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NINETY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 24 October 1974, at 3 p.m.

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS	(Argentina)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. COSTA LOBO	(Portugal)

- Reduction of the military budget of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries [247] (continued):
 - (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Distribution of the Funds Released as a Result of the Reduction of Military Budgets;
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General
- Napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use: report of the Secretary-General [277] (continued)
- Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [287] (continued)
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Mr. BENITES (Ecuador)(interpretation from Spanish) Mr. Chairman, may I crave your indulgence to congratulate you on your election to preside over this Committee. I am well aware of the difficulties of your task, having presided over this body eight years ago, and I should like publicly to express the hope that, given your exceptional abilities, this will be the first step towards the noble destiny which, to the glory of your country and Latin America, I am sure the future holds for you.

I am speaking in this debate with the humility of one who is aware of the fact that solutions are in the hands of a few mighty Powers, but also with the conviction that constant denunciation and the courage of our convictions are the only weapons that we weak States have -- we who are constantly threatened by death and mass destruction which nuclear catastrophe would entail.

We are already accustomed to the fact that "détente" -- an elegant French word -- alleviates our fears and enables us to sleep peacefully after digesting our daily dose of propaganda on the benefits of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. I hasten to apologize if I interrupt that sweet optimistic dream by wondering whether détente is something more than an elegant French word and whether the so-called Strategic Arms Limitation Talks really do reduce the danger of nuclear war.

If the word "détente" is a sort of charm against violent expressions, it is obvious that it has done away with the caustic language of the cold-war and that a sort of spring song has been heard during the autumn deliberations of the last few General Assembly sessions. This is highly positive, and we

(Mr. Benites, Ecuador)

joyfully greet this "détente" which, acting virtually as an anaesthetic, makes us forget that there remain potential hot-beds of conflict in the Middle East, in the Persian Gulf, in the Indo-China Peninsula and on the Asian continent. We dare not ponder the unfathomable mystery of whether the political and economic unity which is the basis of NATO remains intact, and even less whether the events in Cyprus have had anything to do with the naval balance in the Mediterranean. Actually, détente is a promising factor in some areas, such as for instance, in the yet vague Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and in the Vienna Conference on the reduction of military forces and armaments. Direct top-level contact between the leaders of the two super-Powers is indeed useful, and even the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks hold out some hope for a possible future ban -- or at least a moratorium -- on underground nuclear testing. However, it must not be forgotten that the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks are restricted to the limitation of strategic weapons -- chiefly rockets -- and are not on disarmament itself.

In this regard, I would point to some discouraging facts, first of which is the increase in military expenditures. In my statement in the last general debate in the Assembly I cited the figure of \$207,406 million which the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute estimates to be the total 1973 military expenditure. At the 16 April 1974 meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, Vice-Chairman Roschin, in his capacity as Soviet representative, gave the figure of \$220,000 million. That same figure of \$220,000 million was cited at the meeting on 7 May, by Mrs. Thorrson of Sweden who added that:

"... more than 80 per cent of which are the responsibility of the six main military spenders, while the official development assistance stands at 8,000 million dollars -- a tiny and decreasing portion of military expenditures, 4 cents out of each dollar spent on armaments, this is, I would say, an expression of moral bankruptcy on the part of the rich great Powers."(CCD/PV.655, p. 6)

(Mr. Benites, Ecuador)

Regarding the survey of SIPRI entitled "Resources allocated to technological research and development activities for military purposes", Mr. Rosenberg Polak of the Netherlands said, at the meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament on 25 April, that between 15,000 million and 16,500 million dollars is spent annually on military research, and that 85 per cent of that sum represents the expenditure of the two super-Powers.

The representative of Mexico, Ambassador García Robles, whose constant efforts in the area of disarmament are noteworthy, stated that the military budgets of the super-Powers reached 100,000 million and 60,000 million dollars, respectively (CCD/PV.627, p. 25). And the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, said at the opening meeting of the sixth special session of the General Assembly that in the three weeks of the session 14,000 million dollars would be spent on armaments.

I do not want to continue citing these figures lest I invent a new dramatic genre, the drama of figures. But we should wonder whether there is not a blatant contradiction between the assertion that there is, on the one hand, a spring love called détente and, on the other hand, a race towards hell through the increase in military expenditures. Maybe the key to this apparent contradiction was given us by former President Richard Nixon in a sentence which I will dare to quote in the elegant language of the White House, despite my poor pronunciation. He said,
(spoke in English)

"We must never allow America to become the second strongest nation in the world."

(continued in Spanish)

These oft-quoted words appear in "World Armaments and Disarmament" - SIPRI Yearbook 1974, pp. 70-71. We do not know what the other super-Power thinks at the other end of the line, but it seems easy to conjecture that since neither of the super-Powers is ready to reduce or limit its armaments below the levels it considers indispensable for it to be the first world Power, they will have decided that both are the greatest Power or the greatest super-Power, and that this also can be called détente.

This leads me to the second point I should like to tackle. The fact is that the levels of nuclear megatonnage, which five years ago averaged 15 tons of dynamite per capita on a world-wide basis, have a tendency to increase. And we should recall that technically one megaton produced by thermonuclear fusion exploding in a nanosecond, in other words in one ten thousandth of a millionth of a second, releases an explosive energy equivalent to a million tons of dynamite, with a thermal energy of 10,000 million million calories -- that is, 1 followed by 16 zeros, which would cause total destruction over a radius of 50 kilometres, not counting the lethal power of isotopes. It is precisely on the huge capacity for destruction of nuclear weapons, especially thermonuclear weapons, that mankind has relied, living confidently in the so-called "balance of terror", that is, in the belief that it would not be possible to use armaments of such danger for mankind. Today, this confidence is lessening.

We have heard the first reason in the authoritative voice of the Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, who in the general debate of the Assembly told us, on 23 September, at the 2238th meeting, that:

"The world has dealt with nuclear weapons as if restraint were automatic. Their very awesomeness chained those weapons for almost three decades; their sophistication and expense have helped to keep constant for a decade the number of States which possess them. Now, as was quite foreseeable, political inhibitions are in danger of crumbling. Nuclear catastrophe looms more plausible, whether through design or miscalculation; accident, theft or blackmail." (A/PV.2238, p. 26)

We have never heard a more frightening warning expressed with such naked realism like a kind of unequivocal apocalyptic admonition.

It is no mystery, certainly, that there is a small discrepancy regarding intercontinental ballistic missiles, particularly multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles (MIRVs).

In an article published by Mr. Drew Middleton on page 30 of The New York Times of 2 October, it was stated that the Soviet Union had 1,600 operational ICBM launching pads as against 1,054 for the American ICBMs; and 740 submarine-launched ballistic missiles for the Soviet Union, as against 556 for American submarine-launched ballistic missiles, which would require the development of a B-1 type plane at a cost of 1,100 million dollars for the launching of short-range attack missiles.

(Mr. Benites, Ecuador)

In another article in the same newspaper, on 10 October, in column 1, page 7 the same commentator asserted that the Soviet Union had developed a new type of intercontinental missile which could avoid the current detection applicable to missiles launched from silos. The commentator also stated that with the additional construction of 151 silos by the Soviet Union its power would increase to 1,720 as against 1,000 Minuteman silos which the United States will possess in 1978.

The quantitative differences do not really affect nuclear parity. In the SIPRI estimates -- and I assume that this is accepted as one of the most authoritative institutions in the matter -- on the retaliatory war-of "surgical strike", of Secretary of Defense Schlesinger, it is shown that with the present nuclear missile power, after the hypothetical counter-strike operations against 400 cities, 4,000 missiles will be left over.

In the statement made by the representative of Mexico, Ambassador García Robles, in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament on 22 August 1974 he said:

"...the number of nuclear warheads with which the two superpowers have equipped their intercontinental missiles, in a constant state of readiness for firing, from land bases, from submarines or from long-range bombers, which in 1968 came to a total, for both of them, of 3,700, will probably by 1975, still for both the superpowers together, come to around 15,000". (CCD/PV.627, p. 25)

With all its drawbacks, the nuclear balance of terror -- which, although it has been an unstable balance, does not seem to interest many -- has served to maintain peace for 30 years. And I am afraid lest the dangers referred to by Secretary of State Kissinger have a more direct bearing on the proliferation of nuclear weapons that are now called "horizontal" and which the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons tried to prevent. In this regard it is necessary to be clear.

All nuclear fission produces a release of neutrons which may be controlled or uncontrolled. When the neutrons thus released are absorbed, fission does not produce an explosion. When highly fissionable materials in a critical mass is not controlled, a chain reaction is produced which in one millionth of a second leads to an explosion which generates colossal thermal power as well as a devastating shock wave and the mass production of lethal isotopes. In sum, what

(Mr. Benites, Ecuador)

is called an atomic bomb. So far the peaceful uses of the atomic bomb in searching for gas deposits or in land movements are dubious and controversial. This is why the expansion of the Nuclear Club, resulting from the explosion of a nuclear device on 18 May last, has generated universal concern.

But the real danger which will prompt us to a careful consideration of the non-proliferation Treaty at next year's Conference is another and grave one: it is that, so far, the nuclear arsenal contained only strategic weapons which limited their use, and that today we are confronted with a terrible potential tragedy through the use of tactical nuclear weapons, which are called "nuclear miniweapons".

In an interview given to The New York Times of 16 April 1972, President Nixon's Secretary of Defense, Mr. Melvin Laird stated that there was increasing interest in the development of small clean nuclear weapons, and he added that a more precise system was being sought

(spoke in English)

"involving artillery shells, air-to-surface missiles and glide bombs, all of which home in on a laser beam illuminating the target".

(continued in Spanish)

In an article by John Finney, published in The New York Times on 10 May 1973, entitled "U.S. Army's Gun in Europe to Get Nuclear Shells", it was stated that:

(spoke in English)

"... the Army has ordered several thousand new nuclear shells for its large cannons in Europe".

(continued in Spanish)

And Major-General Edward B. Guler, testifying before the United States Joint Congressional Atomic Energy Commission on 14 July 1973 stated, according to the Daily Telegraph of 16 July 1973, that the purchase of such weapons cost about \$1,000 million annually.

The existence of a large number of tactical nuclear weapons of less than a kiloton and of reduced toxic power is a danger which should be seriously considered when the Conference convenes in 1975 to consider the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

(Mr. Benites, Ecuador)

Although tactical nuclear weapons are not considered conventional weapons, their reduced isotope power could lead to a war whose development could end in the use of the devastating strategic weapons.

A second danger is that the manufacture of mini-nuclear weapons is both technically and economically within the reach not only of developed countries, but also of developing countries which have reactors or have installed nuclear electric power plants.

Finally, I should like to refer to the concern prompted by Secretary of State Kissinger's warning when, in the above-mentioned sentence, he refers, among the dangers of a nuclear war, to blackmail and theft. If we are talking about strategic weapons, blackmail and theft are only possible in the case of nuclear military secrets. But where mini-nuclear tactical weapons are concerned, blackmail and theft can be carried out physically. In other words, private individuals, organized crime groups, or political organizations, can acquire them, including through theft, and can use them for blackmail.

In an article published under his personal responsibility, in the book Nuclear Proliferation Problems, edited by SIPRI, page 168 et seq.,

Mr. M. Willrich shows an alarming sketch of possibilities, such as a black market in fissionable nuclear material for the manufacture of mini-nuclear devices; the theft of such material and the technical and economical capacity of non-governmental entities to manufacture such dangerous weapons, as well as a series of possible safeguards to curtail it.

In that same book there is another important article signed by David Krieger, entitled "Nuclear power: a Trojan horse for terrorists", which contains important comments on the foregoing dangers.

I hope that nobody will think that I have tried to invite you to a chamber of horrors. My intention, as the representative of a small country, at risk. Like all small countries, was to express the grave dangers that are both real and potential. And, with your permission, I should like to set forth the measures that seem indispensable to us.

(Mr. Benites, Ecuador)

First, the Conference convened to consider the non-proliferation Treaty should be taken very seriously by all Member States. It cannot be approached with the light-hearted criterion that this is a technical issue of interest to nuclear Powers only, because it is a vital question which concerns all mankind as a matter of survival.

Secondly, it is necessary to speed up arrangements for a well-prepared world disarmament conference, although we know ahead of time that we shall not achieve total and complete disarmament in a miraculous or speedy way. It is a serious matter that today we have no forum for debating these problems which affect the fate of mankind. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament is a negotiating forum only, and the annual debate in the First Committee encompasses so many items in such a short time that a serious consideration is almost impossible. If a world disarmament conference cannot be held, we would have to think about a specific subsidiary body, such as the erstwhile Disarmament Commission.

Thirdly, the creation of nuclear-free zones is of crucial importance and it would be a highly positive development if the first of them created in Latin America by the Treaty of Tlatelolco should become fully universal through the signature of the Additional Protocols by the nuclear States which have not yet done so and the full regional integration by States which have not ratified it to the extent that they may become parties to OPANAL.

Availing ourselves of the opportunity that you have provided us, Mr. Chairman, I shall leave until a later date the chemical weapons, especially binary gases, and the new conventional weapons, and what could be called an ecological war, a new item introduced by the Soviet Union.

Before concluding, I should like to specify two points. In regard to the attributes and powers of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, I should like to recall that between the years 1953 and 1961, the world was gripped by atomic terror due to tests carried out in the atmosphere by the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom, which produced a dangerous isotope fall-out. On 31 October 1958, a tripartite conference -- the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom -- was opened in Geneva to consider the suspension of nuclear tests.

(Mr. Benites, Ecuador)

In 1959, the year of the French nuclear explosion in the Sahara, the Assembly confined itself to calling upon the Disarmament Conference to maintain the nuclear moratorium. But the nuclear moratorium lasted only until 1961 and nuclear tests were resumed while the General Assembly was meeting, the Soviet Union having announced that it would explode a 50 megaton-bomb which occurred, if I am not mistaken, at Novaya Zemlya.

During that dramatic year of 1961 there occurred, however, the first stages of an agreement to negotiate, submitted in the joint document of the United States and the Soviet Union on 20 September 1961.

As a consequence, the General Assembly adopted resolution 1722 (XVI) of 20 December 1961, whose purpose is defined in operative paragraph 2 of part II. To conduct negotiations, it appointed a Committee of 18 nations. The exclusive authority of the General Assembly to enlarge the Committee and to appoint its members, pursuant to resolutions 1660 (XVI) and 1722 (XVI), was reaffirmed through resolution 2602 B (XXIV).

In referring to these facts, I should like to make it quite clear that my delegation believes that it would not be legal for the Co-Chairmen to expand the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, but that it approves both an enlargement and the names of the States mentioned, as long as a procedure is followed in keeping with resolution 2602 B (XXIV) of 16 December 1969.

(Mr. Benites, Ecuador)

I can see that when small countries speak the representatives of most big countries do not pay due attention. That is their problem.

In conclusion, I wish to mention the reference made by the representative of Mexico, Mr. Garcia Robles, in the general debate to the statement by Mr. Fred C. Yklé, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, on the fact that the explosion of the present nuclear megatonnage could destroy the ozone layer which is the stratospheric filter of cosmic radiation.

In this connexion, the article by John W. Finney published on 17 October in column 1, page 7, of The New York Times, entitled "Pentagon replies on peril to ozone" is very interesting. It was asserted therein that the reduction of the ozone layer would not be total, but would amount to between 50 per cent and 75 per cent, which would produce an average world temperature similar to the present temperature of the tropics. If that temperature is on average between 35° and 40° Centigrade, it would seem logical to think that this would cause the polar ice to melt, which would possibly flood maritime cities, if any survived the blast of 300 million tons of dynamite -- which is what 300 megatons represent -- and the effect of lethal radiation.

Let us leave it to a science fiction novelist to say whether man as he exists today, or a living being descended from him after the monstrous genetic mutations produced by carbon 14, will in the year 2200, two centuries after a nuclear war, be able to organize pleasant excursions to the forests of the Antarctic or to some tropical island in the polar seas. and we wonder whether this will have the form of a pentagon.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank Ambassador Benites for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. MOERSCH (Federal Republic of Germany): I wish to take this opportunity to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our great satisfaction at seeing you in the chair. We have had many opportunities in the past of admiring your diplomatic skill and great wisdom. We are confident that under your excellent guidance the Committee will most satisfactorily discharge the many important duties entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

(Mr. Moersch, Federal Republic of Germany)

Disarmament and arms control have been one of the main topics of discussion in the United Nations ever since its foundation and the subject of countless bilateral and multilateral negotiations. Unfortunately, however, we must admit that, despite all efforts to bring about détente and despite the conclusion of numerous agreements of great importance, we are witnessing today an arms race on many levels to which technological developments lend ever new and alarming dimensions.

There is a danger, therefore, which we cannot ignore, that in the eyes of the public the debate on disarmament will be just a matter of routine and that a general feeling of resignation will ensue. We should do everything in our power to counteract such a tendency. True, the issue is most complicated, but our prime concern is not problems of military technology, which are for the specialists to study; our main object is political decisions directed at safeguarding peace. Our goal must be to prevent or remove the dangerous instabilities which the arms race is apt to produce, to initiate controlled steps towards disarmament and to try to concentrate the limited resources of States on the most urgent humanitarian tasks, especially the elimination of hunger and distress.

In order to obviate misunderstandings I wish to emphasize, however, that disarmament is important and necessary, but that it must serve the aim of safeguarding peace. Any steps towards disarmament which disregard the right to self-defence proclaimed in the United Nations Charter would be unrealistic. For a long time to come peace and security will depend on a stable global, as well as regional, balance of power. Such stability and equilibrium must be our foremost objective, which we should attain by suitable agreements in the sphere of disarmament and arms control also. It seems to use that this is a realistic aim. We must break the vicious circle of distrust and the arms race, adhere firmly to the policy of renunciation of the use of force and initiate with imagination, patience and determination practical steps towards arms limitation and disarmament.

The Federal Government is committed to such a policy. Foreign Minister Genscher stated the other day before the General Assembly that disarmament and arms control are an integral part of our policy and that the Federal Republic of Germany is vitally interested in the continuation and effectiveness of the policy of détente.

(Mr. Moersch, Federal Republic of Germany)

For that reason the Federal Republic of Germany has become a party to all universal arms control agreements concluded since the war, or is about to do so. For that reason, we have completed the ratification procedure with regard to the non-proliferation Treaty and the verification agreement. For that reason we want to become a contracting party as soon as possible and to participate in the conference for the review of that Treaty. And for that reason we are prepared to take part in the deliberations of the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

The participation of the Federal Republic of Germany in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) serves the purpose of that Conference: to establish through the joint effort of all participating countries a broader foundation for co-operation between East and West which will benefit peace and security in Europe, promote lasting understanding among the States and peoples represented at the Conference and bring economic benefit to all. The Federal Government has always held the view that the problems of military security and the dangers inherent in military confrontation in Europe should not be excluded from the CSCE agenda. The outcome of the Conference must take account of the fact that there is an inseparable link between political and military security.

The Federal Government supports all serious efforts to achieve world-wide détente and arms control. We intend, however, to exploit regional possibilities also in order to make progress. For that reason, together with our friends and allies, we have for a good number of years sought negotiations on the mutual and balanced reduction of forces in Europe. Thus for the first time in Europe, in the Vienna negotiations, substantial talks on arms control are being conducted within a multilateral framework between East and West. The Federal Government hopes that it will be possible in the negotiations to create a more stable balance of military power in central Europe in order to strengthen peace and security in Europe and beyond.

(Mr. Moersch, Federal Republic of Germany)

Nobody can take over the special responsibility that falls to the world Powers for containing the nuclear arms race. The success or failure of the bilateral Strategic Arms Limitation Talks is of the greatest importance to us all. We have welcomed as a new impetus the arrangements made at the Moscow summit to carry on the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, and we hope that the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks will soon succeed in containing the nuclear arms race not only quantitatively but also qualitatively and that it will prepare the ground for dismantling nuclear arsenals. If the Moscow Agreement on the limitation of underground nuclear weapon tests serves that purpose, we welcome it.

We note with regret that during the past year, as in previous years, the Geneva talks on a comprehensive test ban treaty failed to make any substantial progress. We hope that the negotiations between the two super-Powers to supplement the Moscow agreements, in particular on the details of control procedures, will point the way for an adequately verified, comprehensive test ban treaty, which we should like to see concluded as soon as possible so as finally to reach the goal set in 1963, when the partial test ban treaty was signed: the discontinuation of nuclear weapon tests for all time. That would be a decisive contribution towards containing the nuclear arms race and safeguarding the policy of non-proliferation.

The concern about the future of the non-proliferation policy expressed on various sides during the debate is shared by the Federal Government. We still consider the non-proliferation Treaty the most important instrument for containing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices. That the Treaty should be universal has always been a demand of the Federal Republic of Germany. It is important, therefore, to further its world-wide acceptance and to encourage more States to accede to it. This, I feel, will be a main task for the review conference due to take place next year.

The non-proliferation Treaty inevitably drew a clear line between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. That line must not be blurred. But we must expect the depositary Powers to fulfil their obligations under the treaty as conscientiously as we, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, are ready to fulfil ours. In this respect much is left to be done. Like any other treaty, the Treaty is not perfect. Therefore we appeal to the entire community of nations to take the dangers inherent in nuclear proliferation very seriously indeed; not to look for gaps in the Treaty but to increase their efforts and thus give non-proliferation policy a lasting chance.

(Mr. Moersch, Federal Republic of Germany)

Since the Treaty entered into force in 1970, developments have taken place which could not be foreseen at that time. Low energy stocks are today already forcing many countries to resort more and more to nuclear energy. More and more countries are, therefore, having to concern themselves with the problems resulting from the increasing production of plutonium and other fissionable material in reactors and enrichment and reprocessing plants. The knowledge of nuclear technology will increase, and greater use will be made of it. Mr. Waldheim, the Secretary-General, has drawn attention to the great dangers inherent in this trend and warned about the proliferation of nuclear explosive devices.

If we do not wish to head for chaos as a consequence of unbridled nuclear proliferation, resolute action is called for. We have no time to lose. All countries must be conscious of their responsibility. Therefore we appeal to those countries which, for whatever reasons, reject the Treaty but possess nuclear reactors and other installations or will do so in the near future, to reconsider very seriously whether it would not be in their own interest to subject the entire fuel cycle of their nuclear installations to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. We again call upon all nuclear-weapon States voluntarily to make their civilian nuclear activities accessible to similar international safeguards, as the United States of America and Great Britain have already undertaken to do, and in this way set a good example.

All those countries that have the capability and capacity for exporting nuclear equipment, material and technological know-how have the special responsibility to ensure that they do not further proliferation either deliberately or negligently. Being a major exporter of nuclear equipment and installations for peaceful purposes, the Federal Government is conscious of its responsibility in this respect.

With the speedy growth of nuclear energy production there is another problem which deserves our full attention: the danger of subnational diversion of fissionable material especially capable of being used for weapons. The physical protection of nuclear installations where such material is produced, stored or further processed needs to be covered by international arrangements in the near future. Elaborating criteria and standards to be recommended to Governments for use under national responsibility is a task that will fall to the International Atomic Energy Agency. We are willing to place our experience in this field at the disposal of the Agency.

(Mr. Moersch, Federal Republic of Germany)

Although the questions of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament are currently the focal point of international interest, this does not mean that other major topics of discussion within the complex of international arms control should be pushed aside. We take a special interest in the work of the Geneva Disarmament Conference. One may perhaps criticize the sluggish progress being made in Geneva, but it should not be forgotten that, after many years of fruitless discussion on questions of disarmament, the Geneva Committee, which was proposed in 1961 by the two world Powers, has since 1962 nevertheless prepared important international conventions and placed them before the General Assembly for adoption. The Federal Government would like to see the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament proceed more briskly.

In this connexion, I should like to refer to the world disarmament conference proposed by the Soviet Union three years ago. Such a conference could bring the dangers and problems of the world-wide arms race more forcefully home to a broad international public and at the same time give valuable impetus. However, it will meet the hopes placed in it only if all nuclear-weapon States participate and if it is carefully prepared, not merely as regards organizational and procedural questions but also in respect of substantive issues. We hope that the efforts for a world disarmament conference will make progress on the basis of the useful work done by the Ad Hoc Committee. Such a world disarmament conference cannot, however, take the place of the Geneva Committee on Disarmament and other current bilateral and multilateral negotiations on disarmament and arms control.

(Mr. Moersch, Federal Republic of Germany)

We hope it will be possible in the foreseeable future to round off the work in Geneva on an international convention for the prohibition of chemical weapons. Valuable preparatory work has already been done. I should like, in this connexion, to mention in particular the draft convention submitted by Japan and the knowledge that has been derived from a series of meetings of experts on the complicated questions of definition and verification. We welcome the declared intention of the United States and the Soviet Union which emerged from the last summit meeting in Moscow "to consider a joint initiative in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament with respect to the conclusion, as a first step, of an international convention dealing with the most dangerous, lethal means of chemical warfare".

At the request of the Soviet Union an interesting item was recently included in the General Assembly's agenda: the proposal for a "prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health".

In principle we feel it is right that efforts to achieve disarmament and arms control should not be confined to existing means capable of being used for military operations but should look ahead with a view to preventing calamitous developments of military technology. It seems to me therefore that the Soviet proposal embraces a new, proper approach which deserves careful study. As the present draft convention touches upon extremely complicated scientific and technological problems which need to be analysed by experts, I shall for the time being confine myself to these brief remarks.

Our membership of the United Nations has opened up to us wider possibilities of participating in efforts to resolve the problem of disarmament and arms control. Consequently, and in keeping with its engagement in these questions, the Federal Republic of Germany has applied for admission to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, and the members of the Committee have approved. We are willing to play a constructive part in Geneva and hope we can get the support of the General Assembly for this.

My delegation will be returning to the items I have mentioned as necessary and reserve the right to speak on other items on the agenda in the further course of the Committee's proceedings.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the Minister of State of the Federal Republic of Germany for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. ELIAS (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, availing itself of the choice that you have kindly offered us of the various items on disarmament allocated to this Political Committee, my Delegation would at this time like to set forth its point of view on the following items: the world disarmament conference; the prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health; the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East; and the declaration and establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia.

The delegation of Spain has actively participated in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee for the World Disarmament Conference in its plenary meetings, as well as in those of the Working Group entrusted with preparing a preliminary draft for the report we now have before us. Quite a few difficulties had to be overcome before this report could be drafted and adopted, and this positive and hopeful achievement is very largely due to the competence, dynamism and tact of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Hoveyda of Iran.

As is well known, the idea of a world disarmament conference constitutes a typical problem for our Organization, in that all States agree with the idea in itself, while they differ regarding the timing and manner of its execution. The report in paragraph 15 has singled out six main approaches, corresponding to the importance that various States attach to the different aspects of the problem. Those six approaches can be summarized thus: convening the conference at the earliest possible date; convening the conference when the nuclear States so desire; convening the conference at the earliest possible date, but beginning the preparatory work now; convening the conference when the nuclear States, particularly the two super-Powers, renounce first-strike capability; sine die deferment of the convening of the conference; and convening the conference being desirable, provided priority is given to overcoming the specific difficulties in its way.

(Mr. Elias, Spain)

The immediate problem in the First Committee is that of finding out whether those six approaches can be reconciled, and how they can be related to one another in order to arrive at a consensus, as was done last year on the basis of a draft which then became resolution 3183 (XXVIII). My delegation feels that a new consensus can be arrived at, a consensus that will meet the six positions referred to in the report. In the course of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and the consultations carried out pursuant to the resolution, in order to submit the report to the Assembly at this twenty-ninth session, the good-will and the sound reasons underlying the opinions expressed by Member States in this regard, including the five States possessing nuclear weapons, were evident.

No State believes that the world disarmament conference is a panacea which will automatically produce solutions to the problems derived from the arms race, but nor does any State believe the Conference is an evil that should be categorically rejected. General Assembly resolution 3185 (XXVIII) very rightly refers to the need to seek the opinion of Governments on the necessary conditions for the holding of the world conference. Those conditions have been studied and debated exhaustively, and we can consider it a very positive factor that such conditions are, according to the report, only nine in number, and can be further reduced if we compare them to one another since they partially coincide.

These, then, might be the conditions necessary for a world disarmament conference: (1) appropriate preparations; (2) universal participation; (3) acceptance by the great Powers; (4) international détente, which has already begun; (5) mutual trust as a corollary to détente; (6) reasonable prospects for specific agreements; (7) equality among the participants; (8) a firm promise by the great Powers to refrain from a nuclear first strike; (9) general support prior to the convening of the conference.

Two comments are obvious on analysing those conditions. The first is that some of them are conditions which the conference itself will have to fulfil when it is held, whereas others are prior conditions which must be fulfilled before its convening. Universal participation and equality among the participants are conditions pertaining to the conference itself, whereas appropriate preparation and general support are clearly conditions which should be fulfilled before the conference is convened. The second comment is that some conditions, though separately formulated, amount to the same thing or various degrees of the same thing -- for example, détente, mutual trust and declarations renouncing a nuclear first strike, circumstances which in turn would facilitate what have been termed real prospects for agreement.

The delegation of Spain believes that a continuous in-depth study of this series of conditions, their development and their eventual effective fulfilment can and must be carried out and that a subsidiary body of the United Nations should be entrusted with that study. For that body to function

(Mr. Elías, Spain)

with due effectiveness, it should have a limited membership and a specific mandate. Some delegations would perhaps wish that mandate to include the preparation of the conference itself, but previous debates have shown that it would be difficult to arrive at a consensus on the basis of such an explicit mandate. The delegation of Spain has already had the opportunity to express its preference for a mandate that would give the new ad hoc body the specific terms of reference to co-ordinate, or, if that word is too ambitious, to follow closely, to encourage and to produce information on the efforts and negotiations on disarmament conducted in various forums and at various levels, bilateral as well as multilateral.

I should like to ask the First Committee to recall some of the previous resolutions of the General Assembly included in the annexes to the report of the Conference on the Committee on Disarmament (A/9708) -- resolutions such as 3184 (XXVIII), especially its sections A and C. The General Assembly therein appeals to the two great Powers to expedite agreement on the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons and invites them to keep the General Assembly informed thereon. In addition, the General Assembly recommends a qualitative consideration by the Powers concerned of the contents of their eventual agreements. It also invites the States parties to disarmament negotiations to ensure that the disarmament measures adopted in one region do not result in rearmament in other regions. What does that mean? Doubtless, the General Assembly considers it necessary to participate indirectly in all negotiations on disarmament, promoting their progress and keeping itself informed thereon.

That specific function is one which can for the time being be carried out by an ad hoc body. In that connexion I should like to draw the attention of the First Committee to paragraph 12 of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, which reads:

"The Ad Hoc Committee, on the proposal of its Chairman, took note of a suggestion that there should be continued application of methods and means used until now for helping to clear the way towards the initiation of the preparation for convening a world disarmament conference, particularly the contacts by the Chairman and members of the Ad Hoc

(Mr. Elías, Spain)

Committee on a personal basis with the nuclear Powers, in order to explore the possibility of reaching agreement on the solution of at least some of the disarmament problems most frequently mentioned during the debates, and with a view to reaching agreement on the question of convening a world disarmament conference." (A/9628, para. 12)

My delegation believes that that suggestion is both very reasonable and very timely. We should point out that it speaks of facilitating the beginning of preparatory work, and continued consultations with nuclear Powers are encouraged with a view to an agreement on the convening of the conference itself. If those methods and those consultations were to continue in a permanent manner -- a so-to-speak institutionalized manner -- through a specific body, world public opinion as well as the Governments of all States could within a reasonable time find new reasons for hope as regards the possibility and effectiveness of a world disarmament conference.

(Mr. Elias, Spain)

One of the preceding speakers, with an impressive amount of supporting material indicated the obvious dangers of nuclear proliferation. May I point out, as one of the delegations here present had occasion to do during the last session of the Geneva Conference, that proliferation has two inseparable aspects: one is horizontal proliferation -- which might more properly be called the spread of nuclear weapons -- and the other is vertical proliferation, or the qualitative and quantitative increase in already existing nuclear arsenals.

The hope has sometimes been expressed that, with determined efforts and preferential treatment, horizontal proliferation could be slowed down, whereas vertical proliferation would be left to the good will of the great Powers, expressed through bilateral negotiations. With all due respect to the proponents of that doctrine, my delegation considers that their argument implies an error of perception that could be extremely dangerous. While it is true that the great Powers are masters of their own security -- and it is fair that they should seek to maintain their security as they see fit -- what we cannot tolerate is that the medium-sized and small Powers should remain indifferent, mere pawns in this arms race, as was illustrated to us with such eloquent statistical data. This is the origin of the support for the idea of a world disarmament conference, because if no progress is made in that direction, it should come as no surprise to anyone if the number of nuclear Powers reaches eight or nine within the next two to three years, and 15 to 20 in the following decade.

My delegation will support any draft resolution designed to institutionalize the study and to facilitate the creation of the necessary conditions for an early convening of the world disarmament conference.

As for the initiative of the Soviet Union concerning a draft resolution aimed at the conclusion of an international convention for the prevention of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other purposes, my delegation welcomes it and is pleased to note that at the

(Mr. Elias, Spain)

meetings of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament the delegations of the Soviet Union, the United States, Sweden, Canada, Poland and others referred to this important matter, and that representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States will be meeting in the course of this year in order jointly to study those problems.

Without being critical, but rather in a constructive spirit, my delegation should like to point out that in article I of the draft convention, at least in its Spanish version, there seems to be a certain inconsistency in terminology. On the one hand, it seems that the undertaking not to use such means is categorical, given the use of the phrase, "never under any circumstances", while, on the other hand, there is inserted the qualifying phrase referring to purposes "incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health" (A/C.1/L.675, Annex, p. 1). It is not very clear who would have to demonstrate that a given action is incompatible with international security, human well-being and health, and whether it has to do with all human beings or just some. I repeat, this is a purely technical or grammatical comment.

Furthermore, my delegation cannot conceal its doubts regarding the explicit clause regarding "supreme interests" contained in article X of the draft. "Supreme interests" is in a way a projection to the international arena of the concept of public order in the national field, and in this sense is an attribute of sovereignty which it does not seem necessary to incorporate explicitly among the draft convention's provisions, just as the exception "rebus sic stantibus", in so far as it limits the principle, "pacta sunt servanda", does not need to be incorporated in a treaty for it to be applicable when circumstances really justify it.

Finally, regarding the proposals for the establishment of nuclear-free zones in the Middle East as well as in South Asia, the delegation of Spain, in principle, favours any initiative aimed at the establishment of geographic boundaries for the use, stockpiling and transit of nuclear weapons as an intermediate step towards a more general ban on the use of that type of weapon. But before expressing our opinion on a specific proposal in that regard, we believe that it would be very useful to define clearly the areas in question. In the case of the denuclearization of Latin America,

(Mr. Elias, Spain)

the fact that the area is a subcontinent made its delimitation possible, thus favouring the success of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, a sine qua non for any new regional denuclearization initiative. The initiators of item 101 as well as 107 have shown themselves to be aware of this difficulty in suggesting a common effort within the United Nations to overcome it. The delegation of Spain awaits with great interest and will study very carefully any specific proposals put forward for that purpose during the present debate.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to place on record our gratitude to Mr. Elias for his very valuable work as Chairman of the Working Group of the Ad Hoc Committee for the World Disarmament Conference.

As no other delegation has indicated a desire to speak at this time, I shall make a few comments on the progress of our work.

At the last meeting of this Committee, in referring to the dates for consideration of the disarmament items, I mistakenly mentioned 15 November as the deadline for their conclusion. Upon realizing that error, I tried to correct the verbatim records of the Committee, and indeed in some of them the correct date -- 22 November -- appeared; in others, however, such as the English version, the 15 November date still appears. In any event, as the Committee decided at its organizational meeting, the cut-off date for our discussion of the disarmament items is 22 November.

(The Chairman)

Tentatively, however, I think that we should think of the date of 15 November as a possible date for concluding the general debate in order to leave an additional week for voting and discussion of specific draft resolutions related to the 12 items on disarmament which the Committee is considering. In this regard, this coming week I shall propose a date for the closure of the list of speakers.

Now, having made this comment on my error at the last meeting, I should like to say that in the coming week we have 10 working meetings -- that is, from Monday to Friday two meetings a day. Consequently, I would be grateful to delegates who wish to speak if they would so signify to the Secretariat. There are several already down on the list, and we have to proceed to allocate statements as the available dates permit.

In conclusion, I should like to announce that other States have added their names to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.675⁶⁷⁵ originally submitted by the Soviet Union. I shall now read the list of sponsors as I have it to date. The following countries: Afghanistan, Barbados, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Hungary, Iraq, Kenya, Mauritius, Mongolia, Poland, German Democratic Republic, Syrian Arab Republic and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

If there are no comments, I shall now proceed to adjourn this meeting until tomorrow at 10.30 a.m. sharp.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.