



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): Yesterday afternoon I intended to speak at the end of our meeting to inform members of the sad news of the death of His Excellency Mr. Ian Cromartie, Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva.

Unfortunately the consultations which I was then holding prevented me from so doing. Therefore I should like now, on behalf of the entire Committee and on my own behalf, to present our most sincere condolences to the family of Ambassador Cromartie as well as to the delegation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for that kind expression of condolences and I take this opportunity to thank the many other representatives who have expressed to me their sympathy over the death of Ian Cromartie.

He had worked, as members know, for many years in the field of disarmament in both Geneva and New York, and I have myself learned in the last few days how popular he had been and how much affection there has been for him. He was deeply committed to the cause of disarmament, in particular to the search for a chemical weapons convention. It was a personal commitment as well as an official one. We in the United Kingdom delegation of course take the news particularly to heart.

I shall certainly pass on to Jenny Cromartie your kind condolences, Sir, and those of all the other representatives who have expressed them. Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for your words.

AGENDA ITEMS 48 TO 69 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. RODRIGO (Sri Lanka): Let me at the outset extend on behalf of the Sri Lanka delegation our sincere condolences to the family of the late Ambassador Cromarty of the United Kingdom. I would be grateful if the representative of the United Kingdom would convey these sentiments to his family.

Let me extend to you, Mr. Chairman, and to other officers of the Committee the congratulations and good wishes of Sri Lanka on your election. Your own personal skills, diplomatic experience and your record here at the United Nations are excellent qualifications for the work ahead in what seems to be a promising session.

What appears different during this session is the calmer atmosphere in which we deal with our agenda and the sense of what the United States representative described as "a time of increased expectations". It is academic to debate whether the present international mood is the cause or the consequence of a series of favourable developments. It is imperative that this Committee benefit from this mood.

The agreement in principle between the United States of America and the Soviet Union for the elimination of their land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles is to be welcomed, not merely because it removes an entire class of nuclear weapons but because it represents, even if in a small way, a realization of the efficacy of security-building by means of divesting rather than accumulating armaments. Further, efforts are to be intensified between the two Powers to tackle problems standing in the way of a 50 per cent reduction in strategic offensive arms. The Soviet Union and the United States have also agreed to commence full-scale, though step-by-step, negotiations on nuclear testing issues.

(Mr. Rodrigo, Sri Lanka)

A convention on chemical weapons seems now only a matter of time. Important conclusions on the nexus between disarmament and development have been reached affirming the reality of both the military and non-military dimension to the security of individual States as well as to international peace and security.

An important regional peace initiative, the South Pacific nuclear-free-zone, has found legal form in the Treaty of Rarotonga.

The Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe has helped to dispel clouds of suspicion and mistrust that have been said to obstruct the way to disarmament measures. Policies of openness have helped to develop greater confidence among mutually exclusive military alliances.

In about 48 hours the Foreign Ministers of the Soviet Union and the United States will be coming together to prepare for a summit meeting between their Heads of State, which holds much promise.

Despite these favourable developments it is not yet time for joy to be unconfined. To rest complacent would be to hold back further development of the trends that are being hailed with so much enthusiasm.

For all its pioneering spirit, the intermediate-range nuclear forces agreement represents only some 3 per cent of the nuclear armoury. We can, of course, take consolation in the fact that we have only 97 per cent of the way still before us. Curiously enough, 97 is also the number of brackets that Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico has identified as cluttering the text submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee to the Conference on Disarmament. The three steps forward which the intermediate-range nuclear forces agreement represent should not be shadowed by other new deployments in the nuclear armoury or by qualitative developments that would negate the undoubted achievement in the field of intermediate nuclear forces.

(Mr. Rodrigo, Sri Lanka)

The nuclear overkill capacity still looms as menacingly as before as the greatest threat to human survival.

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The fearful prospect of being subject to nuclear attack or blackmail is a major apprehension contributing to the insecurity of non-nuclear-weapon States. Not all nuclear-weapon States have been willing to give effective assurances against the threat or use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. This has also served to weaken the non-proliferation régime.

Despite a welcome but unrequited moratorium on nuclear testing by the Soviet Union, there is now little restraint on testing. The United States-Soviet agreement to negotiate is welcome, but it is only a start, with the ultimate goal of a complete ban on nuclear testing being projected far into the future. A definite deadline for ending testing by all nuclear Powers would end speculation and misgivings that much-vaunted agreements on nuclear disarmament are being negated by the testing of perhaps deadlier types of nuclear weapons. The Conference on Disarmament, endowed with an appropriate mandate, could facilitate progress to a comprehensive test ban and supplement the efforts of United States and Soviet negotiators.

There would indeed be more than cause for jubilation should the intermediate-range nuclear forces agreement be a prelude to significant reductions in strategic nuclear weapons, to concrete steps irrevocably leading to a comprehensive test ban in which all nuclear Powers join and to earnest negotiations and agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Today outer space, despite its remaining mysteries, is the province of all mankind, and, given the efforts of the scientists, open to the promise of peaceful development and co-operation in the interests of all humanity. Its "weaponization" could curdle that promise. Progress in the space talks between the United States and the Soviet Union has been described as less remarkable than progress in respect of the intermediate-range nuclear forces issues. Outer space must not be converted

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into an amphitheatre for great-Power gladiatorial contests. As long as the two great space Powers perceive threats from each other, there will continue to be confusion between what are considered defensive and what are considered offensive weapons, with the end result being increased suspicion, insecurity and tension between the two Powers and grave threats to us all.

Existing legal treaties relating to outer space, despite their limitations, should be strictly honoured, with such limitations being dealt with by additional agreements. Technological advances have rendered some areas of space law obsolete. The anti-ballistic-missile Treaty needs to be strengthened to include a ban on anti-satellite weapons in space.

In the Conference on Disarmament, complex issues relating to outer space have been examined in some depth. It is necessary now to move from this analytical and exploratory phase to a direct study of measures and initiatives that have been proposed, and to bestow on the Conference on Disarmament the necessary mandate for this purpose.

In this Committee, Egypt and Sri Lanka, in co-operation with the non-aligned and other delegations, will seek, if possible by consensus, to reach agreement on a resolution for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the promotion of the peaceful development of space for the benefit of all.

Another initiative on which my delegation has sought the co-operation of all concerns the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The 1971 Declaration seeks, inter alia, to eliminate from the Indian Ocean area the tensions generated by great-Power naval and military confrontation, which has had an adverse effect on the security of Indian Ocean States. In 1979 the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, meeting in New York, adopted a set of principles of agreement for the implementation of the Declaration. Those principles included the

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non-use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and freedom of peaceful navigation - principles, regrettably, not always observed.

It is our expectation that, should the preparatory work for the Conference on the Indian Ocean to be held in Colombo not be completed in time to permit its convening in 1988, the Conference would be convened at an early date, not later than 1990. During the past year, work has been intensified on issues of substance relating to the establishment of a zone of peace. The issues involved are complex and are not being underestimated. The Conference in Colombo would be the most effective forum for securing and promoting the co-operation of the permanent members of the Security Council, the major users of the ocean and the regional States to realize the objectives of the peace zone and to establish conditions of peace and security in the area, eventually through appropriate arrangements for any international agreement that may be reached. The Government of Sri Lanka has offered to host one of the preparatory sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee next year in Colombo, and consultations are proceeding.

The consideration of issues relating to the naval arms race bears a close relationship to the Indian Ocean zone of peace, and Sri Lanka was one of the sponsors of resolution 41/59 K, on naval armaments and disarmament. Around 25 per cent of nuclear weapons are for naval deployment, in itself a clear indication of the importance of the issue, and ample justification for its closer scrutiny, including measures of naval disarmament and questions such as freedom of peaceful navigation, conflict-prevention and confidence-building at sea, exchange of information and so on.

The attention paid to conventional weapons does not imply a diminution of the priority accorded to nuclear weapons. The acquisition and production of

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conventional weaponry beyond the legitimate defence and security needs of a State could only fester suspicion and mistrust and constitute a destabilizing factor at the regional and other levels. Allied to this is the concern of small countries such as my own about international transfers of conventional weapons to irregular forces and secessionist elements that can threaten the very territorial integrity of States and sap their development potential by forcing a diversion of resources for defence. Some such transfers are commercially motivated, but the threat remains the same, whatever the source of the illegal supplies. It would be worthwhile to consider all aspects of this complex question in some depth at the Conference on Disarmament and eventually at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Chemical weapons have not yet become obsolete. The opportunity now exists to outlaw them by multilateral action. A convention banning their use is virtually a certainty, although complex issues still remain to be settled. Happily, as the representative of Sweden has reported, there are no insurmountable political obstacles to a convention, and, with determination and flexibility, the arduous work of the negotiators may soon be crowned with success.

For the Conference on Disarmament, at which the negotiations on chemical weapons have proceeded, the emerging convention is a clear vindication of its capacity as the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. The reluctance to bestow a negotiating mandate on the Conference on Disarmament in respect of most of the vital issues before it has been a major factor in its impotence and its reduction to the de facto status of being little more than a deliberative body on these issues.

The Conference on Disarmament includes among its representative membership the militarily most powerful States as well as representatives of small States such as

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my own, symbolizing in a sense that consideration of, and negotiation on, disarmament issues is a matter of concern - both a right and a duty - for all States. The Conference on Disarmament cannot live up to its high purpose if it is not invested with a capacity to negotiate.

We are on the eve of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. During this forty-second session we need to set precise dates for the special session. It takes place 10 years after the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We shall need to review progress on the implementation of the Final Document of that historic first special session as well as the anti-climactic second. If our verdict veers towards the negative, it will still be an endorsement of the validity of the decisions and recommendations of the 1978 Document. The Document must remain unassailed as the classic standard by which we must judge the scant achievements of the last decade, examine the present and re-establish goals for the future. To slide back from the imperatives of that Document on the argument that its sights were set too high, or that its goals were too noble, is to weaken our resolve to safeguard the generations that follow. Realism can sometimes mean taking the easy way. Let us not compromise on agreements reached. It is better to acknowledge shortcomings in implementation than to adjust our sights to easily attainable targets. Times have indeed changed. The 1978 Document, if it is also to be changed, must be strengthened, not compromised. If we compromise on the Document we may well be compromising our future.

Mr. TORNUDE (Finland): Before beginning my statement, I should like to join other delegations in expressing our condolences on the death of Ian Cromartie.

I should also like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee and to express our congratulations to the officers of the Committee as well.

For several years, the First Committee has had the dubious privilege of listening to disquieting statements on the continuing global arms race. This year, the situation is somewhat different. As numerous statements made during the general debate have shown, a belief in the possibility of a real breakthrough in the field of disarmament is gaining ground.

A treaty abolishing all American and Soviet ground-launched intermediate-range nuclear weapons could become a turning-point in the history of nuclear weaponry. In concluding such a treaty, both signatories would also agree that their security could be maintained at a lower level of armaments. This could start a process leading to a diminished role for both nuclear and conventional weapons in the maintenance of peace and security.

Although the treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) would eliminate only some 3 to 4 per cent of all existing nuclear weapons, its political impact could be much greater. As a treaty stipulating real reductions in nuclear armaments, it could act as a catalyst in other areas of disarmament. We urge both the United States and the Soviet Union to continue their efforts to reach agreement on strategic and space arms, conventional forces and nuclear testing. Their joint achievements would undoubtedly not only enhance the security of the parties concerned but would also be in the interest of the security of all nations.

The emerging INF treaty is historic also from a disarmament-verification point of view. The treaty would create a stringent verification régime built on the practice of on-site inspection. That régime could serve as a model for compliance

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control arrangements in other areas. An adequate and effective verification system is of critical importance to disarmament agreements and confidence-building in itself.

The positive effect of an INF treaty should be felt most strongly in Europe, where its military impact would be considerable. This also concerns northern Europe, since the prospective treaty would abolish a significant number of nuclear weapons now capable of reaching that area.

Against this background, it might sound inappropriate to express a few words of caution. Finland warmly welcomes reductions in nuclear armaments, both intermediate and strategic, but in assessing the impact of prospective disarmament agreements, my Government must also take into account regional and comparative considerations.

In addition to their overall importance, arms limitation agreements might influence different regions or subregions in different ways. Agreements have an impact on military capabilities and can change deployment patterns. Agreements might also influence military research and development, weapon construction and procurement plans. They might even influence military doctrines. Such consequences demand our attention. They might in some cases even have negative regional effects.

The potential regional impact of future disarmament agreements is of course difficult to foresee, especially before those agreements have been signed and have come into force. Our assumption today regarding future developments must be based on existing and known arms programmes. Any discernible trends are therefore for the most part independent of the new programmes currently envisaged. Our concern is not caused directly by these prospective agreements but rather by some on-going negative trends.

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One of the more persistent of these trends is the increased deployment by the principal military Powers of air- and sea-launched cruise missiles carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads. Those missiles are inherently destabilizing owing to difficulties of verification in regard to quantity, quality and deployment. Recent developments enhancing their penetration capability have intensified those problems. In addition, cruise missiles - because of their trajectory - constitute an indirect security problem to neutral countries like Finland. Since 1978, my Government has therefore been appealing to all nuclear Powers for limitations in the deployment and development of long-range cruise missiles.

Another trend is the acceleration of military research and development. The continuing technological arms race is a perpetual process with its own inner logic, constantly producing new generations of more effective weapons. The qualitative arms race takes on particular importance when nuclear weapons are involved. This qualitative arms race is also assuming increased significance in the field of conventional weapons. It contributes to international tension in both cases by creating more sophisticated systems and counter-systems. Agreed limitations in one area may accelerate the speed of development in other areas. The need for meaningful restraints on the qualitative aspect of the arms race is obvious.

Furthermore, the possible reduction of nuclear weapons - which, as I have said, we warmly welcome and support - may have perceptible consequences in Europe for the role of conventional forces. While giving those forces a more central role in the overall balance between the two alliances, possible agreements at the same time highlight the need for negotiations aimed at greater stability through reductions in conventional forces.

Our concern at possible changes in the relative importance given to specific regions, in arms deployment patterns and in the qualitative arms race, is linked to

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our security interests. Every nation has a legitimate right to, and a responsibility for, peace and security. The Finnish Government has therefore consistently stressed the need for self-restraint and stability in northern Europe and the sea areas in and adjacent to it. Our initiatives in the domain of naval arms control aim at concrete confidence-building measures, as indicated in the working paper presented by Finland at the Disarmament Commission last spring. Such measures range from the possible multilateralization of the so-called incident agreement to notification and observation of naval exercises, as well as to a greater openness on naval matters through a more regular exchange of information.

Let me now turn to some of the issues more directly related to the items on our multilateral disarmament agenda. Finland has consistently argued in favour of a complete ban on nuclear testing. A comprehensive nuclear-test ban would set real limitations on the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. It would also help to strengthen the world-wide non-proliferation régime. We therefore welcome the recent announcement by the Soviet Union and the United States that full-scale stage-by-stage negotiations on nuclear-testing issues would begin before 1 December of this year.

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We continue to believe that a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty with effective verification provisions ought to be negotiable right now. However, we also recognize the validity of a gradual approach as long as it is firmly directed to the ultimate goal, the ending of all nuclear tests in all environments for all time.

The new Soviet-American talks complement the multilateral efforts that have been under way at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva for quite some time, with regrettably scant results. We hope that the multilateral efforts in this field will now gain new momentum.

Finland has, for its part, contributed to the multilateral efforts for a nuclear-test-ban treaty by making available its technical expertise in the field of seismic verification. Finland is taking an active part in the development of an international data exchange system, which would constitute the necessary technical groundwork for reliable monitoring of seismic events for verification purposes. We welcome the steady progress being made in this area.

In our view another priority issue for multilateral disarmament diplomacy is a complete prohibition of chemical weapons. Finland, for its part, does not possess chemical weapons and will never acquire such weapons. Instead, Finland has for the past 15 years devoted considerable resources to developing technical means for verifying chemical disarmament. The results of our research have been regularly placed at the disposal of the Conference on Disarmament. They are available to all others as well.

Considerable progress has been made in the negotiations on chemical weapons. The complete and verifiable prohibition of such weapons on a global basis is, if not yet within immediate reach, much closer at hand than even a year ago. On the key issue of verification differences have now been narrowed, we hope decisively. Finland welcomes the emerging agreement on mandatory on-site inspections upon

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challenge. In view of the grave consequences that suspicions of undeclared chemical-weapons stocks would have for international security if not promptly and satisfactorily removed, such inspections are clearly necessary.

Although unrelated to the question of chemical weapons as such, the recent demonstrations of the workability of the inspection provisions of the Stockholm Conference document are encouraging. We also look forward, as I have already mentioned, to any impetus that the verification régime of a prospective agreement on intermediate-range nuclear forces between the United States and the USSR may give to the chemical-weapons negotiations in this regard.

In our view, the United Nations Disarmament Commission plays an important role as a global forum for testing new ideas on disarmament. We note with satisfaction that such issues as conventional and naval disarmament, as well as verification, have been taken up for serious discussion at the Disarmament Commission. We look forward to continuing that discussion.

It is clear from what I have already said that Finland attaches particular importance to the fact that naval armaments and disarmament are on the agenda of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. This aspect of disarmament has long been overlooked, despite venerable historical precedents. We intend to revert to this subject at the next session of the Commission.

The discussion of verification in all its aspects that began this year in the Disarmament Commission is a welcome development. Although verification is always, by definition, connected with specific disarmament agreements, we believe that there are also common elements to verification that can be considered at a general level.

We also believe that the role of the United Nations in verification of multilateral disarmament agreements needs to be enhanced. Our proposal at the Disarmament Commission for creating a verification data base to be compiled and

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managed by the United Nations emanates from this belief. We are pleased by the response to our proposal. We will continue to work for it at the United Nations Disarmament Commission with a view to elaborating a concrete recommendation on which the General Assembly could act.

One of the few successes in the recent history of disarmament-related conferences is the result of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. Finland participated actively in the Conference. We welcome the adoption of the Final Document by consensus. It was encouraging that, despite the varying views of the participating countries, it was possible to overcome differences and produce a substantive document. The Conference reached a number of important conclusions regarding the relationship between disarmament and development, two processes that ought to support and stimulate each other. The Final Document signals a new approach, a fresh start to the efforts of tackling grave problems. It conforms perfectly to the Finnish view that every human being has the right to pursue a reasonable standard of living and live in peace. The important thing is that the international community has moved towards a wider understanding of how to pursue security. In the Final Document we agreed that security played a key role in the complex and difficult relationship between disarmament and development and that disarmament, development and security formed the three pillars of peace. The Government of Finland is ready to participate in the work towards the implementation of the Final Document.

The General Assembly decided last year to convene its third special session devoted to disarmament in 1988. The Preparatory Committee for the special session has already adopted a draft agenda. Like the agendas of previous special sessions, it is a compromise which makes it possible to organize the work of the session in a flexible manner.

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Finland looks forward to the special session as a universal and authoritative forum. Its purpose should be to outline an international disarmament strategy based on the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, as well as on the results, meagre as they may have been, of the second.

The particular task of the third special session should be to enhance the role of the United Nations in multilateral disarmament endeavours. There is need for a review of the United Nations disarmament machinery, with regard to procedural questions, working practices and the composition of some of the main disarmament bodies. Rationalization and innovation in these fields could permit the resources of the world Organization to be more effectively focused on the central issues of international disarmament, to the benefit of international peace and security.*

*Mr. Nashashibi (Jordan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

Mrs. MULAMULA (United Republic of Tanzania): My delegation has learned with deep sorrow of the untimely death of Ambassador Cromartie. We wish to extend our deepest sympathy to the United Kingdom delegation.

May I, on my own behalf and on behalf of my delegation, congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. My delegation is particularly pleased to see an illustrious son of Africa preside over this important Committee, a Committee which deliberates on issues that are the corner-stone of the maintenance of international peace and security. We also wish to express our deep appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Zachmann of the German Democratic Republic, for the dedication with which he effectively conducted the proceedings of the Committee during the forty-first session.

The Committee is meeting against the background of heightened expectations as to the outcome of the protracted negotiations between the super-Powers with regard to the elimination of deadly weapons of mass destruction. Analysts have given reasons for the agreements reached between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Notwithstanding the reasons advanced, the fact that the two super-Powers are talking to each other and not at each other is an encouraging sign offering promising prospects. For the same reason we welcome the agreement in principle to conclude a treaty on the elimination of intermediate- and shorter-range missiles in Europe and elsewhere. It is to be hoped that an agreement will be signed; but by itself, without total and comprehensive disarmament, the agreement will solve neither the global nuclear arms problem nor the controversies surrounding the issues. Therefore, my delegation looks forward, with guarded optimism, to the forthcoming summit meeting between the leaders of the two super-Powers, in the hope that they will give legal form to a treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF). We urge them also to consider total nuclear disarmament.

(Mrs. Mulamula, United Republic
of Tanzania)

While we welcome the bilateral efforts in the disarmament negotiations towards general and complete disarmament, we share the view expressed by other delegations that however useful and meaningful bilateral negotiations may be, they are not a substitute for multilateral negotiations: each must complement the other, and not hinder or preclude it. As was stressed in the 1986 Harare Declaration of the Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries, we expect the two Powers to keep the General Assembly and the international community at large fully and officially informed of the progress made in the negotiations, rather than compel us to pick the titbits of information from the media.

In that respect, my delegation expresses its disappointment at the state of affairs in the only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament - the Conference on Disarmament. Reading through its report, it is clear that the work done by the Conference on Disarmament leaves much to be desired. The Conference has once again demonstrated its inability to establish ad hoc committees on the priority items listed on its agenda: the nuclear-test ban, cessation of the nuclear-arms race, nuclear disarmament, prevention of nuclear war and all related matters. The obstinate position of certain nuclear-weapons States, members of the Conference on Disarmament, has regrettably crippled the smooth functioning of that body. We are informed that the only area in which there have been positive mood in the Conference on Disarmament - as acknowledged by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization (A/42/1) - is on chemical weapons. However, as in previous reports of the Conference on Disarmament, which note that the draft texts do not bind any delegation, the opening statement in the appended draft convention diminishes the underlying positive note in the respective reports. Equally disturbing are the endless brackets in the text.

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of Tanzania)

The report and the statement made before the Committee by the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission at the last spring session demonstrate yet another discouraging outcome of multilateral efforts of United Nations bodies in deliberations on disarmament.

My delegation is particularly concerned with the insignificant progress made on an item of great importance to our region, and indeed to all peace-loving nations in the world - the issue of the nuclear capability of South Africa. I need not remind delegations of the danger facing the international community in the event that South Africa, in desperation and armed with nuclear weapons, might unleash a major regional war, which could precipitate a global confrontation. The underlying danger was brought to our attention initially by the Secretary-General in his report, which stated:

"Without underestimating the extreme dangers of nuclear weapons in general, they take on especially ominous dimensions if in the hands of a régime desperate to preserve white supremacy." (A/35/402, para. 91)

In retrospect, therefore, the question of South Africa's nuclear capability cannot be separated from the intentions of the apartheid régime, whose policy has been condemned by this body as a crime against humanity. In the same vein, we urge those members who have been standing in the way of a consensus decision on this matter, to reconsider their positions in the interests of humanity, for in the eyes of the victims of apartheid the issue is one of life or death. The recent pressures put on South Africa and its announcement that it would sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is only a "cotton on a stick" intended to try to pacify opponents of the régime who want it expelled from the International Atomic Energy Agency. For my delegation, these efforts are only

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of Tanzania)

cosmetic for they obscure the nature of the problem but unfortunately some countries represented at the annual meeting in Vienna in September were appeased. By becoming a signatory to the NPT, South Africa will acquire a clear licence to join the exclusive nuclear club for it already possesses a nuclear weapons capability. While the NPT has tied the hands of the non-nuclear States that are parties to it, it has allowed horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapons States. To date, my Government has therefore found no justifiable reason for joining this treaty régime.

If I have devoted considerable time to this issue, it is because the issue of South African nuclear weapons capabilities has frustrated all our efforts to translate into practice the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa long since adopted by the OAU. Above all, it is an expression of our concern at the continued nuclear blackmail of independent African States by the racist régime which, through its destabilizing policies, has kept neighbouring countries in a state of perpetual siege.

Another area of concern to my delegation is the continued militarization of the Indian Ocean and the military presence there of super-Powers and other maritime Powers. Efforts to implement the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace through the convening of a United Nations conference have thus far been frustrated by those same Powers. The report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean to the General Assembly at this session is clear testimony to the deadlock confronting the Committee with regard to the convening of an international conference in Colombo on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. Once again, the Committee is requesting a possible postponement of the long-awaited conference. While Tanzania, a member of the Ad Hoc Committee, joined the consensus in favour of the draft resolution recommended to the General Assembly at its forty-second

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session, as contained in its report (A/42/29), we wish to place on record our disappointment with the decision taken to postpone the conference to an undetermined date. My Government particularly deplores the deliberate attempts by certain countries to frustrate all efforts to hold that conference and to protract its preparation ad infinitum. One can only conclude that those stalling actions reflect the adamant refusal of those countries to even contemplate withdrawing from the Indian Ocean.

(Mrs. Mulamula, United Republic
of Tanzania)

The danger facing the littoral and hinterland States owing to the military rivalry in the ocean needs no elaboration, for the danger is at our front door. There is a need for practical action to rid the Indian Ocean of the menacing presence of great Powers, which have blocked the work of the Committee. My delegation was equally dismayed by the refusal to endorse even the offer by the Government of Sri Lanka to host one of the pre-conference sessions in Colombo. Nevertheless, my delegation is optimistic that reason will prevail in our endeavours in this Committee that will lead to the convening of that important conference. After all, it is in the interest of us all to navigate through safe waters and the aim of the conference is to pave the way for the restoration of peace in the stormy waters of the Indian Ocean.

In stating our disappointment we are not saying that there have been no positive developments in other areas. The holding of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development was a valuable achievement in the multilateral efforts of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, however modest the outcome. In the words of the President of the Conference, Mr. Natwar Singh,

"the Conference struck the right blow for the right reason at the right time and in the right forum".

Unfortunately, the Final Document, which was adopted by consensus, did not live up to the expectations and wishes of many delegations, including my own. It did, however, endorse for the first time the close and multidimensional relationship between disarmament and development. Therefore I suggest that the document be considered as our invaluable starting-point for future action and orientation with regard to the attainment of the objective of disarmament and development. We the

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of Tanzania)

developing countries have to build on what has been achieved by our concerted efforts and actions in the Committee.

Another significant development was a consensus decision to hold the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1988 and to agree on the agenda. It is the hope of my delegation that the establishing of the dates and venue for the special session will not be made an issue and thus waste the valuable time of the Committee.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I wish to express once again my delegation's displeasure with the working methods of the Committee. We are disappointed that consultations held by your predecessor with regard to the rationalization of the work of the Committee have not borne results. We therefore find ourselves in the same precarious situation of having to endure listening to repetitive statements in the general debate and again in the debate on specific items. It is our hope that you will reconsider the duplication involved in the organization of work and certainly continue from where Ambassador Zachmann left his consultations, as indicated in your first statement on the organization of our work. I wish to assure you, Sir, of my delegation's full co-operation in this endeavour.

Mr. AH-BANG (Singapore): On behalf of my delegation I should like to extend our warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee. My delegation also extends its felicitations to the other officers of the Committee on their election.

A year ago at about this time United States President Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev met at Reykjavik in a serious effort to narrow their differences over disarmament and other issues. A few weeks ago the United States and the Soviet Union arrived at an agreement in principle on the elimination of two classes of medium- and shorter-range nuclear missiles - the intermediate-range

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nuclear forces agreement. By the end of this session of the General Assembly, President Reagan and Soviet leader Gorbachev will be having another summit, the third in two years, to confirm this agreement and perhaps reach other new agreements.

These events do not take place accidentally. They reflect some fundamental changes in super-Power relations and hence international politics. They are the marking-stones of a changing world. No longer are the super-Powers threatening to swallow each other, as they claimed earlier in their rhetoric of the cold war era. They have now agreed to talk and to create, it is hoped, a peaceful and stable world. Whatever the outcome of this change in their relations, it will have a profound effect on all nations and on world politics. This new era is one in which there is a greater convergence of views and interests of the two super-Powers, an era in which they will settle their own problems and those of the world directly, perhaps leaving little room for the voice of the third world.

The following anecdote from Lewis Carroll, author of Through the Looking-Glass, best describes the new, changing world:

"The room they had entered had a tall mirror standing in one corner. Dodgson gave his cousin an orange and asked her which hand she held it in. When she replied 'The right', he asked her to stand before the glass and tell him in which hand the little girl in the mirror was holding it. 'The left hand', came the puzzled reply. 'Exactly', said Dodgson, 'and how do you explain that?' Alice replied, 'If I was on the other side of the glass'.

This anecdote illustrates that the concepts of the right and the left depend on one's perspective. United States-Soviet relations so far have been colored by this mirror image each has of the other. However, after more than 40 years of

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gazing at each other from opposite ends, they have decided to walk through their respective mirrors to see each other in order to get a correct perspective of each other.

What have been the causes of this change? Until recently the United States had a nuclear advantage over the Soviet Union. From the Soviet perspective at the time, so long as this imbalance existed they would have to strive hard to narrow the gap. The United States naturally tried to maintain its nuclear lead through the development of advanced nuclear technology and weapons systems in response to what was perceived as a massive Soviet nuclear build-up. This inevitably led to the nuclear-arms race, which over the years could not be maintained without severe strain on their respective economies. Though the Soviet Union did finally achieve nuclear parity with the United States, this was achieved at tremendous economic cost. For some time there was a realization by both super-Powers of the futility of the arms race. However, both sides tread cautiously on the disarmament issue, until recently, when the new Soviet leadership, less bound by the dogmas of the cold-war era, emerged.

(Mr. Ah-Bang, Singapore)

A reassessment of Soviet national interests and foreign policy followed. A new style of international diplomacy - that of glasnost - was introduced. "Glasnost" can be roughly translated to mean "openness" or "transparency". Glasnost has led to new approaches on disarmament issues. For the first time the Soviet Union has gone beyond what the two super-Powers were prepared to offer each other in the past. It has accepted the zero-zero option and has advanced a doctrine of reasonable sufficiency in military forces that calls for maintaining an adequate defence, but not investing money in an endless arms race. The result is the recent intermediate-range nuclear forces agreement.

In this new era of improved super-Power relations, are we likely to see a better and more hopeful world? What implications will this have for Europe, Asia and the rest of the world? The new United States-Soviet relationship will first and foremost have serious implications for the balance of forces in Europe, where any small shift in East-West relations is most felt. The Atlantic Alliance was based on its reliance on the United States nuclear umbrella to maintain the strategic balance with the Warsaw Pact, which has superiority in conventional arms. Without this vital United States nuclear umbrella, the delicate strategic balance in Europe would be upset. Faced with this likelihood, the Western European countries may have to make a fundamental reassessment of their security and the basic assumptions on which it is based.

There is little doubt that both the Western and Eastern European groupings would like to see a more stable Europe. However, for the Western European countries this stability is seen to be one based on a balance of forces between the two blocs. In their reassessment of their security, Western European countries are likely to be faced with two broad options - rearming, both with nuclear and conventional weapons, or negotiating with their Eastern European counterparts a mutual reduction of forces. It is significant that in response to the

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intermediate-range nuclear forces agreement the Western European countries do not want to link European security and disarmament to any accord reached between the two super-Powers on a bilateral basis.

The balance of forces in Asia from a broad strategic perspective is not as delicate as that in Europe. However, since the 1970s Asia has not been spared the super-Power rivalry, as witness the serious efforts made by one party to make inroads into this region, where traditionally it had little influence. Any future balance of forces configuration in Asia will undoubtedly have to take China into consideration. From all accounts, it has the potential to be a super-Power. However, it is significant that the Chinese leadership has opted for economic development rather than militarization. It has taken the initiative to cut down its conventional forces by a million men. According to a United Nations information paper giving questions and answers on the relationship between disarmament and development,

"Chinese military expenditures as a percentage of national output are estimated to have dropped by one third from 1979 to 1983. Modernization of agriculture, industry and science and technology is given precedence over military modernization, and a rapid growth in China's economy and living standards is reported."

China's example should be a model for other big Powers to follow.

Elsewhere in the world similar dilemmas face countries, should both super-Powers decide to take a stand-off position in localized regional affairs following glasnost. In a bipolar cold-war world, the super-Powers actively courted the third world for alignment in their struggle for supremacy. However, this is likely to change, as ideological alignment becomes less relevant to the new super-Power relationship. The third world countries may have to reassess their role in the new, changing world: do they still want to hold on to the old ways or

(Mr. An-Bang, Singapore)

will they strike out on their own to a relatively independent line? Each country will have to decide what is best for itself. However, if the small States still want to be in the mainstream of international politics, they will have to keep in step with the new changing world.

As the threat of nuclear war diminishes following glasnost diplomacy and changed super-Power relations, this does not necessarily mean that order and stability in the world will automatically follow. As I have illustrated, new equations of balance of forces at the regional level emerge, and countries other than the two super-Powers will have to find new alternatives for their security. There are three likely choices: first, the countries could rearm, which is not a welcome alternative; secondly, they could agree to regional disarmament for both conventional and nuclear forces; and, thirdly, they could form new regional groupings to solve regional problems by themselves, without the use of force and without the involvement of the major Powers.

The sentiments expressed in debates both in the General Assembly debates and in this Committee clearly suggest that rearmament is not a solution to the problem of world peace and stability. I share the views of many delegates that glasnost diplomacy should not be confined to the two super-Powers. It should permeate downwards to the regional level as well, and regional disarmament, both conventional and nuclear, should be pursued as the key to a stabilized and balanced world. Coupled with this is the establishment of regional groupings, not for the purpose of military alliances, but for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The recent peace proposals initiated by the group of Central American countries themselves to solve their own regional problems is a move in the right direction.

One success story, of course, is the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Before its formation, relations between the non-Communist South-East Asian countries were characterized by mistrust, envy and even conflict.

(Mr. Ah-Bang, Singapore)

Through regional co-operation, following the formation of ASEAN, a more positive and understanding relationship has been forged between its members. Discord has been replaced with regional harmony, stability and economic prosperity.

War and peace are the result of human wills and intentions, and not of weapons. Weapons are the means to wage wars, but are not in themselves the causes of wars. The deliberation on disarmament and arms control will not be complete if there is little discussion on the causes of wars and the ways to eliminate them.

(Mr. Ah-Bang, Singapore)

As most members of the First Committee are non-nuclear-weapon States, our strength lies in our credibility and being taken seriously. I share the view of the representative of Ghana that we should avoid turning this into a forum for propaganda purposes or allow it to be an instrument for bloc or ideological politics. We should strive to make this Committee a respected arms control forum, discussing and recommending tangible proposals on disarmament and verification and means to world peace and stability. The number of resolutions we adopt is not a reflection of the credibility of the First Committee, but the quality of those resolutions is. If we in this forum can arrange for resolutions of better quality to be proposed and adopted, we will have set a high standard for ourselves and for future deliberations.

We look forward to your able leadership, Mr. Chairman, to guide the Committee to a discussion of substantive issues concerning disarmament and arms control.

Mr. van SCHAIK (Netherlands): Permit me first of all, Sir, to congratulate you, as well as the other members of the Bureau, on the assumption of important posts in the Committee. I also wish to express my gratitude to Ambassador Zachmann of the German Democratic Republic for his excellent work as last year's Chairman.

My delegation fully subscribes to the statement made in this Committee by the representative of Denmark speaking on behalf of the member States of the European Community. Indeed, the themes we are discussing here these days are increasingly within the purview of the political co-operation among the 12 European member countries.

For the Netherlands Government, the objectives of peace and security, prosperity and justice are intertwined. Disarmament policies should in fact be placed within a broad context. Disarmament cannot be achieved if no progress is made in other areas.

(Mr. van Schaik, Netherlands)

Salvador de Madariaga, at the time a senior advisor for the League of Nations, once wrote:

"The solution of the problem of disarmament cannot be found within the problem itself, but only outside it."

He continued:

"In fact, the problem of disarmament is not the problem of disarmament. It really is the problem of the organization of the world community."

In the light of such wise remarks, it is most fortunate that we can discern some favourable developments in the current international situation. We are registering signals of reform and transparency in countries where until recently the status quo and stagnation presented obstacles, including on the road to international co-operation. We are witnessing important new developments in the East-West context. The old patterns of East-West relations have proved to be less static than was believed possible only a short time ago.

Of course, uncertainties and rigidities of various sorts cannot be dispelled overnight. In certain areas of the world, devastating war and armed conflicts rage on. Yet there now seems to be clear perspective for progress. In arms control negotiations in particular, attitudes have changed, the climate has improved and concrete achievements are a prospect.

The Netherlands Government is highly satisfied with the agreement in principle reached on intermediate-range nuclear forces - the so-called INF agreement - on 18 September. The elimination of all American and Soviet intermediate long-range and short-range nuclear missiles will be of historic significance. For the first time in the post-war period, whole categories of nuclear weapons, including some of the most modern ones, would be dismantled.

The Netherlands Government is also encouraged by the progress that is being made in the field of reductions of strategic weapons. We strongly hope that deep

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and verifiable reductions to equal levels, properly structured to enhance stability, will soon follow upon an INF agreement.

We consider it of great importance that the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to start full-scale step-by-step negotiations on limiting and ultimately ending nuclear tests before 1 December 1987. We hope that early progress will be made towards the shared objective of a comprehensive test ban.

We trust that negotiations on the verification issue in relation to the threshold test-ban Treaty of 1974 and the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty of 1976 will soon be crowned with success. Strict verification is in essence technically feasible and need therefore no longer block the way towards test reductions.

In our efforts to reach the important objective of a comprehensive test ban, we support the idea of a step-by-step programme of limiting and subsequently ending nuclear tests, parallel with a programme to reduce and ultimately eliminate categories of nuclear weapons. It is encouraging that recent developments point in this direction, thus confirming the validity of an approach the Netherlands has often advocated in the past.

This brings me to a few general observations on the relationship between the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union and multilateral efforts in arms control. The improved international climate creates opportunities for progress in multilateral consultations and negotiations on arms control and disarmament.

All nations should in fact co-operate in constructive proposals for disarmament and should make a contribution in the search for agreements on balanced reductions in armaments, armed forces and military budgets. Bilateral and multilateral arms control and disarmament are in fact complementary. We should see current negotiations taking place in various forums as a combined effort.

(Mr. van Schaik, Netherlands)

For various reasons, most problems of arms control and disarmament have a multilateral dimension. For the effective execution of certain programmes of arms control, the co-operation or participation of many countries may even be essential. Yet in the present state of power relations, the United States and the Soviet Union should, as key actors, play a special role.

We are all conscious of the fact that the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear and space matters are taking place against a background of widespread global concern. That is one of the reasons why disarmament talks should also, when appropriate, take place in a broad context. Besides dealing with negotiations on a regional basis, the Conference on Disarmament should serve as the appropriate global forum where, parallel to the bilateral talks in Geneva, negotiations are conducted that are partly independent of and partly complementary to the bilateral talks.

(Mr. van Schaik, Netherlands)

This relationship between the Conference on Disarmament and the bilateral talks does not only require a certain dovetailing so as to avoid duplication; it also requires wisdom on the part of all parties concerned. We see for instance no use in actions undertaken in the Conference on Disarmament that would interfere with the detailed negotiations between the super-Powers. On the other hand, we hope that those countries will continue to realize that they are dealing with matters of global concern. The Conference, as well as the General Assembly, should continue to be informed about the recent developments in the bilateral negotiations. Proper room should be given for the Conference on Disarmament to undertake useful complementary work at the appropriate moment. The test-ban issue is a case in point, where the bilateral and multilateral approach should be complementary.

This brings me to the subject of outer space. The realm of outer space holds out great promise of scientific co-operation and achievements for the benefit of mankind. The world community should take care that military competition and destabilizing military activities do not become prime characteristics of this vast expanse surrounding our globe. Prevention of an arms race in outer space relates as much to Earth as it does to space. In fact, the only operational missile defence in existence at this moment is ground based. The issue of defensive systems cannot be seen in isolation from the so-called offensive systems. We have been witness to some destabilizing first-strike tendencies in the latter category over past decades.

My Government attaches great importance to an approach which, as part of the 50 per cent cuts, seeks to counter such developments. We also wish to stress the importance of continued adherence to the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and an understanding between the two countries concerned on permitted activities under the Treaty.

(Mr. van Schaik, Netherlands)

Progress in arms control in space is, of course, greatly dependent on progress in the bilateral discussions on the subject of space, but the Conference on Disarmament should also play its role. For two years now, the Conference's Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space has been deliberating. The debate, apart from interesting and detailed technical information given by one or two delegations, was for the most part in general terms. The discussion, useful in itself, did not reach the stage of orderly and systematic efforts to define the issues to be addressed in detail. In particular, the Ad Hoc Committee did not succeed in identifying the problems to which the Conference on Disarmament should try to find solutions. The much-discussed question of definitions is only part of this basic problem. In short, there is still a lot of work to be done.

Next to defining subject-matters as such, it would seem possible that the Conference on Disarmament could play a useful complementary role in the bilateral negotiations by exploring the possibility of partial or interim solutions. The Conference could, for example, discuss the substance of coherent arms-control measures in the field of protection of satellites, as far as such satellites are of a stabilizing nature.

The essential underlying idea of such efforts would be the protection of the many satellites that fulfil a stabilizing role as instruments of verification and crisis management, early warning and communication. The exact nature of the stabilizing satellites to be protected would have to be determined. We would also favour exploring the possibility of prohibiting attacks on high-orbit satellites.

I turn now to chemical weapons. I must first of all say that my delegation was shocked to hear of the untimely death of our friend and colleague Ian Cromartie, who, among other things, as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee in Geneva played such a crucial role at a crucial phase of the negotiations. He was a

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great friend, and we hope that Ambassador Solesby will convey my delegation's condolences to his wife Jenny and to other members of the family.

The use of chemical weapons is a sad reality. These weapons continue to be used, and their actual and potential impact is horrendous. My Government remains greatly concerned by reports, recently once again confirmed, of the use of chemical weapons in the context of the Iran-Iraq conflict. This is the more important in that over the past year significant progress has been made in the negotiations on chemical weapons, notably in the hitherto much-disputed and most sensitive area of verification.

An evolution in the position of some countries made it possible to cover a . . . t of common ground on such issues as the declaration of locations of chemical-weapons stocks, the monitoring of non-production in the civil chemical industry and on-site challenge inspections. After years of stagnation the wide acceptance of mandatory challenge inspections is particularly gratifying.

Looking ahead, it seems to me that these developments are encouraging signs for the pursuit of negotiations. I share the assessment of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Ekeus, at the end of the summer session that "the convention is no longer a distant goal, but a real possibility".

None the less, it is the last straw that can break the camel's back, and I am convinced that it is not only straws that we will have to carry on the slippery road leading to the convention. I mention only the unresolved problems in the area of control of the civil chemical industry, the régime for the destruction of chemical-weapons stocks and various institutional issues.

A major concern that we shall have to address in the period ahead is the exchange of data before the signing of the convention. Timely exchange of information on size and composition of existing chemical-weapons stocks and on the

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size of the production of chemical weapons, as well as information on the actual production and use of chemical-weapons key precursors by the civil industry, would be very useful, if not essential. Such information will not only serve as a confidence-building measure encouraging States parties to accede to the convention, but also help us in filling out the details of the draft convention and making its provisions more realistic.

(Mr. van Schaik, Netherlands)

Speaking about confidence-building measures, I should like to take this opportunity to extend my Government's very sincere appreciation and that of my delegation to the authorities of the Soviet Union for their hospitality during our recent stay in Moscow and Shikhany. We also compliment them on the very effective organization of the visit. We consider this visit an important first step, a confidence-building measure, which it is hoped will lead to a follow-up in the sense I have just indicated. We also look forward to further discussions on the information supplied - if possible in written form - in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Western countries have taken similar steps in the past and will continue to do so. We hope that the results of the coming Soviet visits to the chemical weapons facilities at Tooele, Utah, and future bilateral visits to facilities in other countries will also be brought back to the Conference

Chemical weapons, as I have said, are actually used. I add that proliferation of chemical weapons is actually taking place. In those circumstances, it is difficult to remain patient. Negotiations must lead to success. We call upon all countries to demonstrate courage and inventiveness in overcoming the remaining serious obstacles on the road to agreement. After the conclusion of the important INF negotiations, chemical weapons negotiations should get the priority they deserve.

INF and chemical weapons are illustrations of an as yet only faintly discernible trend in disarmament talks towards efforts to bring about the complete elimination of whole categories of weapons. The Convention on biological weapons will, we hope, prove to be a forerunner in this respect.

The 1986 Review Conference of the parties to the biological weapons Convention and the meeting of scientific and technical experts in early April of this year showed that in the field of verification the régime under the treaty can be

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strengthened by introducing meaningful confidence-building measures. Exchange of information on research, for instance, may help to instil confidence that the development of new types of weapons is unlikely.

The Government of the Netherlands attaches great importance to progress in the field of conventional-arms control. In Europe, where the memory of the devastations of the Second World War is still vivid, time has not in fact healed the wounds inflicted by the massive use of conventional weapons. Conventional-arms control and balanced cuts in conventional armaments go to the heart of the peoples in Europe. In fact, in Europe, the continent with the largest concentration of arms and forces in the world, conventional-arms control has, with the prospect of substantial reductions in nuclear weapons, become more urgent than ever before. Imbalances that threaten stability and security should be eliminated, while cuts are made in the levels of conventional forces.

Against that background, the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance have put forward a proposal for a mandate for negotiations with the aim of establishing a stable conventional balance at lower levels in the area from the Atlantic Ocean to the Urals. In those negotiations we seek, inter alia, to eliminate the capability for launching surprise attacks and initiating large-scale offensive action. In parallel, we want to build upon and expand on the Stockholm agreement on confidence- and security-building measures.

Emphasis on conventional weapons should, of course, in no way be limited to Europe. Eighty per cent of all world military expenditure goes on conventional weapons. Expenditure rises fastest in the developing world, in countries where poverty is greatest. In the course of the last two decades military expenditure in the third world has grown annually by 10 per cent as compared to an annual world growth of 3 per cent.

(Mr. van Schaik, Netherlands)

We appreciate statements made in the Committee that testify to a growing recognition of the urgency of the problem. Conventional weapons are not conventional, in the sense of customary, in their impact. Their capacity to kill, inflict wounds and destroy has far surpassed the already dramatic and horrendous proportions of the past; 25 million people are estimated to have been killed by conventional arms since 1945.

Favourable conditions should be created for regional or subregional agreements on the reduction of armaments. Confidence-building measures, such as rapid communication systems, should go hand in hand with agreements to bring down the levels of armaments. In short, more openness and effectively verifiable arms-control treaties are needed, also in the third world.

We noted from the report of the Secretary-General (A/42/611) that in his letter to the Secretary-General the Chairman of the Board of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) expressed the wish of some members of the Board that the former Director of UNIDIR should as soon as possible be enabled to be present to assist the Secretary-General in the requisite transfer of powers to the new Director of the Institute before the next session of the Board. We strongly support the view that Mr. Bota should be enabled to report in person to the Secretary-General.

In his opening speech to the Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, the Secretary-General expressed the hope that the Conference would clarify the issue of the relationship between disarmament and development. The Conference, in fact, succeeded in reaching a consensus on a Final Document in which the interrelationship of disarmament and development has been spelt out. It is the concept of security in the broadest sense that should guide the international community in parallel efforts to promote disarmament and development.

(Mr. van Schaik, Netherlands)

Apart from the broad policy function fulfilled by the First Committee, the world community fortunately has at its disposal two organs uniquely dealing with disarmament matters: the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. The Disarmament Commission should serve as a forum in which the deliberations would help to shape future orientations. The Conference on Disarmament, necessarily a more restricted forum, is - as it is rightly called - the single multilateral negotiating body.

As is recognized in the Final Act of the first special session on disarmament, the machinery of the Disarmament Commission is an indispensable tool. It can and should foster the disarmament process in a global dialogue by conceptualizing problems, by mobilizing public opinion, by adopting recommendations and, last, but most essential, by the preparation of global treaties.

However, whatever its usefulness, many people doubt whether the machinery has worked sufficiently well so far. As in other parts of the United Nations system, the time has come for streamlining, for considering possibilities of increasing the efficiency of the organs and their procedures, for steering a course leading to less repetition and more concentration on the real issues.

(Mr. van Schaik, Netherlands)

My delegation hopes that the Disarmament Commission, which has on its agenda the consideration of that very United Nations disarmament machinery, will succeed in advising on the appropriate mode for achieving greater efficiency. Allow me in this context also to underline the policy-oriented contributions that UNIDIR can make on ways to raise the standard of United Nations disarmament endeavours.

The forthcoming third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will provide us with a major opportunity to take stock of disarmament efforts. That session will also have the very important task of building and strengthening support by Governments and public opinion for the cause of arms control and the reduction of armaments. We also hope that that session will give us guidance on ways to make our deliberations more effective and directed at areas where there is potential for substantive progress, preferably in the form of arms-control agreements or at least substantive recommendations.

Such a task can be accomplished only when it is tackled in a businesslike and orderly way, without propaganda and rhetoric. In that spirit, the Netherlands intends to make a pragmatic and constructive contribution to the special session.

Politics is the art of the possible in an arena of conflicting interests. The possible will never coincide with the ideal. But, as has been said:

"This Organization [the United Nations] is created to prevent you from going to hell. It isn't created to take you to heaven."

Mr. ADAM (Sudan) (interpretation from Arabic): We should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this important Committee dealing with issues of disarmament and security. Your positive contribution in this connection is well known to all. We also congratulate the other officers of the Committee on the trust placed in them. We should also like to congratulate Mr. Akashi on the assumption of his new high post and wish him every success.

(Mr. Adam, Sudan)

We shall always remember 1987 as the year in which everything seemed quite possible: there appears to be a chance for arms limitation, which was not foreseen within the framework of prevailing international circumstances and of existing serious conflicts that might undermine international co-operation on security issues; the two super-Powers have shown a new interest in negotiating to reach an important agreement; leaders in Europe have started an intensive dialogue with a view to reaching agreement on prerequisites for their countries' security; and an important State - China - has begun to demobilize 1 million of its military forces as a positive initiative.

On the other hand, in this atmosphere of the relaxation of tension, some big Powers are undertaking certain steps that could undermine existing agreements; some circles are questioning the validity of the idea of disarmament itself; third world countries are accelerating the arms race at an alarming pace; the flames of regional conflicts are raging; and the world also finds itself in a grey area as regards its security.

We are therefore faced at this session with a more complex task, and the First Committee must deal with this reality with more seriousness and objectivity. We should also refrain from past practices that were sometimes characterized by a drive to achieve certain gains and a desire to prove the validity of narrow strategic and military doctrines and rules.

The future of international security has acquired a new dimension since the convening of the Reykjavik summit of last October. We must admit here that we have embarked upon a new path that may not be very clear; however, on 18 September that path led the Soviet Union and the United States of America to agree in principle on the elimination of their intermediate- and shorter-range nuclear weapons from Europe. Chances for concluding broader agreements seem possible. Leaders of the

(Mr. Adam, Sudan)

two countries have exercised patience and made concessions that may extend to other areas, such as the conducting of nuclear tests, nuclear proliferation and incidents on the high seas. We should like here to cite one positive example, that is, the agreement reached this year at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, which aims at strengthening trust between European countries and minimizing the chances of surprise attack.

In this short statement my delegation will not be able to deal with all the important items before the Committee; therefore, we hope to be able to comment on some of them at a later stage. The Sudan, a developing, non-aligned country, striving like the great majority of countries to halt the nuclear-arms race and to prevent once and for all the proliferation of nuclear weapons, attaches the utmost importance to questions of disarmament and security. With that in mind, we shall concentrate on the following issues.

The cessation of all nuclear-test explosions is, in our view, the first step towards curbing the nuclear-arms race and putting a stop to the production of new generations of such weapons, which may be even more effective and lethal. Despite the fact that the General Assembly has been discussing this item since its ninth session, we have not yet elaborated a treaty prohibiting all nuclear-test explosions, by all States, in all environments and for ever. Therefore, nuclear explosions are taking place contrary to the wish of the overwhelming majority of Member States.

(Mr. Adani, Sudan)

Some nuclear-weapon States have not yet acceded to the non-proliferation Treaty. The Conference on Disarmament has not succeeded in carrying out its mandate, because of the excuses given by some big nuclear-weapon States. While we support the view of the Group of 21 and the Conference on Disarmament, we also agree that existing means of verification are sufficient to ensure compliance. The argument that such means are not yet available cannot be used as an excuse to continue to improve nuclear weapons and produce new generations of them. We do not reject the principle of developing means of verification within a reliable régime of verification and monitoring in the framework of an international agreement based on complete trust.

Immediate cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and their prohibition have become a priority need. Therefore, all countries must agree without delay to establish an international system for monitoring compliance with a moratorium, especially as one Member State applied such a moratorium for some time, on the basis of its estimate of the accelerating arms race.

Secondly, I come to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and denuclearized zones. Although an effective international convention to ensure the security of non-nuclear weapon States against the threat or the use of such weapons has not yet been concluded, the call for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and denuclearized zones is gaining strength day by day.

We are witnessing renewed efforts by the countries of the Middle East to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in the region, especially since Israel alone possesses nuclear weapons and insists on continuing development, production and testing, without acceding to the non-proliferation Treaty and without agreeing so far to subject all its nuclear activities to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, and also without approving the establishment of a

(Mr. Adam, Sudan)

nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Because of that position, we are far from achieving and strengthening peace and security in an economically and strategically important region. For all those reasons, we support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones also in Latin America, the South Pacific, the Indian Ocean and Central Europe.

What I have just said also applies to Africa. The 1964 Cairo Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa has been supported by the General Assembly at successive sessions since 1965. At its last session the General Assembly renewed its call to all States to consider and respect the continent of Africa and its surrounding areas as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, since the implementation of the Declaration would be an important measure to ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and promote international peace and security.

At that session it also expressed grave concern about South Africa's possession of a nuclear-weapon capability and its continuation of the development of such a capability. It condemned South Africa in that respect and also condemned all forms of nuclear co-operation with that racist régime by any State, corporation, institution or individual. However, countries with the technical means refuse to help the international community to expose that activity and do not provide any official information on the research carried out by South Africa. Racist South Africa does not subject its nuclear facilities to inspection by the IAEA. We face a clear threat to international peace and security, with a serious escalation of the threat and blackmail practised by that racist State against all the peoples of Africa. We should treat with all seriousness the conclusions reached by the report of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research on South Africa's nuclear capability. The Security Council is still duty-bound to

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plug the present holes in the arms embargo against South Africa, in order to make the embargo more effective in all areas, including co-operation with South Africa in the nuclear field.

I turn now to biological and chemical weapons. The international community is still closely following the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on the conclusion of a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. Despite the progress achieved last year, the convention has not been elaborated, although it is imminent.

There are other important issues - including confidence-building measures, security and conventional disarmament, prevention of an arms race in outer space, the naval arms race, the relationship between disarmament and development - on which my delegation would like to present its views at a later stage. However, we should like now to express our view on the role played by the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies in the field of disarmament. In his report on the work of the Organization, issued on 9 September this year, the Secretary-General says:

"The Charter of the United Nations defines the principles to be followed in gaining peace in the fullest meaning of what true peace entails. These principles have lost none of their relevance or validity. What has too often been lacking is the readiness of Member States to put aside national differences and national ambitions and work together within the United Nations in accordance with these principles towards common goals." (A/42/1, p.17)

The Disarmament Commission's report this year has emphasized that the main objective of the United Nations is to safeguard international peace and security. It refers explicitly to the fact that true and lasting peace can be achieved only

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through the effective implementation of the security system provided for in the Charter. It also emphasises the important role played by multilateral agreements in connection with disarmament measures to safeguard international peace and security, and pays due attention to the effectiveness of the key role played by the Security Council in that regard.

Although we appreciate all the efforts at the bilateral and regional levels in the field of conventional and nuclear disarmament, we consider it important that such efforts complement those made by the international community and its negotiating and deliberative bodies, so that the Organization may not be deprived of its most sacred duty, provided for by the Charter, especially when those negotiations are related to the wider objectives and interests of other countries and of the international community in general.

We do not want our Organization to be turned into a forum for rhetorical speeches and a safety valve for the majority of its Members, which have no say, in present circumstances, in many of the important international issues.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.