



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic)

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 46 TO 65 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. RENTON (United Kingdom): It is my privilege today to speak on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community. In doing so, I extend to you, Mr. Chairman - whom I welcome as a fellow European - and to the other Committee officers, our congratulations on your election to your demanding posts. We trust that under your leadership this Committee will conduct its business not only efficiently but with success.

I shall obviously want to make some comments on the recent meeting in Reykjavik between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev, but I shall start with some general remarks about the attitude of the Twelve to disarmament and arms control. Philosophy must be tempered with down-to-earth reflections. This Committee is the first in order at the United Nations. It should also be the first in priority. The issues with which it deals - peace, security and a safer world for all - can never be relegated to the second rank of world attention. But as we look around this room at each another we must ask ourselves this: How much in concrete terms has this Committee contributed to achieving such objectives? People around the world are continuing to die every day and every hour as the result of wars internal and international, as the result of flagrant violations of human rights and as the result of man's inhumanity to man, to woman and to child.

We strongly believe that the objective of the countries represented here should be to make people everywhere feel more secure for themselves, for their families and for their future. The important principle guiding the work of this Committee should therefore be to consider what we can do in a realistic and practical way to move towards those goals.

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom)

I need hardly remind you, Mr. Chairman, that Europe's historical and geographical position means that war, be it nuclear or conventional, would spell ruin, indeed catastrophe, for our continent. Arms control and disarmament have a central role in the achievement of the goals set out in the United Nations Charter, including international security; and that means measures to enhance security at the lowest possible levels of armaments are vital - I repeat: vital - for the Twelve.

We have been heartened by the heightened activity the last year has seen in this field. We have welcomed the success of Stockholm. We have seen the multilateral process continuing to work here, in Geneva and in Vienna. And of course there are the crucial bilateral discussions between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. There are proposals in various forums for deep cuts in United States and Soviet strategic nuclear arsenals, for the complete elimination of their intermediate range nuclear forces, for the elimination world-wide of all chemical weapons and for the progressive reduction of conventional forces in Europe. I should stress that despite the disappointment at Reykjavik, to which I shall return later, those proposals remain.

But expectations must not be confused with success. The former can be easy, all too easy, to arouse; the latter is much harder to achieve. What is now urgently needed is continued and sustained effort. It is surely high time to break the relentless cycle of escalation of armaments. The wide-ranging current proposals must not be allowed to languish in limbo. Practical negotiations concentrating on specific proposals are essential if concrete results are to be achieved at the negotiating table.

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom)

Several elements are common to all arms control and disarmament negotiations. The first is that arms control and disarmament measures can and should increase confidence. Substantial and balanced reductions in the world's arsenals to the lowest possible level are of course vital, but they will not by themselves be sufficient to guarantee greater security. We must also work for improved confidence between States resulting from clearer and more predictable military behaviour. To adopt a set of mutually complementary confidence and security building measures designed to reduce the risk of military confrontation in Europe - that has been the precise aim of the Twelve at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, on which I shall have more to say later.

The question of security is complex. Arms control and disarmament are not the only instruments for safeguarding international peace and security, but their importance is indisputable. The existence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction underscores that view. Ultimately, security is a political and diplomatic, as much as a military, problem requiring dialogue and greater understanding as well. Security is also affected by the way States deal with many everyday aspects of human behaviour, by the respect they show for human rights, by their conduct of good-neighbourly relations. We need to see international security based not on armed coexistence, but rather we need to orient it towards co-operation. Such a result could in itself certainly be a positive factor for development. But the first contribution arms control and disarmament can make is this: the enhancement of stability and predictability in relations between nations.

Secondly, within the arms control and disarmament process, confidence and greater predictability must be instilled by adequate provisions for the verification of compliance. The degree of confidence and transparency which exists

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom)

will be a key factor when States come to assess the verification arrangements appropriate to each agreement. That means that the verification arrangements will differ in each individual case, but the net result must be unambiguous, and there must be effective provisions providing the maximum incentive for strict compliance.

We in the European Community believe that adequate verification is not merely a slogan, an optional extra, another of the tired catch-phrases left behind by the tide of earlier disarmament efforts. No, adequate verification is crucial now, today, and in all future agreements. That should surprise no one, for such verification is in everyone's interest. The acceptance of obligations under an arms control agreement is in itself a recognition that States are willing to circumscribe their sovereign rights. Verification may appear to be a further encroachment on sovereignty, yet it is only by accepting such measures that arms control will be effective and that confidence will be strengthened between States.

I should now like to deal with specific areas of arms control and disarmament. For the countries on whose behalf I speak today, nuclear disarmament is one of the highest priorities. Our common wish is to see the achievement of substantial and balanced reductions in the global level of nuclear weapons, beginning with those of the two super-Powers. This time last year our hopes had been raised by the resumption of bilateral discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union. We welcomed the Geneva summit last year between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev. We welcomed the commitment of both sides to early progress in the current negotiations, and we support the purpose of those talks, namely, preventing an arms race in space and terminating the arms race on earth. We also endorse the overriding aim of creating conditions to prevent any war, whether nuclear or conventional.

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom)

The talks that have been in progress since March 1985 between the two Powers which have the overwhelming majority of nuclear weapons are therefore of vital importance for everyone, and not least for the Twelve. We urge, and we support the need for, significant achievements there.

We continue to take that view after the meeting this weekend in Reykjavik. Arms control agreements of potentially major significance seem to have been in prospect. That they were not reached is of course a disappointment. But this setback does not and should not mean that the search for agreements is at an end. The talks at Geneva were making some real strides. We, the Twelve, look to the two sides to continue the search for agreements in these talks, building on those areas where movement has already taken place. That the Reykjavik meeting was not able to reach agreement on a very wide range of issues must not mean a return to square one. Far from it. By consolidating what has been won, by building on what has been achieved, by moving patiently step by step and with determination, by tackling and disposing of each problem as it arises - in that way will we in the international community truly create a safer world. That rule applies to all our disarmament efforts. And it applies with special force to the bilateral Geneva talks.

While it is of primary importance that the two countries concerned should pursue their efforts, we believe also that all nations should give them full and patient support. The success of their negotiations would do much to bring about that improved confidence which, as I have said before, is such an essential prerequisite for further sustained progress. The Twelve underline the importance of existing arms control agreements, including the bilateral anti-ballistic-missile Treaty of 1972, being strictly observed and being seen to be observed by the parties concerned.

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom)

In our support and encouragement for bilateral discussions we do not overlook another need: that for multilateral negotiations. The role of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole permanent multilateral negotiating body is particularly important. Nor should we neglect the role of other multilateral forums for discussion - this Committee itself and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, which this year continued its valuable deliberations.

Negotiations on the global ban on chemical weapons are currently under way in the Conference on Disarmament. The commitment of the Twelve to the early conclusion of an effective and verifiable global ban on chemical weapons is well known. We attach to it a particularly high priority. A comprehensive convention is needed before the genie of chemical weapons escapes for ever from the bottle. I am therefore glad to be able to say that movement towards that goal in the Conference on Disarmament is encouraging.

The report of the Conference to this session of the General Assembly registers remarkable progress in important areas of the draft convention. The area of common ground between the delegations of the Conference on Disarmament has been enlarged. Members of the Twelve have played important parts in this work. For example, one member State, the United Kingdom, has this year provided the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, which is the forum for the negotiations. The Government of another member, the Netherlands, organized a valuable workshop in The Hague and Rotterdam in June, and that successful event contributed to one important step forward: a new article VI on "Activities not Prohibited by the Convention". This will provide assurance that the civil chemical industry is not being misused for the manufacture of chemical weapons. Similarly, the latest draft contains new texts for articles IV and V of the convention. These deal respectively with the elimination of existing stocks of chemical weapons and of facilities for production.

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom)

Much, however, remains to be done. I spoke earlier about the dilemma between sovereignty and verification. This is exemplified sharply in the field of chemical weapons. Verification measures will affect a large number of civil chemical companies that have never had anything to do with chemical warfare, nor will they in the future. Yet we accept that some international supervision in this area is essential if everyone's security concerns are to be properly safeguarded, and we heartily welcome the international consensus that this should be so. It is generally agreed that this assurance should be provided, as far as possible, by routine methods of verification, including on-site inspection of declared facilities.

It is also agreed that a system of challenge inspection is also required, as a safety net, to provide the ultimate source of confidence in the convention. Challenge inspection potentially involves the greatest encroachment on sovereignty, but this safety net will constitute a crucial part of effective verification arrangements. In order to establish common ground on this last issue, in the Conference on Disarmament I recently made a new proposal on behalf of the United Kingdom which we believe provides the right way forward in this important area, forming a stable keystone in the arch of confidence in the convention. This proposal, I am glad to say, has already received welcome support. We look forward to further substantive reactions from all the negotiating partners.

It is important that work on the convention continue during the present recess of the Conference on Disarmament. Once the First Committee has completed its task, there will be further consultations in Geneva to prepare for the next formal session in January. We hope that at this session the General Assembly will take note with satisfaction of the progress already made in Geneva. We trust that the United Nations will encourage the Conference on Disarmament to conclude as a matter of urgency a convention which rids the world completely of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom)

That is our objective, worthy of the Conference on Disarmament and worthy of the United Nations. Help us to meet it.

The Conference on Disarmament has on its agenda the subject of a comprehensive test ban. Although agreement has not been reached on an appropriate mandate for an ad hoc committee in this area, useful work is being done on verification by the Seismic Expert Group, which has expanded its work programme this year. At the same time we note the recent round of talks between the United States of America and the Soviet Union on verification and nuclear testing.

I have already noted the attention paid by the European Community to the Geneva bilateral talks on preventing an arms race in outer space. We also attach much importance to the work of the Conference on Disarmament Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space, and members of the Twelve have played an active part in establishing common ground there. This is the essential preliminary to decisions on what further arms control measures may be needed. We hope that in the coming year the Conference on Disarmament will be able to agree quickly on an appropriate and generally acceptable mandate for further work on multilateral issues. It goes without saying that work at the Conference on Disarmament must complement the results of the Geneva bilateral talks. It certainly must not prejudice them. Rather the Ad Hoc Committee should aim to carry out its work in a realistic way.

I have already stated that nuclear-arms reductions and disarmament remain one of the highest priorities for the Twelve. But we would not wish to lose sight of the terrible destruction that can also be wrought by conventional weapons. It is conventional weapons alone that have been responsible for millions of deaths since the end of the Second World War. Despite the fundamental difference in character between nuclear and conventional weapons in terms of their capacity for indiscriminate destruction, millions of bereaved families would tell us that death by the latter weapons is just as final as by the former.

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom)

The Twelve therefore believe that the process of arms control and disarmament must apply in all fields. Progress in achieving verifiable conventional arms-control agreements, whether in Central Europe or in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals or in a global context, is crucial. But conventional disarmament is particularly important for Europe. There we see the largest concentration of weapons and of forces in the world. There we find the greatest need to achieve balance at the lowest possible level of forces. And there we must instil confidence - confidence that reductions in one field will not be undermined by imbalances in another or increases elsewhere.

In September, an important and substantial step forward was taken in the building of confidence of Europe. The Stockholm Conference reached agreement on detailed measures to this end. This, the first security agreement including nations from East and West since 1979, came as the result of painstaking, and now productive, negotiations. The Twelve, who made a substantial contribution to that result, will seek to build on it both in the field of arms control and, more widely, within the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. In the latter context, those of the Twelve who participate in the mutual and balanced force reduction talks in Vienna hope that it will now be possible to make rapid progress there on the basis of the constructive Western proposal of December 1985.

Equally, we support efforts in Latin America, in Africa and in Asia, as well as in Europe, which can contribute to a favourable atmosphere for regional disarmament measures. The Twelve hope that such efforts will prosper. The key is to reduce the problems posed by tension, fear and misperceptions in different regions of the world. I should like to underline at this point that a valuable study on conventional disarmament was recently completed under the auspices of the United Nations. The Twelve believe that that has made a substantial contribution

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to international wisdom on this issue, and we hope that the lessons it contains will be taken to heart.

At this session, as at some previous sessions, the First Committee may look at proposals for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The creation of such zones could, in certain parts of the world, contribute to stability in the areas concerned, to non-proliferation and to the disarmament process in general. This is, however, conditional upon the States concerned being prepared to participate on the basis of agreements freely entered into and in keeping with internationally recognized principles.

The Twelve continue to attach the utmost importance to an effective international non-proliferation régime. Those members of the Twelve who are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons note with great satisfaction the successful outcome of the 1985 Review Conference on that Treaty. With equal satisfaction, they note the subsequent increase in parties by a further 4, to a current total of 136. They believe that those events demonstrate the support of the overwhelming majority of States for the non-proliferation objectives enshrined in the Treaty.

The Twelve welcome the successful conclusion of the recent Review Conference on the biological weapons convention in September. We believe that the authority of the Convention, as the international norm against biological and toxin weapons, has been strengthened as a result. None the less, we feel that more can and should be done. We therefore look forward to the meeting of experts scheduled for next April, at which we hope that the process of increasing confidence in the biological-weapons-control régime can be taken a step further. The Twelve believe that the Biological Weapons Convention requires and deserves the support of the entire international community. We call upon those countries which have signed the

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Convention to hasten their ratification, and we urge those yet to sign to do without further delay.

Last year, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, we reflected on the utility of the Organization in general and of this Committee in particular. We concluded that the First Committee had played a useful role as a forum for deliberations on questions of disarmament and international security. At the same time, we recognized the need to improve the efficiency of the Committee. That requirement has become even more urgent as a result of the budgetary crisis which the United Nations faces. The Twelve believe that it is entirely possible for this Committee to make a contribution to the search for economy and efficiency within the United Nations without making unacceptable sacrifices.

At the thirtieth session of the General Assembly the number of draft resolutions adopted in the First Committee was 29. By the thirty-fifth session, that figure had risen to 44. Last year it was 73. We question the actual benefits in terms of results to be derived from this rapid increase in the number of draft resolutions. We of the European Community believe that the objective of resolutions should be the encouragement of effective and verifiable measures of arms control and disarmament. We therefore attach less importance to the total number of resolutions introduced than to the extent of consensus achieved on them. This practical approach will remain the starting-point of the Twelve. We await with interest, in this context, the results of the review of the United Nations approach to disarmament currently being undertaken in the United Nations Disarmament Commission on the initiative of a group of African countries. We hope specific recommendations will be submitted at next year's session of the General Assembly.

One of the tasks of the First Committee this year will be to set dates for convening the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

(Mr. Renton, United Kingdom,

I need hardly say that we of Western Europe will play an active and constructive role in the preparations for the special session, but I do need to note the particular relevance to those preparations of the budgetary restraint to which I have already referred.

The First Committee is also expected to decide upon dates for the United Nations Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, taking into consideration the conferences and venues scheduled in the field of disarmament at the United Nations. We of the Twelve recognize how complex the relationship between expenditure and armaments and the problems of development is at a global and national level. Complications and variables abound. The regional differences admit of no simple short-cuts, no crude panaceas. We are looking forward to a keen examination of all aspects of the relationship between disarmament, development and related issues of security. We will be open-minded, and, as always, we will be realistic.

General and complete disarmament remains our ultimate goal, though we recognize that it can only be achieved gradually. In the present circumstances it is vital that the negotiations now under way - whether at the bilateral or multilateral or regional level - should result in agreement on reduced levels of armaments. That would both help strengthen international security and increase mutual confidence. It should, we hope, create a "virtuous circle" leading to further and even more significant reductions. The Twelve will continue to work actively in pursuit of those goals. We call upon other States to join us in this endeavour.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden): "Of all words, the saddest are 'it might have been'." That saying captures the feelings of us all now. Reykjavik could have been, not just a small step in the right direction, but a great leap forward. The two leaders had within their grasp the most far-reaching disarmament agreement ever attempted. They let it slip out of their hands.

It is probably inevitable that the United States and the Soviet Union will now seek to place the blame on each other. Instead, their leaders should now face the real challenge - to overcome the failure of Reykjavik and shoulder the responsibility that they have to the world. Now, no time and no efforts must be spared to fulfil their commitments - to prevent an arms race in space and terminate it on earth, and ultimately to eliminate nuclear weapons everywhere.

The lesson of Reykjavik is that one must try, try hard, and try harder. If one fails, one must find a way of trying again.

"Only with eyes closed can we believe that there is peace and that freedom exists.

"Only with eyes open can we make sure that peace will be and that freedom will exist."

That was what a Swedish poet wrote some years ago. A poet can make the truth apparent with a few words.

The greatest fear that young people all over the world have today is the fear of nuclear war. That was the answer of almost 90 per cent of Swedish youth in a survey conducted some weeks ago. The survey is part of an international project initiated by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. Similar figures have been obtained in other surveys from other countries. The fear of nuclear war by far exceeds the fear of their parents' death - and that is new.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

When asked if they would have a real chance to survive a nuclear war, they showed realism: only 3 per cent believed so. Young people in Denmark and the Soviet Union gave the same figures. In the United States 17 per cent believed that they would have a chance to survive. Eighty-seven per cent of young people in Sweden said that all testing and production of nuclear weapons should cease and more than two thirds thought that a nuclear war could be prevented.

Young people all over the world have their eyes open and they think that a nuclear war can be prevented - but only if we, the grown-ups, shoulder our responsibility.

Today, through efforts in multilateral and bilateral negotiations, we can see the outline of a necessary and realistic agenda for disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament. I shall limit myself to 10 main points: first, since nuclear weapons are unique in their destructive capacity, they should be a priority disarmament issue; second, achievements in nuclear-arms limitation and disarmament must be defended; third, the qualitative nuclear-arms race should be halted; fourth, a programme of quantitative reductions in different categories of nuclear weapons should be initiated; fifth, geographical constraints on the deployment of nuclear weapons should be carried out; sixth, the sea and oceans should not be the scene of an unrestricted militarization; seventh, an arms race in outer space must be prevented; eighth, measures to build confidence and limit the risk of war must be taken; ninth, major reductions in conventional military arsenals must be made; and, tenth, all weapons of mass destruction should eventually be eliminated.

First, since nuclear weapons are unique in their destructive capacity they should be a priority disarmament issue. Nuclear weapons cannot be used for any rational purpose and their use must therefore be excluded. This is a common and supreme interest. President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev agreed to that

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

last November when they declared: "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." That declaration must be substantiated by action.

The use of nuclear weapons is discussed also in terms of international law. In his last appearance before the General Assembly, at the fortieth anniversary session of the United Nations, the late Prime Minister of Sweden, Olof Palme, stressed that any use of nuclear weapons would be deeply reprehensible. And he continued to propose:

"We should consider the possibility of prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons, by international law, as part of a process leading to general and complete disarmament." (A/40/PV.43, p. 66)

This matter should be pursued further.

Second, achievements in nuclear-arms limitation and disarmament must be defended. I shall mention three important examples. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been subjected to serious debates at three review conferences. Its continued viability will depend on concrete results in nuclear disarmament. The anti-ballistic missile Treaty is under fire. Compliance with it and its future are in doubt. Its letter and spirit must be respected. SALT II has never formally entered into force, but so far both parties claim to have respected its provisions. Even if its ratification is not on the agenda today, the parties should abide by its limits.

Disarmament and arms limitation treaties already concluded must be neither scrapped nor violated. Non-compliance, even if in minor details, can only provide arguments for those who wish to oppose any further agreements.

Third, the qualitative nuclear arms race should be halted. The rapid development of weapons performance - in terms of accuracy, speed and versatility, the use of computers, satellites and so on - makes quality increasingly important.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

A comprehensive test-ban treaty remains, more than 30 years after it was first suggested by India's late Prime Minister Nehru, the foremost measure among those aimed at curbing the qualitative development of nuclear warheads. A test ban would be a major political turning-point, and it would help to stop further nuclear weapons proliferation.

The test ban has become the key disarmament issue in the public mind; it is a major element in the five-continent initiative. The unilateral Soviet moratorium has been a positive step. It is regrettable that the United States has chosen to continue nuclear testing.

The Group of Scientific Experts of the Conference on Disarmament has clearly demonstrated that there are in this field no verification problems for which technical solutions cannot be found. The five-continent initiative furthermore contains an offer to assist in the verification of a test ban. Agreement on verification can be reached when there is a common will to do so. That is a lesson of the Stockholm Conference.

There are no shortcuts to a comprehensive test ban. It can be achieved only through complete negotiations on a multilateral treaty. The Conference on Disarmament remains the appropriate negotiating forum. Sweden both understands and shares the disappointment of many other States at the inability of the Conference to start substantive work on all aspects of the issue. The insistence of a few - very few - in continuing a never-ending argument on mandate formulations may block substantive work on this issue and thus become a disservice to multilateral disarmament efforts.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Sweden urges the two major nuclear-weapon States to freeze their weapon arsenals, a freeze which should include, among other provisions, a mutual comprehensive test ban and the cessation of the manufacture and deployment of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles.

Test ban moratoriums, freeze arrangements and a comprehensive test-ban treaty would help effectively to prevent further qualitative improvements in nuclear weapons and the development of new generations of those weapons. Measures to halt particularly destabilizing developments must be considered, both multilaterally and in negotiations between the major nuclear Powers. Qualitative aspects must be considered in agreements on numerical limitations; little is gained if quality is substituted for quantity.

In general, the military use of research and development must be given appropriate attention by the United Nations. My delegation will consult with interested delegations to find an acceptable procedure to deal with this matter. Due account should be taken of the work that has already been carried out by the earlier group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General.

Fourth, a programme of quantitative reductions in different categories of nuclear weapons should be initiated. Even though reductions of 30, 50 or 90 per cent would leave arsenals large enough to obliterate human civilization, this does not mean that such reductions are without purpose. Appropriate numerical reductions would reduce the risk of nuclear war and have far-reaching political effects. Not least important would be substantial reductions in intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe.

Fifth, geographical constraints on the deployment of nuclear weapons should be carried out. Nuclear-weapon-free zones can help to prevent new areas from being dragged into the nuclear arms race.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

In the Nordic area, the debate on a nuclear-weapon-free zone continues. Important national studies of the matter have now been carried out in the Nordic States. Discussions and studies will continue and, it is hoped, will help to bring about a Nordic consensus on the issue.

Sixth, the seas and oceans - our common heritage - should not be a theatre of unrestricted militarisation. One major concern is the problem of naval nuclear weapons. Every fourth nuclear weapon is earmarked for naval use. The danger of the early use of nuclear weapons - possibly nowhere greater - must be reduced by separating tactical nuclear weapons from routine military activities.

A number of possible disarmament and confidence-building measures in the naval field were highlighted both in the recent United Nations study and, last May, in the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Some areas where possibilities for early progress exist were singled out.

The United States-USSR Agreement on the Prevention of Incidents on and over the High Seas seems to have fared well in reducing the number of such incidents. We could, I believe, take steps to realize the idea of a multilateral incident convention. Sweden is ready to discuss how best to proceed to achieve that goal.

Seventh, an arms race in outer space must be prevented. Much attention has been given to the question of space weapons and defence against nuclear ballistic missiles.

In that context, I should like to quote Olof Palme again:

"To meet the scepticism about deterrence, and to reassure one's own people, the prospect of a watertight system, which will stop every ballistic missile, is being seriously explored.

"It is absolutely clear to me that an initiative of this kind will accelerate the nuclear arms race instead of making nuclear arms obsolete, and

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that it will therefore be another contribution to the continued vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons."

Attempts to develop advanced missile defences will accelerate the offensive arms race. Moreover, the pursuit of an illusory vision of invulnerability can in itself be dangerous. In the nuclear age, we are vulnerable and will be so as long as nuclear weapons remain.

A ban on anti-satellite weapons is urgent. Both the Soviet Union and the United States have developed and tested systems capable of attacking satellites. A ban on space weapons must include the destruction of existing anti-satellite systems.

Sweden welcomes the fact that this year the Conference on Disarmament has been able to start work on the agenda item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. That work must continue next year in order to define, without delay, ways and means of strengthening international law in this field.

Eighth, measures must be taken to build confidence and limit the risk of war, both nuclear and conventional. Lack of confidence is a driving force behind the arms race. The building of confidence thus serves to halt it. For that reason, it is particularly promising to note the recent successful conclusion of the Stockholm Conference. Stockholm was not a spectacular meeting of two but, rather, a victory for hard work by many, during months and years of patient multilateral diplomacy on the part of 35 nations.

The Stockholm Conference showed that when a common spirit of purpose exists, multilateral disarmament negotiations can bring about concrete and positive results. Even if the initial positions of the parties are widely divergent, common solutions can be found. Verification problems can be solved. New procedures can be devised to overcome mutual suspicion and lack of confidence.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

The document adopted on 19 September in Stockholm marks an important step in the work of the Conference on Confidence and Security building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. The results now achieved should favourably influence the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) follow-up meeting due to start in Vienna. My Government expects the Vienna meeting to decide to proceed to the next stage of the Conference, which would make it possible to deal with a wider range of security and disarmament problems in Europe - disarmament proper. The process embarked upon can be vital to European security and thus also to world peace.

Ninth, major reductions in conventional military arsenals must be made. Since the Second World War, approximately 25 million people have been killed in conventional warfare. Conventional weapons are being used in wars at this very moment, causing immense suffering - not least to innocent civilians. And they may be the trip-wire that will pitch us into a nuclear catastrophe.

In Europe, the most heavily armed of all continents, the conditions for substantial conventional disarmament may be improving. I hope the positive conclusion to the Stockholm Conference and signs of a growing interest in conventional reductions will lead to a conventional military balance at a substantially lower level.

There is a competitive relationship between the arms race and development. There could instead be a mutual reinforcing inter-relationship between disarmament and development. The resources now wasted on a continued and exhilarating arms race must be put to constructive use for development purposes.

From the very outset, Sweden has supported the proposal to convene a United Nations conference on the relationship between disarmament and development, originally scheduled to be held in Paris this summer. We greatly regret that the

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

conference has been postponed until 1987. The General Assembly must now decide, as unaniamously recommended by the Preparatory Committee, on a suitable venue and exact date next year for the conference.

Tenth, all weapons of mass destruction should eventually be eliminated.

A long-term objective formally endorsed by the Soviet Union and the United States is the final and complete elimination of nuclear weapons, everywhere and of every kind. Though difficult to reach, it is a goal we must strive for. We must be wiser than the Trojans. We must follow the advice of Cassandra and destroy the horse, that can destroy us.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

On the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction, important agreements have already been reached or are subject to negotiations.

Freeing the world of the scourge of chemical weapons is an important and urgent task. Sweden is taking an active part in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a convention completely banning such weapons. During the past year considerable progress has been made in those negotiations. The conclusion of a comprehensive chemical weapons convention is within reach, even though a number of both technically and politically complicated problems remain to be solved. One such issue is the formulation of measures to ensure that chemical warfare agents are not produced in the chemical industry, while at the same time peaceful industrial production is not hampered.

Furthermore, in order to be viable the convention must be made verifiable. Far-reaching agreements have already been reached on various routine verification measures, including international on-site inspection. One major outstanding problem is verification on challenge, the safety net for exceptional situations where routine measures might prove insufficient to overcome serious suspicions of significant breaches of the convention. The negotiations are now at a decisive stage. All negotiating parties must spare no effort to turn this possibility into a long-awaited reality.

Sweden welcomes the successful outcome of the second review Conference of the bacteriological (biological) weapons Convention. It is gratifying that several concrete measures to enhance further the authority of the Convention were agreed upon, as noted in the Conference's final declaration. The Conference provided a solid basis for further improvement of the procedures for verifying compliance with the Convention.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

A fourth category of weapons of mass destruction, radiological weapons, is subject to negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. It is essential that the hostile release or dissemination of radioactive material be prohibited, irrespective of the method applied. Sweden therefore attaches great importance to a prohibition of military attacks on nuclear facilities. In the wake of the Chernobyl accident, the potential consequences of such an attack on any nuclear facility should be obvious to everyone.

I am aware of the obstacles ahead of us. Decades of distrust take time to dispel. Powerful military-industrial complexes in different countries are always ready to oppose everything they can depict as dangerous laxity in the face of a ruthless adversary. Worst-case military scenarios have long given rise to ever-ascending spirals in the arms race. Nations compete for power. Military force, whether actually used or kept as a possible threat, remains a key instrument in that competition.

I believe in the common sense of men and women. Weapons built by human hands can be dismantled by human hands. Trust can be built. Worst-case military scenarios can motivate the pursuit of disarmament. Nations can compete by means other than military force. The icy winds from Reykjavik must not be allowed to presage a nuclear winter.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Both the general debate in the General Assembly's plenary meetings and the discussion in the First Committee have been taking place at a time when the mood of the international community is in favour of concrete action aimed ultimately at a breakthrough to improve the state of affairs in the world and realistically to stop and reverse the process of material preparations for the nuclear self-destruction of mankind.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

That constructive mood was clearly apparent also in the interesting and deeply thoughtful statements made here by the representatives of Mexico, Austria, the German Democratic Republic and Bangladesh and in the profound and thoughtful statement of the representative of Sweden. It is easy to understand the great importance attached from the very beginning of our common work to the results of the Soviet-United States meeting at the Reykjavik summit, where there was discussion of key issues regarding the limitation and reduction of armaments: issues which are at the forefront everywhere, including in the work of the First Committee, the General Assembly's political committee.

Beginning with its first special session devoted to disarmament, the General Assembly has, in a number of resolutions, called upon the USSR and the United States to report to it on the state of Soviet-United States talks. Accordingly, we should like today to make such a report, providing a picture of what took place at Reykjavik.

Our fundamental assessment of the results of that meeting was set forth by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Sergeiyevich Gorbachev, at his press conference at Reykjavik.

The purpose of the meeting was to give momentum to the constructive work in the major areas of world politics, to embark on productive efforts to reduce weapons and to reduce the threat of nuclear war, and to begin work on agreements and on the implementation of agreements reached at the Soviet-United States summit meeting held at Geneva in November 1985.

It will be recalled that the parties at Geneva recognized the special responsibility of the USSR and the United States for the preservation of peace, jointly stating that nuclear war must never be fought and can never be won. It was

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

also stated that neither side would strive to achieve military supremacy. The enormous importance of those provisions is clear, and has been widely recognized here in the United Nations.

Almost a year has gone by since the Geneva meeting. The Soviet leadership has been faithfully abiding by the obligations it assumed at Geneva. Since then, our country has four times extended its moratorium on nuclear explosions. For 14 months silence has reigned at Soviet nuclear testing sites; this is convincing evidence of the Soviet Union's commitment to the Geneva agreements and of its sense of responsibility for the fate of the world. I must say quite frankly that these decisions were not easy to take, particularly bearing in mind that throughout that time the explosions in Nevada have continued, as they do to this day.

On 15 January this year, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Sergeiyevich Gorbachev, made a major statement, putting forward a well-founded programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons by the end of this century. In June of this year, the Warsaw Treaty countries put forward a comprehensive programme for large-scale reductions in conventional arms and armed forces in Europe.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

That too was a major step which took into consideration the concerns expressed in Western Europe and in the United States. Together with other countries, we have made a substantial contribution to the attainment of important agreements at the Stockholm Conference, reducing the threat of war in Europe.

Learning the lesson of the Chernobyl accident, the Soviet Union took the initiative for the holding of an emergency session of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna. It has taken place, and its results are very promising. International machinery has been created that will make it possible to solve many extremely important issues connected with the safety of nuclear energy.

Such is the list of concrete actions undertaken by the Soviet Union guided by the spirit and letter of the Soviet-American agreements reached in Geneva. I think the facts themselves make clear to everyone the seriousness of the approach of our country to the Geneva understandings and to their implementation.

In other words, in the period concerned the Soviet Union has done everything possible to promote the emergence of a new thinking in the nuclear age that accords with its realities. And it can be noted with satisfaction that offshoots of that new thinking have emerged in Europe too.

Why, then, was the Reykjavik meeting necessary, and what motives were behind that Soviet initiative?

The fact is that the hopes for major positive changes in the world situation, which arose and were spread about soon after the Geneva summit, have recently begun to dwindle.

To take the example of the Soviet-American talks on nuclear and space armaments, a lot of different things were said there. Fifty or even a hundred versions of proposals were introduced. That alone is enough to cast doubt on the fruitfulness of the debate there. If there had been one, two or even three proposals, that would have narrowed the discussion in some way and focused the

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search on the most important areas, and it could have been expected to produce some kind of concrete agreements and proposals for submission to the Governments. But frankly nothing of that kind happened at the Geneva talks. As of late, the talks have been idling; they are, to all practical purposes, virtually deadlocked. The arms race has not been halted; on the contrary, it is nearing a point beyond which a new spiral of the arms race will be inevitable, with unpredictable political and military consequences.

Hopes for a turn for the better in international affairs have also begun fading because major Soviet initiatives that were broadly welcomed by world public opinion have failed to meet with the due understanding on the part of the United States Administration.

The situation has been aggravated, and world public opinion has become increasingly alarmed. The world community, including the United Nations, has been urging the leaders of all countries, and above all those of the major Powers, first and foremost the Soviet Union and the United States, to show enough political will and determination to reverse the dangerous trends.

In order to break this alarming vicious cycle, this cycle of anxiety, and to put the processes on the right track, we need the leaders of the USSR and the United States to provide powerful momentum. It was precisely for that reason that, in his reply to the 25 July letter of President Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev proposed an immediate meeting, putting aside all other business for a day or two. The President, I must say, did agree, so the decision to hold the meeting was a joint one.

In proposing the meeting, the Soviet Union was guided by a resolve to save all the peoples of the world from the threat of nuclear catastrophe and the fear of annihilation, whether from the earth or from space. We proceeded from the understanding that the peoples need genuine security rather than a mere shift of

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the threat from earth to outer space. It is not our intention to seek an end to the nuclear nightmare only to find mankind plunged into a terrible science-fiction "star wars" nightmare.

We also proceeded from the premise that it was necessary to halt the squandering of human resources and to release funds for peaceful development. With the arms race continuing on earth, countries are throwing money to the wind. It would be even less admissible for them to throw trillions of dollars into outer space.

Finally we took into account the clearly expressed opinion of the world community of nations and its demands, which essentially reflect the new political thinking. Now, what are those demands?

Shortly before the Reykjavik meeting, the Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries addressed the Harare appeal to the leaders of the USSR and the United States to put an end to the arms race and to achieve meaningful agreements in disarmament, including the conclusion at an early stage of an agreement on the prevention of an arms race in space.

In the Mexican Declaration the Delhi Six called for a ban on nuclear-weapons testing and the elimination of nuclear weapons. At the same time they opposed the misuse of the outer space of our planet for destructive purposes. This was mentioned in detail yesterday in the First Committee by the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Robles.

The United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly appealed to the leaders of the USSR and the United States to provide decisive momentum for negotiations on nuclear and space armaments in order to achieve effective agreements on halting the arms race, reducing nuclear arsenals and preventing an arms race in space.

That appeal could be heard also in the statements of the overwhelming majority of representatives in the general debate at the current forty-first session of

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

the General Assembly. I would, for example, refer to the statement that the Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom, Sir Geoffrey Howe, made on behalf of the countries of the European Community. He said:

"The Geneva negotiations have as one priority the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The other urgent priority is deep cuts in the strategic and intermediate forces of the United States and the Soviet Union."

(A/41/PV.6, p. 71)

One after another representatives spoke out in favour of maintaining and strengthening the Treaty basis for the reduction of armaments, first and foremost the SALT agreements and the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) Treaty.

Finally, at the fortieth session of the General Assembly the United States itself proposed a draft resolution in which, I must say, it quite rightly stressed the fundamental importance of full implementation and strict observance of agreements on arms limitation and disarmament if individual nations and the international community were to derive enhanced security from them. It was adopted and became resolution 40/94 L.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Thus, the Soviet Union and the United States were given a clear-cut mandate, a coherent directive from the international community, as to what they should be working towards in their bilateral talks. The Soviet side took this directive fully into account.

The announcement of the joint USSR-United States decision to hold a meeting evoked a lively response in all countries of the world. The response was lively and, with a few exceptions, positive. The dialogue in Reykjavik confirmed the validity of such a response and gave answers to many questions of paramount importance. That was a major meeting, as demonstrated by its content and the problems that were at the centre of very broad, intensive and concerned discussions.

The Soviet leadership did not come to the capital of Iceland empty-handed. It presented a whole package of major compromise proposals which, had they been accepted, could have truly led, in a very short time, to a major breakthrough in all areas of nuclear-arms limitation and have effectively averted the threat of nuclear war, making it possible to start moving towards a nuclear-free world.

Mikhail Gorbachev proposed to the United States President that at Reykjavik the leaders of the two countries give binding instructions to their Foreign Ministers and the agencies concerned to draft three agreements that could subsequently be signed during the visit of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the United States.

The first such draft agreement, on strategic weapons, stipulated a 50-per-cent reduction leading to the total elimination of these deadliest of weapons by the end of the century. Here, the Soviet side proceeded from the premise that the world expected genuine major steps, deep cuts and bold and responsible actions in the interests of all peoples, including the Soviet and American peoples.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Naturally, the draft agreement on strategic weapons must include balanced reductions in their historically established structures in a positive and honest manner. The Soviet leader proposed a new formula of a 50-per-cent reduction for both delivery vehicles and warheads: a 50-per-cent reduction in every component of strategic offensive weapons - land-based strategic missiles, submarine-launched strategic missiles and strategic bombers. At the same time, sea-launched cruise missiles were to become the subject of separate agreements.

In addition, bearing in mind the concern expressed by the American side, we were prepared to reduce substantially the number of heavy missiles and their warheads within the framework of our arms-limitation proposals. It should be recalled that in the Soviet Union proposal to reduce strategic weapons by 50 per cent, a proposal advanced in Geneva, the Soviet Union included medium-range missiles as strategic weapons capable of reaching the territory of the USSR. The Soviet side abandoned that demand at Reykjavik, and it also withdrew the issue of forward-based systems. The United States side accepted the new Soviet proposal. Thus, because of major concessions on our part, agreement was reached on reduction of strategic weapons.

The second Soviet proposal concerned medium-range missiles and was aimed at the drafting of an agreement relating to that type of weapon based on a new approach that would abandon all the options discussed earlier - interim, temporary and so on - and return to the original United States option of completely eliminating United States and Soviet missiles in Europe. The Soviet side made serious changes in its position, taking primarily into account the interests of the European States in arriving at a solution to this problem now. It left aside the French and British nuclear capabilities, although those two countries, both allies of the United States, have a nuclear potential that continues to be built up and improved, and all their military activities are closely co-ordinated within the

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Even that obstacle, therefore, was also removed by the efforts of the Soviet side and at the cost of major concessions on our part.

As for the concern over medium-range missiles in Asia, Mikhail Gorbachev proposed a compromise solution: to proceed immediately to negotiations, to identify the various points in dispute and to settle the issue. It was clear that the question of missiles with a range of less than 1,000 kilometres would inevitably arise, and in this connection the Soviet proposal was to freeze those missiles, both in Europe and in Asia, and to enter immediately into negotiations in order to decide how to dispose of them.

In the course of the exchanges that took place the United States side made it clear that it was not prepared to remove its missiles from Europe, and it once again insisted upon the interim solution. The Soviet leadership emphasized the need to rid Europe totally of Soviet and United States medium-range missiles. We drew the attention of the United States President to the fact that he, as it were, had abandoned the so-called zero option, upon which he had once insisted, and which the USSR was now prepared to accommodate. The Soviet side then took another constructive step and stated that, in the elimination of United States and Soviet missiles in Europe, the Soviet Union would agree that the number of warheads on Soviet medium-range missiles in Asia would be limited to 100, while an equal number would be retained on American missiles of the same type stationed on United States territory.

Finally, both sides agreed to reach an accord on that category of nuclear weapons, and here again, we made a major concession because of our desire to begin to move forward and to take bold, original decisions with a view to achieving a mutually acceptable compromise.

(Mr. Estrovsky, USSR)

Naturally, the problem of verification also came up during the discussions at Reykjavik. Because of its readiness to make deep cuts in nuclear weapons, the Soviet side made it clear that, since the Soviet Union and the United States were entering upon a concrete phase of eliminating nuclear weapons, there must be absolute clarity with regard to the question of verification, and verification must indeed be tightened.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The Soviet Union would like to see the kind of verification that would give full confidence to both sides that they would not find themselves in any kind of trap. The Soviet Union reaffirmed that it was prepared to accept any kind - I stress: any kind - of verification. Thanks to the Soviet position, the verification issue also has been removed.

In connection with the understandings with regard to embarking upon the practical elimination of nuclear weapons, the question then obviously arose of the need for each side to have assurances that during that period neither side would seek military superiority. That approach to the matter was entirely justified and legitimate from the political and military standpoints.

Politically speaking, if reductions are under way one must be concerned to see that all the brakes in action today which are applied to the creation of new types of weapons are not only preserved but also strengthened.

From the military standpoint, it is indeed necessary to see to it that both sides reduce their nuclear potential and at the same time - while the process of reduction is going on - see to it that neither side can secretly or stealthily prepare and seize the initiative and break through to achieve military superiority. That would be inadmissible either on the part of the Soviet Union or the United States.

In this context, the Soviet side put the matter in the following way. When the two sides reach the stage of real, deep cuts and 10 years later - the stage of eliminating the nuclear potential of the United States and the Soviet Union - nothing must be done to disturb the machinery which restrains the arms race, particularly the anti-ballistic missile Treaty, but rather consolidate it. Our proposal amounted to strengthening the indefinite anti-ballistic missile Treaty by the sides' assuming equal obligations in the course of the next 10 years,

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

undertaking not to use the right to withdraw from the treaty. I should like to draw attention to the fact that that was a compromise period, lying somewhere between the five years proposed by the United States of America and the 15-20 years mentioned earlier by the Soviet side.

At the same time, the Soviet Union expressed its support for the idea that in the course of those 10 years all ABM demands should be strictly observed, there should be a banning of all testing in space of all space-based ABM elements and only research and laboratory testing would be permitted. At the same time we proposed that during negotiations in the course of the next few years the parties should find further mutually acceptable solutions in this area.

We have no illusions here and know the commitment of the United States Administration and the President himself to the so-called strategic defence initiative (SDI). The Soviet Union's agreement to the continuation and possibility of laboratory testing quite clearly makes it possible for the President to carry out thorough research and identify what SDI is all about - though for many, for us and many persons here, it is quite clear what it is and where the danger of the strategic defence initiative lies. It has quite rightly been described as the "star wars" programme.

First, the danger is a political one: immediately a situation would be created that would cause confusion, engender and increase lack of trust towards each other, and suspicion. In other words, for us to deal promptly and finally with the reduction of nuclear weapons, we need a very different situation.

Secondly, there is a military aspect to the question. The Americans think that through outer space they could achieve military superiority over us and put into effect an idea of one of its Presidents who said: "Who rules in outer space

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will rule on Earth." That shows that what we are dealing with here is imperial ambitions. Through SDI - and I should like this to be taken into account - one may come up with new types of weapons and an entirely new stage of the arms race, with incalculable, unforeseeable and serious consequences.

A situation would be created, in connection with the proposals put forward on nuclear disarmament where, on the one hand, we would be working for agreement to begin reducing nuclear weapons - the most dangerous and frightful weapon today; and, on the other hand, we would have to give our blessing to research and even to carry out such research in space, in the environment itself, in order to create an entirely new weapon. I think this has nothing to do with common sense or normal logic. Hence, there was a clash between two approaches to world politics, including questions such as the cessation of the arms race and the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

The United States Administration persisted in insisting that America should have the right to test and carry out research into everything relating to SDI, not only in the laboratory but also beyond and outside it, and primarily in space itself. Furthermore, the United States also called for our agreement to the deployment of the strategic defence initiative. It is clear that it was impossible to agree to that "right" - which destroys the whole sense and purport of the 1972 anti-ballistic missile Treaty, if one wants to have a responsible and sensible approach. Furthermore, the Soviet Union has no plans for the deployment of any strategic defence initiative. We have a very different idea. A situation of certainty and trust for deep cuts and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons would be created precisely by strengthening the anti-ballistic missile Treaty.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

We think that in Reykjavik the leaders of the two countries were on the point of breaking through to the adoption of far-reaching historical decisions on the elimination of all types of nuclear weapons by 1995, as proposed by the Soviet side. In the course of the next few years those sides would have sought further mutually acceptable decisions in this regard. Our positions have never been so close together. It was simply a matter of giving instructions for work on a treaty and the procedures about how to put this into practical effect. It would have been possible to sign treaties on the subject during the course of the visit of the General Secretary to Washington.

However, the United States Administration, placing all its trust in United States technical superiority and the possibility of achieving military superiority through SDI, went so far as to bury those almost-achieved agreements and understandings which had already been the subject of agreement.

We should like to tell the Committee also that in the course of the Reykjavik meeting the Soviet side proposed to the President of the United States that agreement should be reached immediately after the conclusion of that meeting on going to negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear explosions and that would be a process during whose course it would be possible to consider at some stage - maybe as a matter of priority - the questions of thresholds, the yield of nuclear explosions, the number of nuclear explosions a year, and the fate of the 1974 and 1976 treaties.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The main thing, however, was to agree to continue and to make further progress towards producing a full-scale treaty on the total and definitive prohibition of nuclear explosions. We believe that the two sides came close in Reykjavik to finding a formula on that question, too.

In assessing what happened, we cannot fail to see that the United States Administration scuttled the success of the meeting. As a result, the historic chance to reach agreement on a whole package of agreements was missed. And, as has become quite clear now, it was scuttled by the will of the military and industrial complex, whose narrow and selfish interests prevailed in the United States position this time as well.

Thus, in the minds of everyone here - and this was expressed today and yesterday, as was apparent in statements - a natural question arises: what next? We are taking a sober look at the matter. The United States remains; it is a reality. The Soviet Union remains - another reality. The world as a whole is also a reality. And we cannot gain prestige or authority or solve outstanding problems if we do not take into account the realities of the world today.

The meeting in Reykjavik made it abundantly clear who is who in matters of disarmament. The Soviet side felt that there was a lack of new thinking. We again faced the spectre of the pursuit of military superiority.

Today, here in this Committee, we find it necessary to express the hope that our American partners will come to recognize the realities of the world in which we all live. Otherwise, if the Americans fail to begin to think in contemporary categories and to proceed on the basis of current realities rather than on dreams, we will make no progress in the search for correct solutions.

We do not believe that the meeting in Reykjavik can be considered fruitless. On the contrary, it was nevertheless a step in the long and arduous dialogue in the search for solutions. It should be noted that agreements were almost reached.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

They needed to be finalised. The very road that was travelled to such major agreements on such considerable cuts in nuclear weapons is a great experience and tremendous achievement. The Reykjavik meeting constitutes an extremely important event in international life and a major stage in American-Soviet relations.

The leadership of both countries should obviously think over the entire situation that evolved in Reykjavik and come back once again to the questions under discussion to try to bridge the gap dividing the USSR and the USA. That is the way the General Secretary of the Central Committee, Mr. Gorbachev, put it. And, indeed, both sides agreed on many things and covered a lot of ground. The Soviet Union is aware that the President of the United States may have to consult the Congress, political circles and the American public. America should think this whole matter over. The Soviet Union will wait, without withdrawing the proposals it made public and which were, as a matter of fact, agreed to by both sides.

An interesting exchange of views on a number of other issues took place at Reykjavik. Humanitarian issues were discussed as well, and the two sides addressed specific issues in that area. Certain agreements reached there could have become a component of a final document. But because the most important thing was destroyed, the whole process came to a halt.

I should like to stress once again that we think there are no grounds for giving up hope. The meeting brought us to a very important stage of understanding where we stand today and showed that agreements are possible.

If the United States President and Administration heed Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal to continue to study everything that was discussed in Reykjavik and to consult the circles they deem it necessary to consult, then not everything has been lost. On the basis of what was achieved in Reykjavik, there are possibilities for reaching agreements which would make a summit in Washington a realistic proposition.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The formula for moving ahead is quite simple - dialogue, realism, responsibility. We are confident that we shall not be alone in efforts aimed at such forward movement and that we shall be acting together with all peace-loving forces.

Of course, a great deal depends upon the United States and the USSR in matters of disarmament and security. However, Soviet-American talks - like all talks among the militarily significant States - do not take place in a vacuum. It is thus extremely important to ensure that the political climate in the world contributes to the success of those talks.

What is required in order to achieve progress in disarmament is not only the efforts of the Soviet Union and the United States, but also purposeful work on the part of the entire international community, whose political will is expressed by the United Nations.

The times require action from us, not merely lofty speeches which are not followed by concrete action. The world is tired of talk. What the world needs is real progress in disarmament and in the elimination of nuclear weapons.

We share the belief, reflected in United Nations resolutions, that in dealing with the key issues of war and peace, all Powers must take into account the higher interests of mankind. We support the appeal made yesterday by the doyen of disarmament, Mr. Garcia Robles, to the effect that the historic opportunity for reaching agreement on nuclear disarmament that is opening up should not be lost. We favour the holding of productive bilateral and multilateral negotiations on the reduction and elimination of the nuclear danger.

We are convinced that in the present circumstances, the importance of multilateral efforts has increased many times over, and a majority of the delegations here have spoken about the need to intensify them. To move to a secure peace through disarmament is a task that is not only multifaceted but global, requiring the combined efforts of all States jointly and collectively and of each

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

State individually. To resolve this problem, there must be tremendous acceleration in the entire negotiating machinery for the limitation and reduction of arms and a sharp increase in the rate of its efficiency.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The importance of multilateralism is more than ever before on the increase, as shown convincingly by recent positive outgrowths of that new factor in the field of international security. The success of the Stockholm Conference, the signing in Vienna of conventions laying the foundations for an international régime for the safe development of nuclear energy, progress towards banning chemical weapons, the positive results of the second review Conference on the bacteriological weapons Convention: all this confirms that dialogue is possible and necessary.

The latest advances in scientific discovery have shown us that multiplying the elements and factors of a given process can create a qualitatively new synergetic effect. What is a chaos of elements in a single, fragmented environment can, in combined aggregate form, lead to higher forms of organization. Thus, given the collective reason of world public opinion, we are convinced that we shall find appropriate political solutions and solve the problems of the nuclear and space age. For its part, the Soviet Union will continue honestly and energetically to seek political ways and means of eliminating the military threat and of strengthening co-operation and mutual understanding in matters of war and peace.

As Mr. Gorbachev has said,

"The Soviet Union will continue to work constructively and responsibly. We shall not depart from our course of peace, against the arms race, in favour of the prohibition and ination of nuclear weapons, and in favour of lifting the threat that hangs over our entire planet."

The Soviet delegation intends in its next statement to set forth specific views and proposals on problems related to the limitation and elimination of weapons which are under discussion in the United Nations and other multilateral forums.

Mr. BADAWI (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf I wish at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation and myself, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are fully confident that your wide experience and diplomatic skill will help you guide the work of the Committee wisely and ably. I wish also to congratulate the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur on their election to their important posts, which reflects the Committee's confidence in them.

I affirm my delegation's entire readiness to co-operate in the achievement of our common goal: the promotion of the security, stability and welfare of our world, which is in danger given the current international situation.

There is no doubt that the world is extremely frustrated, even despairing, over the meagre progress achieved thus far in the field of nuclear disarmament, despite universal agreement on the seriousness of the nuclear threat and on the need to eliminate all nuclear weapons. That agreement has existed since the foundation of the Organization and has been reaffirmed in many United Nations resolutions and in various bilateral and multilateral international conventions.

Unfortunately, however, at a time when the world public opinion which we here are privileged to represent has become more familiar with the aspects of the issues, when opposition has grown to vertical and horizontal nuclear proliferation, and when there is an increasingly strong call for concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament, nuclear arsenals continue to grow and the threat of war continues to increase and become more acute.

There are several doctrines concerning nuclear weapons and nuclear war. Some argue that nuclear weapons have made the world more stable. Others affirm the importance of preserving equal security through deterrence and military parity. Many will agree with me that the fact that there has been no world war since the

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

last use of the nuclear weapon does not attest to the validity of the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, and is no reason to retain nuclear weapons, unless we tend to disregard things unintentionally or intentionally.

Although there has long been global peace in the world, we cannot accept nuclear weapons and the type of international relations to which they have given rise. These are manifested in complex regional conflicts with international ramifications.

In his address to the General Assembly on 22 September 1986, President Reagan of the United States said that

"while the United States and the Soviet Union disagree over the root causes of political tension, we agree that regional conflicts could escalate into global confrontation". (A/41/PV.4, p. 24)

Egypt believes in the principle of undiminished equal security as a sovereign right of each State. It is in favour of security and safety for all the States of the world. But we cannot endorse interpretations of that principle that would turn it into a pretext for acquiring more nuclear weapons. We cannot accept the notion that security for the nuclear Powers must be at the expense of the rest of the world's non-nuclear States, or at the expense of the future of mankind. Spiralling nuclear arsenals and the resulting nuclear threat have rendered the notion of equal security meaningless.

Egypt realizes that the nuclear equation and the international military equation in general are very complicated. But we disagree with those who claim that that justifies not making an effort to deal with the situation, especially given the all-embracing consequences of failure. The major Powers, which bear the greatest responsibility, are now unable, even unwilling, to address this equation with a view to the interests and aspirations of the international community.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

We feel that all these doctrines and arguments are a pretext used by one party or the other to preserve nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, which has caused today's world to be a hostage to nuclear weapons. Nuclear destruction, which used to be a frightening nightmare, is now an actual sinister threat hanging over the world.

Given that painful reality, it behoves me to state clearly and frankly that we here, especially the nuclear States, have assumed political, legal and moral responsibilities that stem from our commitments under the Charter of the United Nations and other international commitments. It is our responsibility to grapple with the various aspects of the arms race and nuclear disarmament with urgency and resolve. There can be no continuation of the situation in which the calls of the world are met with indifference from those who claim to represent it. We cannot represent the international community without practising what we preach with a view to meeting the aspirations of the world. No State large or small, nuclear or non-nuclear, should persist in ignoring the urgent desire of the international community to be freed from the threat of the nuclear sword of Damocles, not to mention the status of the United Nations as a corner-stone and a mainstay of the contemporary international system as well as the future one, which should not be prejudiced because of failure to face the gravest threat to it of our age.

In his statement to the General Assembly on 23 September last, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, quoted from a statement by General Secretary Gorbachev in which he said:

"Everywhere in the world there is a growing conviction in the minds of the peoples and in political public circles and widely differing in their orientation and outlook that what is at stake is the survival of mankind and that the time has come for decisive and responsible action." (A/41/PV.6, p. 42).

We agree with that concept.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

We must confirm the responsibility of the nuclear States, and especially the two super-Powers, to ease nuclear tension. That is their responsibility because of their acquisition of nuclear weapons, and they have special responsibilities for the protection of international peace and security under the Charter of our Organization.

We have followed closely the bilateral consultations between them concerning the international situation, as also the negotiations conducted by the two States in different cities of the world on disarmament issues. We had hoped that the summit meeting in Reykjavik would pave the way for concrete agreements in the nuclear field to be concluded at the next meeting, and that it would give an impetus to the bilateral and multilateral negotiations on various aspects of disarmament. We believe that what we have witnessed lately in the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe as regards reducing the possibility of a sudden, accidental war in the European arena, together with the proposals of certain non-aligned and neutral countries, as regards contributing to a system of verification and control, and compliance with disarmament conventions as well as military manoeuvres - all provide common ground for certain achievements and initiatives by the nuclear Powers, foremost among them the two super-Powers, as follows.

First, prevention of the transfer of the arms race, and especially of nuclear weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, to new spheres: In this Committee we call for a commitment on the part of the two super-Powers to abide strictly by the anti-ballistic missile Treaty, as well as to widen the scope of that Treaty. In order to cover other States, it should include verification and compliance measures, together with specific interpretations of the controversial provisions in an attempt to close loopholes in the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 in the light of the speedy technological developments in this respect.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

Secondly, reaffirmation of the commitment of the nuclear States to the agreements they reached in the field of disarmament, together with ratification of what has not so far been ratified.

Thirdly, urgently reaching a comprehensive nuclear test ban and widening the scope of the CTBT and the ratification of both the Threshold Treaties together with peaceful tests: We believe that a nuclear test ban represents the first step on the path of the elimination of nuclear weapons, which have been developed to become more destructive and devastating. A test ban is a major step towards ending the nuclear-arms race in accordance with the Final Document. We maintain that the present level of nuclear armaments does not justify the holding of more tests under the pretext of preserving deterrence or of the need to test the effectiveness of nuclear-weapon stockpiles.

Fourthly, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to new areas of the world and encouragement of the translation of the proposals put forward to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones into concrete reality: In this regard Egypt addresses an appeal to the nuclear States to respond through practical measures and constructive positions to efforts aimed at protecting the Middle East and Africa from the nuclear danger. Egypt warns against the proliferation of nuclear weapons to those two regions because of the serious implications at both the regional and the international levels, given the ongoing conflicts and the special circumstances there.

In the interest of the preservation of the peace and security of the above two regions, Egypt calls on the States of the two regions, especially the States that possess advanced nuclear capability that is not subject to international control, such as Israel and South Africa, to affirm the peaceful nature of such programmes as a first step towards the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones through acceding

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, or at least through applying the international safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency to all their nuclear facilities.

For many years Egypt has made unstinting efforts to ease world tension and to end the arms race, especially in the nuclear field, in consonance with its profound belief in providing a free, decent and secure life for the peoples of the world and its conviction that that will not be achieved so long as the world is held hostage to the idea that security can be guaranteed only through increased armaments. Similarly, in view of the world's limited resources, we shall not be able to increase our efforts towards development and grapple with the socio-economic disequilibrium of the world if we do not overcome the present malaise arising from our wasting resources and human expertise in bloody wars and in the stockpiling of arsenals to realize certain unproven security notions that only provide fragile stability like sand-castles.

I cannot speak of disarmament issues without dealing with the relationship between disarmament and development; it is becoming all the more urgent and important for us to do so, given the relentless spiral of military expenditures.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

We have followed with interest and optimism the development of international thinking towards recognition of the relationship between disarmament and development and its crystallization in valuable United Nations studies. The vast majority of the international community maintains that concrete proposals should be put forward and measures taken in this area, particularly since the Group of Eminent Persons has recognized the importance of the interrelationship in the triad: security, disarmament and development. The adoption of such measures is the ultimate goal of the forthcoming United Nations International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, to be held next year. We believe that at its current session the General Assembly should formulate definitive guidelines and lay the necessary groundwork to complement the work of the Preparatory Committee so that the Conference can indeed be held in 1987, without any further postponement, with a view to reaching concrete and practical agreements leading to the freeing of both human and material resources for development by way of a reduction in armaments and military expenditure, thereby alleviating the crushing economic burden borne by the developing countries.

For its part, Egypt would recall the proposal it made at the third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, which noted the need for any arms-control or disarmament agreement to contain provisions to allocate the resulting savings to economic and social development, especially in the developing countries. Such a recommendation by the Conference would be a step in the right direction.

Egypt clearly views the creation of a multilateral negotiating body entrusted with the responsibility of negotiating disarmament issues as one of the most important achievements of the tenth special session of the General Assembly. That action reflected international recognition of the collective responsibility of the world's countries to work towards the goal of disarmament; it stands as irrefutable

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

testimony to the validity of the position adopted by many States non-members of military alliances, confirming as it does the importance of participation in the disarmament process by the majority of countries in the world instead of confining it to the two super-Powers and the members of their alliances, in view of the consequences inherent in a continuation of the arms race at its present pace and levels.

More than seven years have elapsed since the establishment of that negotiating body, which has been renamed the Conference on Disarmament in order to consolidate its international status and potential and to reflect the will of the international community to negotiate through multilateral organs within the United Nations. Although the expertise represented in the Conference could consolidate its effectiveness, and in spite of the fact that in practice the Conference can dispel the hesitancy expressed by some since its inception, it is today suffering from paralysis and timidity, thus preventing it from undertaking genuine negotiations on the most important issues before it in the nuclear field, first and foremost a nuclear test-ban. It is incapable of dealing with emergent trends towards extending the arms race into new spheres, notably, outer space.

Negotiations to ban chemical weapons, which augured well at one time, are now faltering. Egypt wishes to warn against such negative developments in the work of the Conference on Disarmament, for they question not only its present structure but also the credibility of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies, as well as the positions of the parties involved and the overall framework of international relations among States, especially the First Committee, which is the organ responsible for providing directives to the Conference on Disarmament and to bilateral and multilateral international efforts in the field of international security and disarmament.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

We do not consider that the resumption of negotiations by the two super-Powers should obstruct the work of the multilateral negotiating forum in Geneva or of the First Committee. Such negotiations should not be viewed as an alternative to the work of those two bodies but should rather serve to enhance it. We hope, however, that both super-Powers, proceeding from the premise of responsible dialogue, will continue their negotiations with the required political will.

In conclusion, Egypt would appeal to all States, especially the two super-Powers and their allies, to intensify efforts to ease international tension, limit the possibilities of the outbreak of war and free the international community from the threat of nuclear devastation. Today, we must all join efforts to secure the safety of our peoples and to work for future generations by creating an international climate favourable to the welfare and stability of mankind. Let us depend less on the force of arms. Let us depend more on the rule of international law and justice, to which we have all subscribed in the Charter of the United Nations.

At this forty-first session, the responsibility of the First Committee is to give vital impetus to the achievement of peace by adopting draft resolutions worthy of its high responsibilities and capable of preserving its credibility and effectiveness. That is what we all hope will be accomplished at this current session.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to inform members that the following delegations have inscribed their names on the list of speakers for this afternoon's meeting: India, Bulgaria, Algeria and Qatar.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.