non-interference in the affairs of other countries. The ASEAN has put forward the idea of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality.

In our search for peace and security, we must leave no stone unturned. We lend our support to such measures as those on confidence-building, especially in the European region. We believe that confidence-building measures are crucial to the maintenance of the peace that has endured for these past 40 years.

The Philippines has also supported moves for nuclear-weapon-free zones such as that embodied in the Treaty of Tlatelolco, as well as the implementation of Assembly resolutions on regional disarmament. We support, for instance, the Contadora initiative in Central America, which shows how countries of a region could work together to solve its own problems.

We believe that peace is indivisible. For this reason we take interest in developments in regions far from us but which could have an impact on world peace.

An important work that has been accomplished for the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly is the study of the Group of Governmental Experts on concepts of security (A/40/553), in which the Philippines was honoured to have a representative. This is an important study which deserves the attention of all Governments. A key idea culled from this important work is the harmonization of national security with international security as the two are vitally interrelated.

It is a disturbing trend that treaties that are keystones of United Nations disarmament measures are not being followed to the letter. These include the Convention on biological and toxic weapons and the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques. The

(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo,
Philippines)

use of chemical and biological weapons has once again become a threat to us. We may well remember that in the First World War the use of chemical and toxic weapons prompted nations to agree on the first treaties banning these weapons. We believe that the fortieth year of the United Nations is an occasion to renew the commitment to these and other such treaties. We therefore favour the review and strengthening of such treaties in the coming years.

We should like also to stress that outer space must be kept free of weapons and that it be utilized for peaceful purposes. If we have managed to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Antarctic there is no reason why this could not be done also in outer space.

We support the Five-Continent Peace Initiative held on 29 January 1985 which calls for the prohibition of the development, testing, production, deployment and use of all space weapons. As the Declaration of this Peace Initiative states, an arms race in space would be enormously costly and would have grave destabilizing effects in addition to endangering arms limitation and disarmament agreements.

In 1945 the 50-odd nations assembled in San Francisco found it possible to unite against what had seemed to be a common threat to mankind and the values that it held dear: peace, freedom, justice, progress, equality, tolerance. The year 1985 brings us yet to another watershed in mankind's history. On the one hand we are confronted with widespread and persistent economic, political and social crises. No country in this world, no matter how developed and well-endowed, can claim to have remained untouched by the malaise that has beset us in the postwar era. On the other hand we are faced also with an arms race that threatens to devour ever more resources.

(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo, Philippines)

Would it not be possible to focus on a common endeavour that would once more unite the nations of the world? Many problems, such as hunger, poverty, illiteracy, disease, the challenge of outer space for peaceful purposes or the use of the seas and oceans for man's common benefit, could provide us with a goal.

It is in our power today, in this General Assembly, to untie the modern Gordian knot. We can move from being disunited nations to a truly United Nations. Only by working together can we achieve our common security.

Indeed, we live in the worst of times as well as the best of times. We live, as in the Chinese expression, in "interesting times", in an age of crisis. The Chinese character for crisis in fact mirrors the words "danger" and "opportunity". It is therefore within our grasp to turn this crisis away from danger, towards opportunity.

Mr. BARNETT (Jamaica): Man is distinguished among life on this planet by his capacity not only to learn from history but also to anticipate the future and, through conscious action, to determine its course. Futurists abound. But while there is no unanimity of vision on the part of those who would foretell our fate, one thing is clear: it is that, despite the scientific, technological and communications revolution of the past 40 years, life on this planet is marked not by a wholesome confidence and faith in the future but by uncertainty, misgiving and a significant measure of foreboding. This has two roots: first, in the persistence of military conflicts, accompanied by the accumulation of massive arsenals of conventional and nuclear weapons. The second is found in the continued gap between the potential and actual economic well-being, particularly among the developing countries. The United Nations, and by that token Member States individually and collectively, must address both those issues more effectively than

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

has been the case in the past if we are to ensure congruence between human potential and human achievement. This Committee must deal specifically with the first.

Our predilection to apply the approaches of the past is manifested by our continued passion for armed conflict as a means of settling disputes, despite the tremendous human and economic cost. This is of the utmost concern to small developing countries which have no significant military means or web of military alliances on which to depend for security. As is so of other similarly placed countries, Jamaica must put its confidence in the Charter, its principles and ideals. As a Member of this Organization we take seriously its mandate for maintaining international peace and security. We do so not because it is convenient but because it is the rational course to take. In an anarchic world where the Charter is given short shrift the security interests and concerns of small States will certainly be overlooked. It is thus cause for grave concern that, 40 years after the founding of the United Nations with the stated purpose of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, armed conflicts and more insidious forms of threats and pressures against the security of States continue unabated.

Annual military expenditures hover around \$800,000 million. As is known, an increasing proportion of those expenditures is taking place in developing countries. Often those expenditures are such that they cannot be rationally sustained. This also reminds us that beyond the physical threat to humanity an immense cost is being exacted by the arms race primarily, but not only, from those countries engaged in these massive outlays. We live in an interdependent world economy in which the cost of distortions, imbalances and inefficiencies in this and

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

other areas is transmitted to others through the interlinked webs of trade, investment and finance. In this sense, small developing countries with no interest in military aggrandizement whatsoever but with small, open economies, can be said to bear a disproportionate share of the costs imposed on the international economy by a non-productive and escalating arms race. Hence we await with interest the forthcoming International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development.

Since this Committee's meeting last year, there have been some faint glimmers of hope - just a few. It may do well to recognize them, but at the same time we ought not to assume that they represent a bright light of hope.

There has been a perceptible growth in public interest and concern for disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament: the successful conclusion of the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War; the meeting within two weeks of the leaders of the super-Powers; specific, though understandably insufficiently elaborated, proposals spread out on the table; and the general schema of the negotiations being defined.

Not long ago we heard the constant reiteration of the need to abide by the provisions of the Charter. We have heard expressions calling for peace, understanding, arms control and disarmament. Now we have seriously to take those expressions into account.

It is our view that a comprehensive test-ban treaty is essential to give the international community hope that there is some prospect of living on this Earth without being under the constant threat of nuclear annihilation. There cannot be, and there has not been, any good reason to persist in nuclear testing when the vast

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

majority of mankind has called for a cessation and when the more sophisticated weapons whose development testing will allegedly permit can do no more to enhance security. We repeat that a ban is both technically feasible and politically advisable. The work of the seismic experts Group indicates fully that verification is possible, and is possible within the existing technical means.

Much has been made of the success of the Third Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. There is some acknowledgement that the consensus declaration has reaffirmed the viability of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as an essential instrument in the system of international security. Yet there is room for some scepticism. Whilst the nuclear-weapon States refuse to take seriously their commitments under article VI, there must remain the strong implication that the mere possibility of non-nuclear-weapon States possessing such weapons is more dangerous and reprehensible than the existing capacity of the nuclear-weapon States themselves.

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

This is clearly moral posturing and bad logic. Implicit, too, is the air of political and moral superiority, if not self-righteousness. But the world has to move beyond that. We are all potential victims even if we are not all potential users. There is superiority in neither one nor the other. The search for sophistication and more arcane means for self-destruction has also taken us into outer space as well as into the realms of chemical and bacteriological weaponry.

We do not believe that the vast sums expended in trying to use outer space for warlike purposes will be anything but wasteful in their intent. There was a time when the ABM Treaty was termed a major victory for arms control and essential for strategic nuclear stability. This Treaty was solemnly entered into. But what can we say of treaties or conventions on important issues such as these, when their provisions are either surreptitiously violated or given as elastic an interpretation as new interests dictate? What faith can we put in such agreements? The potential victims in this world have a right to know the answer.

If agreements are as important as they are supposed to be and are to remain as important as they ought to, there must be agreed interpretations changeable only by mutual consent. Otherwise, what is there? Shadows without substance. Can we not also have defined areas where technological developments will not be allowed to undermine legal instruments or legal régimes? But with all these, mutual trust and confidence, and some faith, cannot be avoided. It behoves us to remind ourselves from time to time that science and technology must be at the service of man and not the other way around.

Regional initiatives to restrict the race in conventional weapons consistently receive our support. So too do nuclear-weapon-free zones. But there is an inherent weakness in the inability of the States participating in the latter to verify whether the provisions in respect to the zones of application are always being respected. Member States live on faith and hope, but very little charity.

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

What slight hope there has been for the conclusion of a comprehensive and viable ban on chemical weapons has been maintained by at least the fact that a draft consolidated outline has come out of the Conference on Disarmament. Much more work needs to be done, but we are still hopeful that the opportunity will not be lost. In the meantime there are ominous signs of an emerging proliferation of chemical weapons. Clearly, substantial action is needed before time runs out.

There has been a discernible reluctance to be serious about bacteriological weapons. Both these means offer to those interested in the more peculiar ways of killing each other, an apparently cheap way of doing so. There is something particularly repulsive about seeking collective death by these means. Yet moral repulsion does not seem enough to deter or discourage those who would persist in seeking these weapons. Surely the international community ought by now to take better cognizance of our own frailty and seek to have these potential weapons banned from the weaponry of warfare.

We therefore expect that the Preparatory Committee of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, scheduled to meet in the spring of 1986, will be able to press ahead for a fruitful Conference.

The long-expected summit between the leaders of the USSR and the United States of America is only a few days away. For all the world this is a welcome event. It may be true that the actual workings of the strategic relationship between the super-Powers are more enigmatic than often admitted. But are we justified in placing much hope in the meeting? Can we expect that the general international atmosphere is conducive to both sides establishing the basis for a new understanding that will lead to solutions to the major problems of arms control and disarmament?

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

I cannot help but recall the words spoken a day or so ago by our Japanese colleague, Ambassador Imai. He said then:

"... today's questions of disarmament and arms control are questions of the modern-day philosophy of science and the role of technology. We may need to seek means to restructure man's relationship with technology."

(A/C.1/40/PV.19, p. 46)

So whilst there is much to learn, there is much to unlearn.

Mr. GOMEZ (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): This is the first time at the current session at which the delegation of Bolivia is speaking in this Committee. Permit me, therefore, Sir, to convey to you, first of all, the sincere congratulations of my delegation on your election to preside over the proceedings of the Committee. We would also wish to congratulate the other officers of the Committee. We pledge to you the full co-operation and support of the delegation of Bolivia in your difficult task.

This year we are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the creation of this world Organization, whose main objective is, as laid down in the Charter itself, to maintain international peace and security. As we have heard from several representatives who have spoken before me, that objective has been only partially attained. For while it is true that since the creation of the United Nations, it has been possible to avoid a new world conflagration and the use of nuclear weapons, it is just as true that regional conflicts, in which so-called conventional weapons have been used, have continued to erupt in practically all regions of our tormented planet. Even at this very moment confrontations between brother countries persist. This is the case of Iran and Iraq, whom we urge once again to suspend hostilities and negotiate a just and lasting peace between themselves.

(Mr. Gomez, Bolivia)

According to figures mentioned by other speakers in this Committee, as well as in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly, since the end of the Second World War, more than 150 local or regional wars have taken place. This is rather an eloquent figure which reveals the true importance of the work of this Committee that for years has been dealing with matters relating to disarmament.

It is easy to see that any of those regional conflicts could degenerate into a real worldwide catastrophe, especially if we are unable quickly to eliminate from the face of the earth these terrible nuclear weapons which make the very survival of the human species to hang on a thin thread. It is therefore essential and urgent for us to do something to avoid a future catastrophe. But that task, which behoves all States of the earth, is mainly an obligation of the nuclear-weapon Powers, especially the two super-Powers, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Those two countries have the duty and the responsibility to free the world from the nuclear danger. The delegation of Bolivia hopes that the forthcoming negotiations between the two countries, and in particular the meeting to take place between the President of the United States, Mr. Ronald Reagan and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, will be crowned with success and lead to the adoption of important agreements on arms control and disarmament. We pray that this will be the case.

(Mr. Gomez, Bolivia)

Bolivia has repeatedly stated that it is a peace-loving country. It, therefore, has always supported and will continue to support all initiatives aimed at strengthening international peace and security. Thus my country is a party to the main treaties currently in force on arms control and disarmament, among them the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, better known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We attach special importance to that Treaty because it establishes a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region, a fact which shows that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is not utopian, as already stated by the representative of the Soviet Union a few days ago in this Committee.

We share the idea of the Non-Aligned Movement that we should encourage the creation of such zones in other regions of the world since that would be one further step towards the final goal, that of general and complete disarmament. In this connection, we urge all nuclear-weapon Powers to respect existing nuclear-free zones, thus encouraging other countries to follow that example and establish in their regions additional zones free from this terrible threat.

However, in order to bring about the elimination of nuclear weapons it is not enough to create nuclear-free zones in some regions of the world. In addition to that, another type of action must be undertaken, for example, to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to totally prohibit nuclear-weapon tests. With regard to the former point we should like to say that a great deal has been done through the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; Bolivia is one of the 130 States parties to that Treaty. Only a few weeks ago, the Third Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons came to an end; that Conference adopted an important Final Declaration which stated that any proliferation of nuclear weapons would gravely increase the danger of nuclear war. Nevertheless, a great deal still remains to be done in the area of non-proliferation, and all

(Mr. Gomez, Bolivia)

States, regardless of whether or not they are parties to the Treaty, must undertake new efforts to limit and reduce nuclear weapons.

With reference to the latter point, my delegation is in favour of concluding at the earliest possible time a treaty on the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests since that would limit the possibility of updating them. It would lead to a reduction of nuclear arsenals, contribute to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation régime, and consequently would be an important contribution towards international peace and security.

Another matter which has drawn the attention of most speakers here has been the so-called "star wars". My delegation supports the principle that outer space should be kept free from the arms race, and that we should encourage and increase international co-operation on the peaceful uses of outer space.

Leaving aside now the question of nuclear arms, we must insist on the danger of another type of weapons: chemical weapons. Bolivia, since 1975 has been a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological, Biological and Toxic Weapons and on their Destruction. Also, in 1984, it acceded to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 for the prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases and of bacteriological methods of warfare. These facts prove the concern and the importance which my country attaches to the question of chemical weapons, the use of which in recent conflicts has been denounced. My delegation considers that we should step up negotiations on the adoption of a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Gomez, Bolivia)

I should now like to refer very briefly to the theme of disarmament and development which is of interest to the delegation of Bolivia. A great deal has been said about this in this Committee and in other forums, mentioning figures and other data, but in actual fact very little or nothing at all has been done in that regard. Developing countries such as Bolivia are burdened under terrible economic crises which in some cases even threaten their political and democratic stability. In the meantime the big Powers continue to squander hundreds of millions of dollars on weapon programmes, thus highlighting the injustice of the present international economic system.

At least part of those resources, which are wasted on the arms race, must be devoted to development programmes which would help resolve the serious economic situation which obtains in countries of the so-called third world. The delegation of Bolivia is therefore in favour of holding in 1986 the international conference on the relationship between disarmament and development, since we feel that that conference will be able to consider this matter in all its aspects and will also consider appropriate means of freeing additional resources to be used for development purposes, especially to benefit the most needy countries.

Bolivia, a truly peace-loving country and one which maintains that all possible resources should be devoted to development, which is the true foundation of peace, supports initiatives aimed at promoting nuclear and conventional disarmament at regional and international levels. In that context my delegation, in particular, wishes to reiterate its support for the initiatives which we have had in South America with a view to reducing weapons and other military expenditures.

Disarmament must be general and complete; that is a goal for all mankind.

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(Mr. Gomez, Bolivia)

President Victor Paz Estenssoro stated before the General Assembly in 1963 that for the moment that objective was:

"A great dream ... because in the atmosphere of distrust, caused by the existence of contrary interests among the great Powers, it would appear to be better to rely on force than to rest on law." (A/PV.1252, p. 11)

(Mr. Gomez, Bolivia)

In other words, we should reduce, if not eliminate, such mistrust. It will be possible to reduce tension only by promoting and consolidating confidence; only thus shall we be able genuinely to speak of promoting disarmament. Therefore, measures to create confidence between States are welcome. In that context, my delegation stresses its support for all unilateral measures to limit or reduce arms, particularly the unilateral commitment of nuclear-weapon Powers not to be the first to use their nuclear weapons.

Peace is indivisible; the desire for peace is infinite. Therefore, reducing nuclear and conventional weapons is a duty that all States must fulfil for the benefit of their own peoples and all mankind.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.