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Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

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Mr. Jamal (Qatar)  
Mr. Venkateswaran (India)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31 to 49 and 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the delegation of Ecuador, I should like to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. We should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat which so efficiently assists them. Your proven capacity and your prestige ensure the success of the work of this Committee.

The subject of disarmament must not be the concern of the major Powers alone. The weaker countries, who deal with that matter only as potential victims, must have a keener interest in that subject than do the people of the industrialized countries.

That is true in times of peace: the relentless, shameful expenditure on the arms race - \$500 billion this year - is not only a cause of world-wide inflation but also of the delays in investments which should be directed towards improving the living standards and development of all the peoples of the world.

This is also true in times of accidental warfare, which can be unleashed by error: such a war would affect exposed peoples who do not have elementary resources for protection, for warning and for alert, or for refuge and do not have the means to protect themselves during a period of nuclear holocaust when mankind destroys itself.

So it is not merely to repeat technical arguments, it is not merely to repeat theories, that the representatives of large and small countries come to this Committee and make an appeal to a sense of survival, a sense of responsibility. In particular, those appeals are addressed to the major Powers, urging them to call a halt to the arms race.

A ray of hope was perceived when the recommendations of the tenth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, on disarmament were adopted. However, we seem to have been moving backwards since that time.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

No progress has been made in the disarmament negotiations which should have included nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, chemical weapons, conventional weapons, and weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects. Nor has there been any progress on the reduction of armed forces.

As the prospect of the nuclear threat is so harrowing, the lack of progress in negotiations is particularly disturbing. With every passing day, the threat of atomic warfare is truly horrifying. Whether war is deliberate or accidental, the result would be the same - the destruction of the planet. War might last only a few minutes, but it would wipe out everything that mankind has achieved in thousands of years of history.

We were dismayed to hear references to the three nuclear alerts of the last 12 months which were mentioned by the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Garcia Robles, who is so well acquainted with the subject. Those alerts were due to electronic malfunctions that took place in November 1979 and June 1980. Today, we not only know that bombs which are 2,500 times more powerful than the bombs of Hiroshima can be produced, but also that the explosives have greater energy than all the bombs which have been produced since the invention of gun powder, and there is thus an unprecedented threat of the human species destroying itself. As is well known, nuclear arsenals that have been stockpiled can destroy the planet many times over.

Hence, we must agree on effective action to call a halt to the nuclear arms race. Countries party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have vowed to do that, particularly the three nuclear Powers who are depositaries of that Treaty, which has been in effect for 10 years.

We hope that the SALT II agreement signed in Vienna by the chiefs of State of the United States and the Soviet Union on 18 June of last year will be ratified and come into force. We trust that there will be progress towards the SALT III treaty which, we hope, will spell the complete and total destruction of nuclear weapon stockpiles, now one of the greatest threats to mankind.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

We view with interest the draft resolution proposed by the Soviet Union entitled 'Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war'. That draft should be adopted with a few additions, particularly a total suspension of test explosives instead of for one year only, preferably as from 1 January 1981. Those explosions are particularly destructive and affect the environment. The littoral States of the Pacific Ocean will remember that several such explosions took place on Pacific islands and there has been news of radioactive clouds coming from the west and covering all the continents.

We must tackle with renewed enthusiasm the Programme of Action adopted in 1978 and we must eliminate any notion of a nuclear war, including the so-called limited nuclear war, because it is immoral, impracticable and absurd.

Fortunately, there is one area in the world which has renounced nuclear folly. I refer to Latin America and the progress that we have made in the Tlatelolco Treaty. My delegation, representing as it does a Latin American country, would like to express its appreciation to the Governments of the five permanent members of the Security Council for having signed and ratified Additional Protocol II of the Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America. That has made it possible to meet a heartfelt wish of the General Assembly as expressed by this Committee last year. We should like to recall the appeal which was made at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly last year, in resolution 34/71, inviting the Governments of the United States and France to secure the ratification of Additional Protocol I of that Treaty at the earliest possible date.

We sincerely hope that it will be possible for the few Latin American countries that have not yet done so to sign and ratify that Treaty.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

The progress in various regions towards general and complete disarmament, should be simultaneous and active. We shall support all efforts to make progress on items related to the implementation of the Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa and to the creation of nuclear-free zones in the Middle East and in southern Asia. We likewise support the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, and in regard to this subject we share the concern of the delegation of Italy and others over the lack of compliance with the recommendation made by the General Assembly at its sixth emergency special session concerning the withdrawal of the foreign forces occupying the non-aligned country of Afghanistan. This matter is of fundamental significance in a debate on disarmament as it has produced a crisis which, as the Secretary-General says in his analysis of the world situation, "... has affected the process of détente ... /and/ created tension and anxiety throughout the world community." (A/35/1, p. 5)

Since the signing of the United Nations Charter, this Organization has devoted its best efforts to matters of nuclear armaments, their limitation, prohibition or destruction. It has not, on the other hand, paid sufficient attention to the use of what are known as conventional weapons or weapons in common use. This subject is of concern to my delegation, because for a period of almost 35 years in different regions mankind has known the scourge of by now more than 100 wars in which conventional weapons have been used. In the most recent of them chemical weapons were employed, which together with bacteriological weapons constitute another terrifying subject that we considered had been dealt with after the express ban on their use in an international Treaty.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

The use of conventional weapons in conflicts has meant that military expenditures have increased, day by day.

The question of conventional disarmament is of special concern to the countries of Latin America. In the recent Charter of Conduct proposed by the Constitutional President of Ecuador, Jaime Roldos, we read the following:

"The Presidents of Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela, and the Personal Representative of the President of Peru, member countries of the Andean Group meeting in Riobamba on the occasion of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the 'Constitution of the State of Ecuador' on the eleventh day of September, one thousand eight hundred and thirty;

"...

"Decide to adopt the following:

#### CHARTER OF CONDUCT

"...

"4. To encourage the settlement of disputes that exist or might arise between the countries of the Andean Group, or between them and third parties, by means of the peaceful procedures provided for in international law;

"5. To promote a process of subregional and regional disarmament based on the postulates of the Declaration of Ayacucho which constitutes an effective contribution to general and complete disarmament and makes it possible to free resources for economic and social development".

(A/C.3/35/4, annex, p. 2)

The Presidents of Costa Rica and Panama and the Special Representative of the Government of Spain unreservedly supported the spirit and purpose of that declaration.

May I remind the Assembly that the Declaration of Ayacucho, signed by eight Latin American countries in 1974, is mentioned in the recommendations of the Programme of Action, in paragraph 84 of the Final Document of the tenth special session devoted to disarmament. According to that Declaration each of the signatories undertakes

to promote and support the building of a lasting order of international peace and co-operation and to create the conditions which will make possible the effective limitation of armaments and an end to their acquisition for offensive purposes" (A/10044, annex, p. 2),

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

in order to devote all available resources to the economic and social development of Latin America. In that declaration, which was expanded in 1978, the participating countries

"agree that the continuation of problems in the international arena is one of the major causes of the arms race and therefore they reaffirm their will to promote the settlement of all disputes by peaceful means, thereby contributing to the elimination of tension and to the preservation and strengthening of peace".

This brings us to one of the problems that is the logical consequence of the question of disarmament since, as we consider the causes of the arms race, there always seems to be some pending issue among States, some injustice that needs to be redressed or some situation that needs to be clarified to bring about harmonious life among the peoples of the world. That is why it is necessary to strengthen machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes on a world-wide level. So there is a direct link between collective security and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Disarmament is not for my country just the absence of the elements of war, the suppression of aggression, the withdrawal of foreign troops that occupy a territory, in order for there to be free elections or international obligations or treaties arrived at free from coercion. Disarmament means that there must be instruments for peace arising from the peaceful settlement of international disputes and that law must be the foundation of justice. Then law and justice can produce a genuine permanent peace.

Furthermore, there are the scandalous amounts spent in the arms race and if these funds were devoted to peaceful development that would be the solution to most of the world's problems. It would be mutually beneficial and would help the prosperous countries as well as they try to build an international economic order. The subject of the economic and social consequences of the arms race and their harmful effects on peace and security is one of top priority and is continually relevant. It is part and parcel of the North-South dialogue, both in this third development decade and in the Second Disarmament Decade, and in global negotiations. The figure of \$500 billion a year is a reality.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

It represents what is being spent on the arms race in a world where many are fighting under-development, where there are these huge gaps between the poor countries and the wealthy countries, all of which endangers world peace.

These two questions, disarmament and development, are indissolubly linked. Both would respond to a speedy adoption of sound and sane ideas and decisions, in a world that seems to be headed directly to nuclear suicide.



(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

There may be very little time left if we look at the second special session of the General Assembly to be devoted to disarmament scheduled for 1982 and if we wish to reach that date with guarantees or commitments for the survival of mankind or just to get to the end of the century and to be at all sure of reaching the third millennium of our era. This subject has been much studied and here, as in the North-South dialogue, we note the lack of sufficient political will. The gradual transfer of subsidies from military industries to civilian production has been considered as an aspect of the desired change. There must be a change in the attitude of the scientists, investors, workers and politicians who today are involved in military production, so that they can respond to the challenge of peace and begin to produce more houses, schools, dams and food, as required by peaceful coexistence among peoples. That is especially true concerning the need to increase those campaigns that have a crucial effect on the people of the world, such as the campaigns against illiteracy, malnutrition, environmental pollution and other problems. The financial and other benefits that such a process could generate have been considered at the interesting International Conference on Disarmament and Development that took place in Norway in May of this year. Workers in major arms production centres have expressed interest in converting their facilities into centres for the production of socially useful products.

It was made clear at that conference that military expenditures will continue to be the major obstacle to the transfer of adequate resources from the industrialized countries to the poor countries. In the meantime, in most cases, we have not even reached the minimum of 0.07 per cent of the gross national product that has been recommended, although we should applaud those countries that have gone beyond that percentage and are beginning to talk of 1 per cent of their gross national product as the transfer level.

Even as regards operational programmes of the United Nations, to take the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as an example an input of 0.4 per cent of what is spent on arms would triple its present financial level, but the contribution of those countries that regard themselves as super-Powers is really small if compared as a percentage of their per capita incomes with the contributions of some industrialized countries that have a greater awareness of international affairs and a clearer vision or sense of survival in this tense world in which we live.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

It is encouraging to see that in academic circles studies are beginning to be made of alternative strategies for using for civilian development purposes the personnel and resources now involved in the military industries and of the methods for such a conversion in the industrialized countries. The Soviet proposal that was made a few years ago to reduce military expenditures by 10 per cent; the proposal by Romania to at least freeze them at their existing level; the proposal by the President of France in 1978 to create a fund that would begin by making available to the poorest countries one billion dollars, the cost of ten 90-F-160 planes or one nuclear submarine; the proposal in the Brandt report of a tax on the international arms trade; and the proposal by Secretary-General Waldheim to devote a million dollars to disarmament for every billion that is being spent on armaments at present all these are praiseworthy initiatives that indicate a state of awareness and perhaps a survival instinct that should be encouraged here in the United Nations, that is by those of us who share responsibility for these debates.

The possibility of locating major concentrations of arms in the world is beginning to increase in this era of satellites. Some 96 per cent of the nuclear warheads have now been located, according to the annex of SALT II. Talk is beginning of how to achieve the same level of security at a lower cost, in order to obtain a realistic conversion to the production of those things that are necessary for the improvement in the living standards of peoples that are lagging behind.

In this world that is looking for more rational and equitable ways to live in peace, we see that the recognition of national sovereignty and of the collective sovereignty of the international community is developing and is taking on new world-wide dimensions. In the world Organization we discuss sovereignty over resources in the sea and on the sea bed; progress has been made in recognizing the 200-mile limit as it applies to resources in what is called the economic zone; progress is being made towards the recognition of 200 miles of territorial sea to the coastal States in the Committee on Outer Space there has been a discussion of the need to regulate the use of geostationary orbits - sui generis natural resource, directly related to our planet - and we have stated our position on the question of the sovereignty of the southern States with regard to making segments of this natural resource available to the developing world.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

But both the marine area and the spatial area must be maintained as zones of peace. We cannot allow the development of anti-satellite systems in space, with projectiles that are really space grenades, with lethal laser beams that place elements of atomic destruction in orbit. The dangerous system of the use of nuclear energy in devices placed in outer space that could threaten any country in the world cannot be allowed to go on. Possibly the most lethal and the most costly of the arms races is taking place in space now, with new and more sophisticated weapons that are destined to be used in future wars and are already beginning to leave the realm of science fiction to create terrifying possibilities of new prospects for space war, unless all this is prevented in time in accordance with the warnings issued by specialists.

It is encouraging to note that in some countries of Latin America civilian activities such as road building, mining, settlement and transport are increasingly being carried out by sectors of the armed forces. However, it is sad to note that the developing countries spent \$90 billion on their military budgets in 1979, while the amount needed to speed up their development, according to statistics of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), would be \$30 to \$40 billion, that is, less than half of the huge amount that is now being spent by these poor countries.

The delegation of Ecuador reaffirms, as it has in past Assemblies, its unswerving support for any resolution that seeks concrete measures to eliminate the use of force in international relations, to halt the arms race, and to uphold the principles of the legal equality of States, of the peaceful solution of disputes, of non-intervention and of the illegality of territorial gains resulting from the use of force. We shall support anything that is primarily aimed at curbing the sterile arms race and banning the use of weapons that must not and cannot replace the rule of law and order.

My delegation reserves the right to speak in more detail in the debate on the various items before this Committee.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): It will soon be one year since the General Assembly adopted resolution 34/73, on 11 December 1979. It is now our task to consider, under item 5 of the First Committee's agenda, how that resolution has been implemented. I shall devote this entire statement to that question. When we compare the text of resolution 34/73 with the text of the resolution adopted on the same subject a year earlier, that is, resolution 33/60 of 14 December 1978, we see clearly that the Assembly wanted to stress the growing impatience of the international community regarding the stagnation of the tripartite negotiations which had been going on for more than three years. Resolution 34/73, therefore, contains a number of provisions which did not appear in the earlier resolution, provisions according to which the most representative body of the United Nations:

First, emphasized "the urgent need for all nuclear-weapon States to cease the testing of nuclear weapons";

Secondly, noted "with dissatisfaction that that part of the report of the Committee on Disarmament relating to the question of a comprehensive test-ban treaty shows no progress in the consideration of this subject and that a full report on the status of the negotiations between the three nuclear-weapon States was not submitted";

Thirdly, expressed unequivocally its "conviction that positive progress in the negotiations by the Committee on Disarmament on such a treaty is a vital element for the success of efforts to prevent vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons ..."

Fourthly, recognized "the indispensable role of the Committee on Disarmament in the negotiation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty"; and

Fifthly, directly requested the Committee on Disarmament "to initiate negotiations on such a treaty as a matter of the highest priority".

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 137 in favour to none against. It was complemented by a more general resolution, but one which was equally explicit, that is, resolution 34/83 B, which was adopted on the same day by 130 votes in favour to none against.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

In that resolution, entitled "Report of the Committee on Disarmament", the General Assembly stressed that "negotiations on specific disarmament issues conducted outside the Committee on Disarmament should not in any way constitute an impediment to the negotiations on such questions in the Committee," and urged the Committee "to proceed, without any further delay, to substantive negotiations on the priority questions of disarmament on its agenda," and, as a direct contribution to those negotiations, it called on the members of the Committee who had been participating in separate negotiations on specific priority questions of disarmament "to make every effort to achieve a positive conclusion of those negotiations without further delay for submission to the Committee, or, if that was not possible, to submit to the Committee "a full report on the status of their separate negotiations and results achieved thus far..."

If we consider the contents of the report in document CD/130, which was submitted to the Disarmament Committee on 31 July by the three nuclear Powers and which covers the status of their negotiations, and bear in mind the categorical declarations and appeals contained in both resolutions to which I have referred, it will be easy to understand the reasons for the concern and disappointment which have been expressed by various members of the Committee as may be seen from the report of the Committee this year in document CD/139.

Their concern and disappointment are particularly understandable when we judge the present situation, bearing in mind the background of the subject, some of which I shall try to sketch in now.

The General Assembly has concerned itself with this subject for the past quarter of a century. The pages of the documents of the world Organization, of the Disarmament Committee made up of 18 nations (UNDC), the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CDC) and the Committee known as the CD, contain speeches and proposals that have been made on this subject, and there are not hundreds or thousands, but tens of thousands of such pages.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

The question was first discussed in the General Assembly in 1954. The next year the first resolution on the subject was adopted, and since 1959 the subject has year after year appeared on the agenda of the General Assembly. During the past 25 years the Assembly has adopted more than 40 resolutions on the subject. In 1971 it asked the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to assign high priority to matters having to do with the concluding of a treaty on the subject. It did the same in its resolutions addressed to the Committee on Disarmament. On seven different occasions the General Assembly, using terms that are rarely used, condemned all nuclear-weapon tests, and it did so "most vigorously" or "energetically" or "most emphatically". That is the kind of language that has been used in past resolutions. In 1972 and 1973 the Assembly reaffirmed its deep apprehension concerning the harmful consequences of nuclear-weapon tests for the acceleration of the arms race and for the health of present and future generations. In 1974, 1975, 1976 and 1977 it expanded its original declarations on the subject. Starting in 1974, it expressed its conviction that

"continuance of nuclear weapon testing will intensify the arms race, thus increasing the danger of nuclear war". (General Assembly resolution 3257 (XXIX))

And in the Final Document, approved by consensus at the first special session to be devoted to disarmament, it affirmed that such cessation would be in the interest of mankind and would make a significant contribution to the aim of ending the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and the development of new types of such weapons and of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It is, then, not at all surprising that for many members of the Committee on Disarmament, including Mexico, the explanation given in the tripartite report for the failure to comply with the decisions of the General Assembly - and the explanation is basically that verification is a laborious process that must be carried out with the greatest care - is unacceptable and groundless. That is

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

easy enough to understand if one bears in mind a number of elements such as the following.

First, the General Assembly has repeatedly said that regardless of the differences that exist concerning the question of verification there is no valid reason to defer the conclusion of an agreement completely banning all nuclear-weapon tests.

Secondly, on 29 February 1972, more than eight years ago, in a statement to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, the Secretary-General stated:

"I believe that all the technical and scientific aspects of the problem have been so fully explored that only a political decision is now necessary in order to achieve final agreement ...

"When one takes into account the existing means of verification ... it is difficult to understand further delay in achieving agreement on an underground test ban ...

"... The potential risks of continuing underground nuclear-weapon tests would far outweigh any possible risks from ending such tests."

(CCD/PV.545, pp. 8-9)

That is what the Secretary-General told the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament more than eight years ago.

Thirdly, in his introduction to the report of the four experts contained in document A/35/257, the same high international official has, with special emphasis reiterated the opinion he expressed in 1972. After referring specifically to that opinion, he adds:

"I still hold that belief. The problem can and should be solved now." (A/35/257, p. 5)

Fourthly, in the report to which I have just referred, which is entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban", and which, as is well known, was prepared pursuant to resolution 34/422, which was adopted by the General Assembly in order to carry out a study that had been recommended by the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies and was supported by the Secretary-General - and in passing I would commend this report to those members who have not yet read it - the authors reach the following conclusions, among others:

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

"As a result of the failure to stop nuclear-weapon testing, many States became disillusioned and increasingly discontented. Non-nuclear weapon States in general came to regard the achievement of a comprehensive test ban as a litmus test of the determination of the nuclear-weapon States to halt the arms race." (A/35/257, para. 15)

"The trilateral negotiations have now been going on for nearly three years" -

that was true when the experts were writing; now, as I have already said, the trilateral negotiations have been going on for more than three years -

"while in the Committee on Disarmament negotiations have still not commenced. In order to bring the achievement of a comprehensive test ban nearer to realization, much more intensive negotiations are essential. Verification of compliance no longer seems to be an obstacle to reaching agreement." (Ibid., para. 154)



(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

My delegation shares the views thus expressed and we feel that they faithfully reflect the existing situation. In the light of the brief analysis I have just made of the origin and development of this question in the past quarter of a century or so, it should, we think, be clear why we have suggested, both in the Committee on Disarmament and in the recently held Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and also in our statement when this general debate in the First Committee began last week, the adoption of some specific, realistic and feasible measures, which, as we said in Geneva two months ago, are among those likely to produce tangible effects of this type for which the countries of the world are anxiously waiting so that their already shaken faith in the Non-Proliferation Treaty would not be shattered.

This matter is more urgent today than ever before, especially bearing in mind the need for the States that are depositaries of the Treaty - and this is also something we pointed out at the closing meeting of the Review Conference to which I have referred - to correctly interpret the lessons to be derived from that Conference. At that Conference, as is well known, the non-nuclear-weapon States, in refusing to approve a final declaration of a purely academic nature, emphasized that the patience they had had during the ten years since the Treaty had entered into effect had been exhausted and they were now awaiting a cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date. This was made clear in article VI of the instrument in question. In its tenth preambular paragraph reference is made specifically to the determination expressed in the instrument known as the Moscow Treaty, signed on 5 August 1963 - that is, nearly 20 years ago - to bring about the permanent suspension of all nuclear weapon tests.

Therefore we hope that, by implementing a procedure such as the one that the delegation of Mexico suggested through me in our statement on 15 October to which I have just referred, the General Assembly will next year receive from the Committee on Disarmament a draft treaty on the comprehensive prohibition of such nuclear explosions, early enough for it

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

to be considered at the thirty-sixth session. We should also like to reiterate our conviction that it would be highly desirable, before that happens, to have an immediate proclamation, as a provisional measure, of a moratorium covering such explosions. That moratorium should be subscribed to by at least the three nuclear-weapon States acting as depositaries of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation.

Mr. NKOUKA (Congo) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, as this is the first time my delegation has spoken in this Committee, permit me to associate myself with previous speakers in conveying to you and the other officers of the Committee the congratulations of my country on your election and to assure you of the co-operation of the Congolese delegation in the carrying out of your functions.

Each year the question of disarmament and international security appears on our agenda, thus demonstrating the constant interest of our Organization in this extremely disturbing problem and the extent to which our Organization remains attached to the principles, so dear to us all, relating to the safeguarding of peace and security in the world. The same question is before us again and is even more relevant since it is incumbent upon this Organization to make every effort to find a solution as soon as possible. Within this context, my delegation very much appreciates and supports the welcome initiative of the Soviet Union because for us it is a positive and concrete contribution to the efforts made by the United Nations in this particular field of international peace and security. Urgent measures are indeed necessary. The international situation makes them absolutely imperative. It is a situation that is marked by generalized violence which has assumed the dimensions of a life of anguish for thousands upon thousands of human beings. This violence is felt even more tragically in Africa, even though that continent has been declared a nuclear-free zone.

It is said rightly or wrongly, that the renewal of international tension has been caused by the events in Afghanistan, yet we must not overlook the fact that the African continent every day faces a nightmare in the shape of

(Mr. Nkouka, Congo)

the threat hovering over it, like a sword of Damocles, created by the abhorrent Pretoria régime, particularly since it has acquired nuclear capability. Having suffered a mortal blow through the brilliant victory in Zimbabwe won by the Patriotic Front, with its back to the wall in Namibia as a result of the valiant struggle of the South West Africa People's Organization and challenged on its own soil by rebellion and strikes the apartheid régime which, on the basis of a neurotic mystique of race, is already waging outright war against the front-line countries, is capable in its cynicism and desperation of resorting to the use of nuclear weapons against free and fighting Africa. It seems clear to us that people who manufacture arms do so not to put them into museums but to use them. This is the danger in Africa - the Africa where so many countries have celebrated their independence. They aspire to peace. It is disturbing to note that 20 years after independence the African continent continues to be a theatre of war and conflict. Indeed, blood has never ceased to flow there during its 20 years of independence. The results are more tragic than ever today. Africa remains the poor, forsaken and abandoned continent. We can clearly no longer resign ourselves to such a state of affairs. Long devastated by colonialism and exploited by imperialism, the African continent truly needs an environment of peace so as to allow its lagging economy to recover.

(Mr. Nkouka, Congo)

The tactic for economic recovery in Africa, the Plan of Action for which was adopted in Lagos in April last, can be effective only within that specific context.

My country, the People's Republic of the Congo, with its limited resources, does not have the means to maintain military forces for hegemonistic or subversive purposes; but, in any case, that is not in the nature of its people, which is profoundly peace-loving. That explains our commitment to peace: regional peace in the first place, because we believe that our efforts at national development can be successful only in an environment of détente and hence of well-being for our people. Thus one of the guiding principles of our regional policy is good-neighbourliness, that kind of peaceful coexistence and frank and ongoing dialogue with the countries of central Africa with which we are linked by a common past and many other ties. Then there is our commitment to peace in the continent and in the world at large, which is explained by the fact that we maintain relations of co-operation, on the basis of mutual advantage and respect for sovereignty, with all countries which wish such relations. This devotion of my country to peace and international détente means that, as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, we remain open to all measures that militate in favour of reducing the danger of war and the risks of tension.

That is why we think that disarmament is not just the business of those countries that have the means and the know-how to manufacture and invent weapons but is the business of mankind, precisely because of the interdependence of the world. Moreover that is demonstrated by the recent events.

The People's Republic of the Congo continues to believe that our Organization remains the instrument of choice whereby, in the face of the deterioration in the state of the world, it should be possible to take the urgent measures which are so necessary for the well-being and survival of future generations.

Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): It is my pleasure first of all to extend to you, Sir, on behalf of the delegation of the State of Qatar and on my own behalf, our warmest congratulations on your election to this important post of Chairman of the First Committee. Your competence as a negotiator - which was again confirmed during the difficult work at the eleventh special session of the General Assembly - and your extensive experience in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva give us every confidence that the work of this Committee will be successful and that new and necessary measures will be adopted as regards the cessation of the arms race and the strengthening of international security.

May I also congratulate the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur of the Committee on their election to those important posts; we wish them every possible success.

The question of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament is the primary task of the United Nations today. If the first task of the United Nations, entrusted to it under the Charter, is to establish a solid system of international peace and security, the situation which has now been reached in the arms race is extremely dangerous for international peace and security and the survival of man on our planet; it poses a threat to the very existence of human society.

If the problems of development, human rights and disarmament are the three basic problems facing the United Nations at the beginning of the 1980s, the problem of disarmament is obviously closely linked with the other two and all three are directly and completely interdependent. Suffice it to mention, in proof of that contention, the bitter truth that the world today spends more than \$500 billion on the arms race while millions of people in different parts of the world are suffering from hunger and have no schools, hospitals or shelter.

But the world is not facing up to that tragic truth by adopting measures to limit and then halt the arms race, and finally to achieve general and complete disarmament so that human society can rid itself of this nightmare for ever. Instead, the nuclear arms race is continuing, and is in fact relentlessly

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growing worse. Although negotiations on disarmament began in the 1950s on various levels, we have not yet embarked on the course of attaining our objective. On the contrary, nuclear arms are constantly increasing, qualitatively and quantitatively, and the stockpiles of different types of conventional weapons are also increasing in various strategic parts of the world such as the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean regions.

In view of its geographical situation, my country is greatly disturbed by the efforts to transform the Indian Ocean region into a zone of military competition among the great Powers, in spite of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, by which the Indian Ocean was declared to be a zone of peace.

The Government of my country vigorously condemns the attempts on the part of the two racist régimes in South Africa and occupied Palestine to introduce nuclear weapons in Africa and the Middle East. The report of the Secretary-General shows that South Africa has the capacity to produce nuclear weapons and reaffirms that that fact poses a great threat to the security of Africa and to the peace of the world. The nuclear co-operation between Israel and South Africa is no longer a secret. It is rather a source of grave disquiet, particularly because of the aggressive and racist characteristics of those two régimes, characteristics which pose a serious danger to the peoples of the two regions.

My delegation would emphasize the importance of continuing the study of this question and of preparing a detailed report on Israel's nuclear armament. That report should be submitted next year - by a date to be determined - and should deal with Israel's nuclear activities in all their aspects, which are now known to the whole international community. It should also deal with the dangerous nature of those activities, which threaten not only the Middle East but also peace and security in the world.

The Israeli authorities have claimed that they will certainly not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the Middle East. And yet they show that they are in fact proud of being the first to have introduced a

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nuclear potential and capacity in that region. They are also referring increasingly to their possession of nuclear weapons, while attempting to evade assuming the political responsibility which flows therefrom. That was demonstrated by an interview with Shimon Peres, a former Defence Minister of Israel and the leader of the Israeli Labour Party. In that interview - published in the Israeli weekly Maaref in September 1980 - Peres said that John Kennedy, the United States President, had asked him at the beginning of the 1960s if Israel was developing nuclear weapons. Peres continued:

"I did not expect that question at all. I therefore thought for a moment and replied: 'Israel will not be the first State to introduce nuclear weapons in the Middle East'. At that time my reply was criticized, but in due course it became an official policy."

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Peres added:

"This question was not a technical question but rather a political question, because if there is an irresponsible State or a State which is not in a declared war and operating in this field, the reply that I gave would not apply to such a State. But Israel is a peace-loving country."

Those words mean that Israel possesses nuclear weapons but is not ready to say so, in order not to have to assume the political consequences. What, then, is the meaning of the reply of Peres, claiming that this question applies to Israel but would not apply to another State that acted the same way in the nuclear field? What is the meaning of Israel's refusal so far to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty? The Zionist entity cannot shirk the responsibility for its actions, which deny politically but confirm in fact and technically that it possesses nuclear weapons.

The international community at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament expressed the international community's will to co-operate fully to solve the problems of disarmament. Nearly two and one-half years after that session, we find that the major nuclear Powers are acting as if it had never taken place.

At the previous session, we all expressed the wish to see the SALT II treaty signed. The General Assembly in its resolution 34/78 (F), reaffirmed its confidence in that treaty. However, to this very day we find that it has not been ratified and negotiations have been broken off, in spite of the fact that the world urgently requires that the arms race end and that the stockpiles of those weapons which now exist be destroyed.



(Mr. Jamal, Qatar)

The comprehensive study on nuclear weapons, published in the Secretary-General's report in document A/35/392, resulted in strong confirmation of the urgent need for the world to rid itself once and for all of these weapons which now exist. That study refers to the fact that today there are in the world approximately 40,000 nuclear warheads, the total strength of which may be equivalent to about 1 million bombs of the kind that were dropped on Hiroshima and claimed more than 200,000 human victims. Such a destructive power, according to the study, is equivalent to some 13,000 million tons of TNT, or about 3 tons of TNT for each individual in the world. Experts also believe that 300 grams of TNT are sufficient to kill one human being. From a simple calculation, we can reach the conclusion that the nuclear weapons which now exist are sufficient to destroy the world about 10,000 times over.

We should thus like to ask, what is the logic behind all these stockpiles of monstrous weapons, which would bring the world to its total self-destruction? We are all aware of the need of each State for national security. But today we cannot agree that military force should be the only form of national security, because dangers of a new kind are threatening the international community as a whole. During the 1970s the world had to face problems of a lack of food, a lack of energy and a lack of currency. Today, for example, 80 per cent of the population of the world, and in developing countries particularly, are living in a state of hunger, while 20 per cent of the world's inhabitants - and I am speaking here of those who live in the industrialized and most developed States - are exploiting and using more than 80 per cent of the world's resources. The economic, social and political upheavals that will result from that situation will affect the whole world, and it will be difficult to remedy this by military force. Quite to the contrary, the limitation of military expenditures and the transfer of the savings effected to development purposes is the appropriate way of facing up to those dangers.

(Mr. Jamal, Qatar)

All Member States have undertaken to apply the Programme of Action adopted by the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, which contains specific measures for disarmament which were to be put into effect in subsequent years. The powerful States which possess the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons are called upon to assume their special responsibilities in order to attain the objectives of nuclear disarmament and spare the world the danger of a nuclear war.

There is a very close relationship between nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. That is why my Government regrets that the NPT Review Conference was not able to produce a final document dealing with substance. In spite of the fact that the trilateral negotiations on the treaty for a total ban of nuclear weapons began four years ago, they have not yet produced a treaty, nor is there any sign of one. That is why we should like to express our hope that the Committee on Disarmament will during its next session set up an ad hoc working group to consider this question and that bilateral negotiations in this field will be held within the framework of the Committee. But these negotiations should not be a substitute for the trilateral negotiations.

One source of hope is that the Committee on Disarmament at its last session began preliminary negotiations in spite of the political upheavals on the international scene during the year. The Committee agreed to set up four working groups; that was an important achievement. We hope that other important decisions will be taken during the 1981 session of the Committee.

The delegation of my country welcomes the positive results attained and the important agreements reached by the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions and Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Excessively Injurious or Have Indiscriminate Effects.

(Mr. Jamal, Qatar)

We are also grateful for the very valuable preliminary studies published by the United Nations in accordance with a request made by the General Assembly, on various aspects of disarmament and the efforts undertaken to prepare new measures. These studies effectively contribute to the growing awareness by world public opinion of the problem of disarmament and allied problems. They have also created the international climate necessary for attaining the objectives of disarmament.

We also greatly welcomed General Assembly resolution 34/75, in which the 1980s are declared to be the Second Disarmament Decade.

Since we are at the preparatory stage for the second special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament, the delegation of my country would appeal to all concerned to translate into tangible and concrete reality the commitments which they made in the Programme of Action adopted at the first special session devoted to disarmament.

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(Mr. Jamal, Qatar)

We must all do what we can to attain the objectives of general and complete disarmament, those being the objectives most cherished by mankind. And as the Secretary-General himself stated in a message to the inaugural meeting of the Committee on Disarmament on 5 February 1980:

"As disarmament involves nothing less than the survival of humanity, it is the common concern and the collective responsibility of all." (CD/FV.53, p. 13)

In the atomic era, there will be no winners and no losers, and therefore everyone must put an end to the arms race and do everything they can to bring about general and complete disarmament.

Mr. VENKATESWARAN (India): Mr. Chairman, at the very outset, I should like to congratulate you on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf on your assumption of the chairmanship of this important Committee. I have no doubt that under your able guidance we shall be able to complete our tasks in time and to the satisfaction of one and all. I take this opportunity also to convey greetings and good wishes to the two Vice-Chairmen and to the Rapporteur, as well as to the officers of the Committee.

My statement today will mainly cover my delegation's position on the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, which have rightly been accorded the highest priority in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament in these words:

"Nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization. It is essential to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race in all its aspects in order to avert the danger of war involving nuclear weapons. The ultimate goal in this context is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons." (resolution S-10/2, para. 47)

I shall also briefly refer to the efforts made during this year in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, to which I have the honour of being accredited as the representative of my country.

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Inaugurating the general debate in this body, the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Garcia Robles, spoke eloquently and convincingly of the futility of any kind of nuclear strategy. My delegation fully endorses that view since, clearly, in a nuclear conflict there will be no winners - only losers - and that will be the case for everyone, including those who are not involved and are innocent of blame.

India has always been opposed to nuclear weapons and firmly committed to the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. India has consistently advocated the complete cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests. We are just as firmly in favour of the total prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, thereby leading the way to nuclear disarmament. The halting of nuclear-weapon tests will significantly contribute towards the non-proliferation objectives which are much talked about but not practised by the nuclear weapon States, since at one stroke the cessation of tests of nuclear weapons might help to prevent both vertical as well as horizontal proliferation. The outlawing of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, on its part, would remove the danger of a nuclear war, with all its terrible consequences, besides ensuring that there is no longer any incentive for countries to continue the nuclear arms race or to add to their existing nuclear stockpiles. Only thereafter may one hope that the logical next step will be taken to eliminate nuclear weapons altogether from the armouries of nuclear-weapon States. The collective wisdom of mankind would then at last have been translated into action.

Mr. Albert Einstein, whose theories had led to the development of the first atomic bomb, had powerfully argued as follows, in three appeals which he broadcast over Radio Oslo in April 1958. He said:

"Should agreement be reached on the outlawing of nuclear weapons, this alone without any negotiations will have led to a great improvement in the political situation, because as a result of such an agreement, time and distance would again become realities with their own rights. Nuclear arms give a distant war the effects of a near war. The Soviet Union and America, in spite of the vast distance which separates them, can

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menace one another with atomic missiles in so frightful a manner and in so short a space of time, as if they lay next to one another. Having become neighbours, they are in constant fear of their lives every minute. But if nuclear arms are no longer in question, even the rockets and missiles would not present nearly the same destructive danger. The nearness that endangers existence would have ceased to be. If rockets are no longer nuclear arms, Europe is no longer a battlefield for a distant war which has the effect of a near war between the Soviet Union and America."

Mr. Einstein also spoke with remarkable foresight about the risks involved in surrendering the prerogative of the human brain to the workings of a computer, in these words:

"Such is our achievement that we now depend entirely on an electronic brain, and on errors and omissions from which such an instrument cannot be exempt. The making of a decision by means of an electronic brain, though quicker, is not as reliable as the making of a decision by the human brain. At some point the complex mechanism of the electronic brain may become faulty."

The repeated computer failures reported over the past months give room for reflexion in this context. Evidently, computers are not infallible and it would be the height of folly to entrust to them decisions on matters of life and death. We should like to see a study made by experts appointed by the Secretary-General into the reliability of the computer warning systems of the super-Powers, since the survival of mankind seems to be linked to them.

More than 20 years after Mr. Einstein's appeal, we find ourselves still in an age where the ambitions of nation States remain enmeshed in the warp and woof of technological advance while the world is being brought inexorably to the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. Surely, the outdated notions of the manifest destiny of States in terms of their power and military capability

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will have to be weighed against the staggering destructive potential of nuclear weapons, particularly when their use has been declared a crime against humanity and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations. Since those weapons came into existence, various doctrines have been put forward, such as massive retaliation, nuclear deterrence, limited strike, pre-emptive strike and second strike capacity. They are not content with the overkill capacity of the existing stocks of nuclear weapons, estimated at over 40,000 in all and representing the equivalent of 13 billion tons of TNT, or three tons of explosive death for each man, woman and child on our planet.

My delegation firmly rejects those theories and the currently fashionable concepts of nuclear deterrence and first-strike strategy. The former concept depends for its reliability on the ultimate use of nuclear weapons. The latter concept is nothing less than a strategy of waging aggressive war to pre-empt a perceived threat. Both concepts, put bluntly, amount to nothing more than a hostage system and ironically do not even provide the protection to the civilian populations that they are intended to. The only option left to States is to take revenge on each other, with the process continuing until they have destroyed everything or run out of weapons.

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In this context it is relevant to recall the statement made by Lord Zuckerman at the thirtieth Pugwash symposium, held last year, when he pointed out that:

"once started, wars, even limited wars, rarely proceed or indeed end as predicted. The claim, therefore, that limited strikes would in fact have either the desired pre-emptive or limited effect is at best a cynical sophistication, and at worst dangerous myopia".

As the Minister for External Affairs of India stated in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly earlier this month,

"Our principal concern in this nuclear age is, however, that the leadership of the most powerful nations of the world should consider not only the political appositeness of their foreign policy prescriptions but their consequences for the very survival of the world. We run the risk today of being carried on the wings of a collective paranoia. The situation calls for restraint and responsible behaviour so as to bring the world away from the edge of a nuclear catastrophe" (A/35/PV.23, p. 66)

My delegation would also like to refer in this context to the conclusions reached in the Secretary-General's recent comprehensive study on nuclear weapons, in particular to paragraphs 496 through 499. These paragraphs demolish with telling effect the claim that a stable world system can be based on a balance of terror. Apart from the perils of accidental war triggered by human or technical failure or computer malfunction, the report says

"It is inadmissible that the prospect of the annihilation of human civilization is used by some States to promote their security. The future of mankind is then made hostage to the perceived security of a few nuclear-weapon States" (A/35/392, annex, para. 497).

It has been truly said that when military objectives become the main preoccupation of statesmanship all of us have cause for genuine alarm. Why is it that the world is unable to resolve this deadlock? Perhaps this paradox was best expressed by our first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, when he said:

"The vast majority of peoples all over the world hunger for peace, but fear of others often clouds their perception and makes them act differently. This fear should be eliminated, and disarmament is essential



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if the fear is to be removed and peace is to be secured. Out of war, or threat of war, or preparation for war no peace can emerge.... I do believe, however, that if the peoples or the Governments of the world try hard enough, this catastrophe can be avoided, although it becomes increasingly difficult to do so<sup>1</sup>.

It is high time that man asserted his mastery over events rather than becoming the slave of every passing situation. What we do not understand we fear. What we fear we begin to hate, and what we hate we try to destroy. If even a small part of the efforts invested in inventing ever more powerful engines of destruction had been directed to the search for peace, very probably disarmament would have been achieved by now. But, on the contrary, people are getting accustomed to thinking the unthinkable, and resigning themselves to the possibility, or even the probability, of a nuclear war. The danger of a nuclear catastrophe appears greater today than at any time since these dreaded weapons were used at the end of the Second World War on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

That great visionary, the Buddha, cautioned his followers against becoming obsessed with selfishness, because selfishness leads to partiality - our seeing only what is good for us and not for others. Even reason then becomes a double-edged sword and serves equally the purpose of hate as it can serve the purpose of love, adding new fuel to the flames of hatred and increasing the turmoil of conflicting passions. Hence, it was that the Buddha sought to teach men the right application of reason so as to change rational creatures into humane beings. Ahimsa, or non-violence, in that sense became not merely a negative virtue of abstaining from harming others, but also a positive quality of harmonizing with them through universal love, which is the result of the recognition of the kinship of all living beings.

It is a sad commentary on the existing state of affairs that any deterioration in the international situation, instead of resulting in more mature statesmanship on all sides, should be used as an alibi to build up a psychological atmosphere leading to a further escalation of the arms race, both nuclear and conventional. Non-aligned and developing countries will do well in these circumstances to address themselves squarely to the problem and direct their energies towards bringing about the urgent halting and reversing of the arms race, in particular

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the nuclear arms race, and refuse to be distracted by peripheral issues of less gravity. The myth that some countries are more responsible than others and that so long as nuclear weapons remain in the hands of a few the safety of the world can be assured through a balance of terror has also to be categorically rejected.

A very recent independent survey conducted in the United States showed a dangerous shift in public opinion where people now seem to have learnt how to stop worrying and to live with - if not to love - the nuclear bomb. The survey goes on to say, "Apparently, people are willing to fight against Three-Mile Islands everywhere, but they are reluctant to think about nuclear war, even when it represents a clear and more pressing danger". The same study concludes as a result of interviews of 32 nuclear experts representing different shades of opinion that the collective view was that there had been only a 1 per cent chance of nuclear war in the 1970s, but that they see a 5 per cent chance of this occurring in the first half of this decade, and the chances go up to 10 per cent in the 1990s. Two of the panelists even felt that the odds may be as high as 50-50 in the next decade.

A bloodcurdling account of what may happen in the event of a nuclear war is found in the study entitled "The effects of nuclear war", published by the United States Office of Technology Management. It estimates that 20 million to 165 million Americans would die in such a war and a further 12 million to 33 million would be injured. The study adds grimly:

"All of the fatality figures are for the first 30 days following the attack. They do not account for subsequent deaths amongst the injured or from economic disruption and deprivation".

It may be presumed that similar havoc would result to the nuclear adversary also, besides the deaths and damage resulting from radioactive fall-out in third countries which have nothing to do with the conflict. As Niger Calder says in his book Nuclear Neighbours

"No one can really begin to guess what the combined and cumulative effects of physical damage, fire, atomic radiation, fatal sunburn and climate changes will be, or predict their consequences".

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

Delegations in the plenary Assembly, including my own, as well as in this Committee have expressed their deep sympathy on the recent earthquake in Algeria. The man-made disaster of a nuclear war is bound to cause many times over the misery and devastation of any natural disaster, and only mankind will be to blame for it if this should happen. Let us not, therefore, be distracted from our primary objective of halting the nuclear arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament. We must succeed, if not for our own survival, then for the sake at least of our children and our children's children, because, apart from the immediate deaths resulting from blast and heat radiation, the delayed effects of a nuclear war will last very long, causing cancer, permanent damage to the central nervous system and genetic malformations which could continue through many generations.

I now turn to the work done by the Committee on Disarmament during this year. It has, indeed, been an active period compared with previous years. The Committee's report has already been circulated.

My delegation believes that the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban Treaty with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States is an integral phase in the achievement of nuclear disarmament. The text of such a treaty can be best achieved through multilateral negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament.

(Mr. Venkateswarán, India)

The work done by the trilateral negotiators can contribute to the work of the Committee but cannot be a substitute for multilateral negotiations aimed at achieving a comprehensive and universally acceptable treaty. Pending the conclusion of that treaty we consider it essential for all nuclear-weapon States to agree on an immediate moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests, thereby demonstrating the earnestness of their commitment to the goal of nuclear disarmament. The Group of 21 in Geneva has called for the setting up of an ad hoc working group on this item in the Committee on Disarmament and we should like to have a mandate to that effect. I may also mention that the Secretary-General's report on this subject in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 34/422 of 11 December 1979 has stressed that:

In order to bring the achievement of a comprehensive test ban nearer to realization, much more intensive negotiations are essential. Verification of compliance no longer seems to be an obstacle to reaching agreement." (A/35/257, para.154)

It would be a great pity if that opportunity was lost through unwillingness to accept the relatively low risk of surreptitious testing, thereby permitting the continuation of an ever-escalating nuclear arms race and the possibility that new technological advances may come up with fresh means of testing that would not be verifiable at all.

In regard to the item "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" the Group of 21 in the Committee on Disarmament had submitted a working paper CD/116 identifying some substantive issues for discussion and suggesting the setting up of an ad hoc working group. The issues suggested included identification of the responsibilities of nuclear-weapon States and the role of the non-nuclear-weapon States in the process of achieving nuclear disarmament, clarification of the issues involved in prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons pending nuclear disarmament and in the prevention of nuclear war and clarification of the issues involved in eliminating reliance on doctrines of nuclear deterrence.

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

My delegation is firmly of the view that pending nuclear disarmament, which alone can remove the threat of a nuclear war, there should be a total prohibition on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons covering all States, both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. It is pertinent to recall that as long ago as 1961 the General Assembly in its resolution 1653 (XVI) declared that: "The use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons is contrary to the spirit, letter and aims of the United Nations". We believe that such a commitment by nuclear-weapon States would help in the cessation of the arms race and pave the way to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

As for credible assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, no common formulation could be arrived at in the Committee on Disarmament on the basis of the different declarations made by the nuclear-weapon States.

The position of my delegation is that the only effective guarantee lies in the achievement of nuclear disarmament and pending that, in the negotiation of a legally binding convention prohibiting the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons on the pattern of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 forbidding the use of biological and chemical weapons. Because, as Professor Mandelbaum of Harvard has said: "Declarations like that get put aside in the first moments of conflict. Nobody would obey them and nobody would believe others would obey them.

With respect to a chemical weapons convention we feel that the gray area between chemical and biological, or what may be called the bio-chemical area, should also be carefully studied. The new field known as bio-technology has spawned new substances that are impossible to classify either in the biological or chemical category. Any future convention on chemical weapons will have to take that factor into account.

In regard to radiological weapons, my delegation is of the view that the characteristics of this category of weapons should be clearly defined in an objective and positive manner. The definition of radiological weapons contained in articles 1 and 2 of the draft treaty presented by the United States and the Soviet Union is unsatisfactory to my delegation and should be redrawn so that it does not have to resort to an exclusion clause with respect to nuclear weapons, which could amount to indirectly legitimizing the use of nuclear weapons. We earnestly trust that that will soon be possible.

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

As I conclude my statement I should like to recall the words of the well known Irish leader, Eamon De Valera, at the League of Nations many many years ago. He said: After every war, however bad it might be, there is some kind of a peace. So why not have the peace without the war? And I may add that if there is an fact a nuclear war, no peace will be able to follow because there will be no one left to benefit from it.

The CHAIRMAN: Several representatives have asked to speak in exercise of their right of reply. May I remind the members of the Committee of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 34/401, which limits the number of interventions per delegation to two, the first intervention to be limited to 10 minutes, while the second intervention is limited to five minutes.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): My delegation, in exercising its right of reply, would like to make the following statement.

In the course of the discussion at the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and in the First Committee, representatives of an overwhelming number of States have supported the adoption of concrete steps to ease international tension, to eliminate the threat of war and to activate efforts to call a halt to the arms race and bring about disarmament. Without any doubt this is in keeping with the aspirations of all peoples and all peace-loving States. At the same time it is clear that the development of the international situation in this direction is not to the liking of Peking and this has been shown today in the statement made here by the Chinese representative in our Committee.

We do not intend to answer the insinuations made by the Chinese representative. They have nothing whatsoever in common with actual facts of international life. These fact show, and this was quite rightly indicated in the resolution of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly on the inadmissibility of the policy of hegemonism in international relations, that the sources of the danger of war in the world are the hegemonistic pretensions and claims, the ambition to dominate other countries and the making of territorial claims upon those countries.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

It is a policy of just this kind that is being pursued by the imperialist forces of the present Peking leadership. We should like now to draw the attention of the Committee to a fact which is typical; the arguments of the Chinese representative about the danger of war are dictated not by concern for the exacerbation of the international situation, but rather are designed to serve as a smoke screen for the pursuit of the hegemonistic plans of Peking, particularly in the area of South-East Asia, to carry out subversive activities against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and to carry out the programme they have proclaimed of rearmament and modernization of their armed forces.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

It is no accident that for the Chinese the inevitability of nuclear war is no abstract matter and that it has now been raised to the level of official doctrine, however unthinkable that may be. That is a very dangerous position, and it follows from this that the struggle against the danger of war and against endless armaments is mindless and doomed to failure. In accordance with the provisions of its foreign policy, China is doing everything it can to undermine disarmament, to discredit it in the eyes of world public opinion, to prove the unnecessary and fruitless nature of any disarmament measures, and thus to justify the need and the inevitability of building up armaments, primarily in China itself.

As members know, China obstinately refuses to associate itself with the overwhelming majority of treaties and agreements on disarmament, the usefulness of which for restraining the arms race is clear to all.

From its very entry into the United Nations, the representatives of China have taken an obstructionist position in matters of disarmament. China has not made a single - and I stress this, not a single - constructive proposal - and I stress this again - China has not come forward with any positive initiative in the field of disarmament. To put it boldly, China is flatly rejecting any proposals for disarmament. What is worse, it is trying in this area to undermine any understanding and to prevent the adoption of a document on disarmament among countries. The position of the Chinese People's Republic on the question of disarmament as reflected in this Committee offers convincing proof of this fact.

There is no need to enumerate all the items on which the Chinese People's Republic has a position which is opposed to that of the majority of the Members of the United Nations. To do so would take up too much of the Committee's time and, in any case, the facts are very well known to all representatives.



(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Today, too, the Chinese representative in his statement did not answer the question: does Peking intend to take part in the negotiations on ceasing the nuclear arms race? Does it intend to take part in the process of limiting and reducing strategic weapons?

Also, we have not heard Peking's reaction to other items on the agenda of our Committee.

The negative position of the Chinese delegation with regard to measures to reduce the danger of war, today appears particularly ominous. Its dangerous nature for the cause of peace is stressed by today's NBC report that clouds are approaching New York carrying some radioactive fallout as a result of nuclear tests recently carried out in China. It is entirely understandable that the initiative of the Soviet Union designed to bring about an early agreement on complete and general prohibition of the testing of nuclear weapons has brought forth an outburst of slander from the Chinese representatives.

Recently the international situation, for which the hegemonistic and imperialistic forces are to blame, has become much worse. We have met here not to attend exercises in rhetoric. We need a sense of great responsibility and seriousness and, by our joint and combined efforts, to undertake a search for concrete and realistic action that would actually curb the arms race, prevent the increase of the danger of war and direct the trend in international relations along the road of co-operation and peace.

Mr. PHAM NGAC (Viet Nam): My delegation in its statement on 20 October, pointed out, inter alia, the fact that China, a nuclear weapon State and permanent member of the Security Council, after long years of boycotting the negotiating body, had to join the Committee on Disarmament this year. Those are hard facts.

However, this morning the Chinese representative regarded the statement of my delegation as a lie. I think the record is clear and there is no need for my delegation to speak further on China's negative attitude in the field of disarmament.

The Chinese representative also stated this morning that China did not have a single soldier occupying foreign territories. I think many delegations present in this room, especially those which have their territories still occupied by China, could disprove that statement. As a matter of fact, China is still occupying territories of many neighbouring countries, of which the Paracels islands of Viet Nam is but one example.

What is more, following the large scale war of aggression in which 600,000 Chinese troops were put into action in February 1979 against my country, China at present still occupies many bridgeheads inside the territory of Viet Nam. Most recently, from 3 to 17 October - only last week - China launched repeated attacks against Xin Man district, in the Ha Tuyen province of Viet Nam. And from those newly occupied territories, Chinese troops shelled and fired rockets for seven hours. One Chinese regiment was sent to carry out ground attacks, which caused heavy casualties among the civilian population. That was the largest attack since the last war launched by China against Viet Nam last year. The Chinese occupying troops are still there at this moment. Those are also facts.

Mr. SOUTHICHAK (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): I have asked to speak in order to clarify the tendentious assertions by the representative of Japan in his statement in this Committee yesterday, at its eighth meeting, concerning the use of chemical weapons and toxic gas by my country.

In making those absurd allegations, the representative of Japan referred to so-called reports, of which no one here is aware. What reports was he really referring to and on what are those so-called reports based? Is it on the pure imagination of the Japanese representative or on inventions of some Khmer refugees who fled Laos after having been prevented from carrying out destructive action against my country? With respect to those sorry individuals, no one is unaware, and certainly not the representative of Japan, of the fact that they continue to act as imperialist agents, who now connive with the expansionists in a big country that has a common border with mine to the north, to engage in subversive and destructive activity against the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

My delegation deeply regrets that it is the representative of Japan who is now taking up the cause of those sorry individuals, misleading our Committee and spreading slander against my country.

I would invite that representative to remove the blinkers which have prevented him from seeing the truth so that in the future he would only say sensible things in this important Committee - and at least be somewhat more responsible in what he says.

Meanwhile, I categorically reject the slanderous and misleading allegations made by that representative against my country.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.