



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 21ST MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

CONTENTS

DISARMAMENT ITEMS

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

- General debate

Statements were made by:

Mr. Canales (Chile)
Mr. Pojani (Albania)
Mr. Fein (Netherlands)
Mr. Tarua (Papua New Guinea)
Mr. vanden Heuvel (United States of America)
Mr. de la Gorce (France)

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

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. CANALES (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): In our first statement, we referred basically to nuclear disarmament. In this second statement, we shall take up another item on our agenda of special interest to my delegation.

Even if nuclear weapons did not exist, or if one day we did manage to eliminate them and to use atomic energy solely for peaceful purposes to promote the welfare of mankind, war, involving the use of the sophisticated and lethal conventional weapons which we have now, would be an unprecedented disaster both in terms of material damage, and, more importantly, loss of human life.

Let us not forget that in the Second World War, in a single battle at Stalingrad, more than half a million soldiers were casualties, and the weapons of mass destruction that we have today were, of course, not used then.

A third world war would involve most countries and very few of them would be able to take a neutral stance which would be respected. Consequently, such a war would be quite different from preceding wars.

First, sophisticated weapons of mass destruction would be used, and because of their special features they would not be confined to the battlefield. They would be used against the civilian population, which would suffer greatly for lack of a defence capability.

Secondly, the surface war on land, in the air and at sea would involve the use of radiological, chemical and bacteriological weapons and those capable of changing the environment which could be used by surprise in any theatre of operations, due to the great flexibility of present launching systems.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

Thirdly, we would repeat that recourse to environmental warfare, although restricted by international convention, would acquire hitherto unsuspected proportions and it would be difficult to control the effects of such warfare and keep them from being 'grave, extensive and lasting'.

Fourthly, outer space would also be a battlefield because anti-satellite weapons would eventually destroy any kind of artificial earth satellite and it would be impossible to discriminate between peaceful and military uses of such satellites by States.

Fifthly, health services would be incapable of bringing any relief to the many human beings who would be victims of conventional weapons.

As a logical consequence of the foregoing, another world war, even if it were a war with only conventional weapons, would do irreparable damage the effects of which would be difficult to overcome for many years afterwards, due to the social, economic and cultural consequences which would be difficult to predict.

Furthermore, local wars would also involve increased destructive power because wherever they occur in the world, they would involve restricted use of these means of warfare, but with the risk that a bilateral conflict could easily be transformed into a conflagration of greater proportions.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

Any local war that might occur in countries rich in the natural resources indispensable to the industrialized and developing countries would have a considerable effect on the world economy, making it difficult to bring about a new international economic order more just and equitable for all States and to overcome the serious problems of the poorer countries.

It should be stated that although 1980 is a difficult year in the area of international relations because of the crisis plaguing the international community, the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva has continued its work and has provided a valuable forum for multilateral negotiation. The Committee has unquestionably taken significant steps to implement its mandate, proof of which is its agreement to establish four ad hoc working groups to pursue negotiations aimed at concluding effective international agreements providing guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, on chemical weapons, on radiological weapons and on a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The working group on negative security guarantees dealt with a very delicate and complex task in an area that is deemed to be of particular importance to a large number of non-nuclear-weapon States, and for that reason no substantive progress was made on that subject.

Special attention should be given to the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. It should be recalled that the 1925 Geneva Protocol banned the use of such weapons. Unfortunately, however, States have not totally renounced the development of such weapons, nor have they agreed to destroy their arsenals. Consequently, the Geneva Protocol must be supplemented by a multilateral convention encompassing the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their destruction. We wish to congratulate the Committee on Disarmament for having established a working group to study this complex question in an attempt to bring it to a speedy solution.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

It is a matter for regret that the working group on radiological weapons has not made any progress. The draft submitted by the United States of America and the Soviet Union containing the main elements for a treaty must, along with other proposals, be considered and negotiated very carefully by the Committee on Disarmament.

The last working group of the Committee on Disarmament has been considering a comprehensive programme of disarmament. That working group began its work very slowly because the subjects are very complex. Its programme is closely linked to preparations for a second special session on disarmament in 1982, and the work of that working group should therefore be completed as soon as possible.

Military expenditures have reached alarming proportions. In 1979, some \$500 billion were spent, approximately 80 per cent of which went to conventional weapons.

Expenditure on the transfer of weapons to developing countries was in excess of \$25 billion.

What financial resources, labour and raw materials have been wasted in this unbridled arms race, aggravated by the world-wide tension through which we are living, that could have been better employed to alleviate human suffering in the extremely poor regions of the world.

What insensitivity has been evidenced, and what obstacles placed in the path of a new international economic order, in which international co-operation with better understanding and impartiality on the part of the richer countries must prevail if we are to make substantive progress in controlling the arms race and creating greater international confidence.

United Nations resolutions and reports have stressed the close link that exists between disarmament and development, and the fact that progress on the former will promote progress on the latter and will help to free real resources that are at present being devoted to military purposes and make them available for world economic and social development, especially in the developing countries.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

It should be recalled that, in compliance with paragraphs 94 and 95 of the Final Document of the General Assembly's tenth special session, on disarmament, a group of governmental experts was set up to study the relationship between disarmament and development. Attention was to be focused on the use of resources for military purposes, on the economic and social effects of the arms race, on the implementation of disarmament measures, and on the reallocation to development uses of resources now being devoted to military purposes.

It is distressing that military expenditures have increased, that weapons are being perfected, that there is constant rivalry between the super-Powers, that the regional tensions in certain parts of the world seem to have become permanent, and that each year the principles of the United Nations Charter are being violated in one part of the world or another.

The declaration designating the decade of the 1980s as the second United Nations Disarmament Decade, which the General Assembly adopted by consensus in resolution 34/75, constitutes a measure that will heighten the awareness of world public opinion with regard to disarmament and related problems. During this second Disarmament Decade, comprehensive information must be presented in such a way as to create an international atmosphere propitious to the preparation of concrete action aimed at bringing about real and effective disarmament.

As the Secretary-General stated in his report on the work of the Organization for 1980:

"The Second Disarmament Decade, which began this year, offers a suitable framework for setting politically attainable concrete targets and making substantive progress in that direction." (A/35/1, p. 13)

It is undeniable that the tenth special session of the General Assembly produced a Final Document that is the most comprehensive document produced thus far in the effort to bring about progress in halting the arms race, if its

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

stated objectives are supported by the States that are primarily involved in and responsible for that arms race.

In the Final Document, in connexion with the projected world disarmament conference, it is stated:

"At the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conference should be convened with universal participation and with adequate preparation." (resolution S-10/2, para. 122)

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

There is also a plan to hold a second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1982 in order to evaluate the progress that will have been achieved by then. My delegation most firmly supports both initiatives.

We must make whatever efforts are necessary to achieve significant progress in this area that is of such importance to mankind. Failure to do so would be proof of our inability to achieve a meeting of the minds among States in order to curb the arms race.

In order to mitigate the effects of war and make progress in disarmament we must: first, never lose sight of the final objective of general and complete disarmament under strict international control, an ideal that must inspire the political will of States; secondly, promote by whatever means available to us the awareness of world public opinion regarding the phenomenon of war, so as to inspire in that public opinion the ideal of peace as the sole way of achieving the well-being of mankind - the University for Peace, which is to have its headquarters in Costa Rica, is an initiative that will make an effective contribution to that end; thirdly, speed up all the disarmament measures that have been agreed upon and that are at present being negotiated; finally, promote unrestricted respect for the fundamental principles of the Charter of our Organization.

Mr. POJANI (Albania): Mr. Chairman, first of all I should like to express my delegation's congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee.

The problems relating to disarmament before this Committee have been discussed throughout the history of the United Nations. There is no doubt that peoples and freedom-loving States would have liked after so many years to have seen some concrete steps taken in the field of disarmament, or at least in curbing the arms race. However, it is an undeniable fact that in spite of a great number of meetings, declarations and resolutions we have not in all that time seen any real progress towards disarmament. That objective reality has obviously been expressed in the statements made in our Committee by many representatives of freedom-loving countries.

On the basis of that reality and of the present worsening situation in various parts of the world the Albanian delegation would like, in common with many other delegations, to express briefly its considerations on the substance of the problems under discussion. We are of the opinion that the primary source of the great dangers currently threatening peoples, peace and international security and of the tension and insecurity in the world is the hegemonistic expansionist policies of the imperialist super-Powers and the fierce rivalry between them for zones of influence and world domination. In order to carry out such policies and achieve their goals the super-Powers and other imperialist Powers have built up a powerful military machine that is unparalleled in the history of mankind. The United States imperialists and the Soviet and Chinese social-imperialists maintain millions of soldiers under arms and they have created and continue constantly to increase and modernize colossal stockpiles of nuclear and conventional weapons. The two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, are persistently strengthening their military blocs, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty, and are making efforts to expand their activities in other areas of the world. Social-imperialist China too is intensively endeavouring to create, under the shadow of the United States, a new aggressive alliance in the Far East.

(Mr. Pojani, Albania)

It is precisely now when we are engaged here in the First Committee in the traditional debate on the agenda items relating to disarmament that tension has increased everywhere, and armed conflicts have broken out in various regions of the world because of the warmongering policy followed by the super-Powers.

During the period since the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, not only has nothing been done for disarmament but, on the contrary, the use of weapons and the threat of their use have further intensified. The Soviet social imperialists have committed a barbarous aggression against Afghanistan and are using the most sophisticated weapons to crush the resistance of the freedom-loving people of that country. While the Soviet armies and Soviet tanks were invading Afghanistan and terrorizing its people, the American imperialists were intensifying blackmail and military provocations against Iran and were strengthening their military presence in the Persian Gulf area. Social-imperialist China on the other hand has arrogantly continued its threats to teach Viet Nam a second lesson.

The most grave and flagrant consequence of the aggressive policy and machinations of the imperialist super-Powers to instigate feuds and local wars is the armed conflict between Iraq and Iran and the explosive situation created in the whole Persian Gulf area. That bloody conflict was prepared and set off against the background of the rivalry between the two super-Powers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, for hegemony and world domination in that important strategic area and especially against the background of their plots against the anti-imperialist revolution of the Iranian people, who are resolutely fighting to defend their revolution and national integrity.

As is stated in the report contained in document A/35/392, military expenditures today have reached \$ 500 billion a year, or around \$1 million per minute. Two thirds of that sum are spent by the two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Military expenditures in those two countries and in other imperialist countries have increased at a much greater rate than that of their gross national product.

(Mr. Pojani, Albania)

The militarization of the economy, which is a distinctive feature in those countries, is the direct outcome of the aggressive policies of imperialism and social-imperialism. The unbridled arms race, in which the two super-Powers have been engaged for a long time, not only shows no sign of slowing down but, on the contrary, is constantly increasing at unparalleled rates and proportions. That is clearly shown in the new plans for increasing military budgets, in the strengthening and expanding of their military blocs, fleets and military bases, in the deployment of their nuclear and conventional weaponry, in the increasing of their military manoeuvres and so on.

(Mr. Pojani, Albania)

All this occurs at a time when, here in the United Nations, in other international forums and in their own propaganda, the imperialist Powers, and particularly the two super-Powers, spare no words and no slogans on the reduction of military budgets and a slowing down of the arms race, on the limitation and banning of nuclear tests and nuclear weapons and of chemical, bacteriological, radiological and other weapons of mass destruction. The United States imperialists and Soviet social-imperialists do not hesitate to present every passing year as new proposals their already consumed ideas on the measures they allegedly are ready to take towards general and complete disarmament and prevention of a new world war. For many years now, the United States and the Soviet Union have been making a great fuss about the importance of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks and agreements for disarmament and even for international peace and security. Life shows that both SALT I and SALT II, so highly propagated as important steps towards limitation of strategic weapons, are not steps towards disarmament but constitute bargaining of a political and military nature between the two super-Powers.

As we stated previously, the SALT II agreement is but an effort by the two super-Powers, in the framework of their so-called balance, to define an acceptable level between them in the development of strategic weapons.

The imperialist super-Powers have continuously tried to present the theory of 'military balance' between them as one of the most effective means for disarmament and for international peace and security. Under the cover of balance, both of them strive to legitimize the right to play a "leading role" in the world. They claim the balance of power to be a need of time allegedly serving the interests of all countries. They even threaten that any upset of this balance would have serious consequences on international relations and the international situation. That is why they arrogantly try to make peoples and countries give up their sovereign rights and accept the idea of division of the world into spheres of influence for the sake of that balance. No doubt that is pure, typical imperialist logic. In fact, the concept of balance between super-Powers is an old imperialist slogan, used by them and other imperialist Powers to justify their hegemonistic policy of interference in the internal affairs of other countries and their preparations for aggression and world war. This very purpose also underlies the mutual accusations we hear this year from the two super-Powers -- accusations by each that the other is disrupting its efforts towards balance and the curbing of the arms race.

(Mr. Pojani, Albania)

The United States, under the pretext of defending its "vital interests" world-wide, is drawing up new plans for the strengthening of its military machine, for intensification of war hysteria within the country, for further militarization of the economy and perfection of all weapons systems. To this end it has set up and is intensively training the so-called rapid deployment force to be used in the regions they plan to intervene in militarily.

The Soviet social-imperialists are treading the same path. They too declare that they will increase and bring to perfection all kinds of weapons and will not allow any change in the existing balance of forces between the United States and the Soviet Union and between the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty in the field of military forces and armaments, in order to defend the Soviet Union's interests, which, according to them, are also to be found throughout the world.

The Soviet proposal to discuss the new item entitled "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war" is but an old tune that has been heard every year in the First Committee. By such proposals the Soviet social-imperialists play upon the aspirations of peoples for genuine disarmament and upon their concern over the danger of a world war.

The Albanian delegation is of the view that an analysis of events of recent years shows that the outbreak of a world war is not an imaginary but a real danger, and it is precisely the imperialist super-Powers that are leading the world towards such a war. In such a situation there is no room for illusions about the real intentions of the super-Powers or for slowness.

The Peoples's Socialist Republic of Albania has been and is for genuine disarmament and for international peace and security. The Albanian people, like all other peoples of the world, is against imperialist war. Peoples and peace-loving States do not expect disarmament from the super-Powers or their negotiations and agreements. That is why it is imperative in the present conditions for peoples and sovereign States to which freedom and national independence are dear to raise their vigilance, spoil the plans of their enemies and prevent themselves from being deceived into playing the dangerous game of the imperialist super-Powers on a world scale.

Mr. FEIN (Netherlands): As representatives are aware, my delegation has made a few statements in this general debate on behalf of the Members of the European Community. The statement I shall make today, however, is on behalf of my own country alone. The views I shall express should therefore be taken in addition to those expressed by my delegation on behalf of the Nine, but they do not necessarily reflect those of any or all of our partners in the community.

I should also like to remind the members of this Committee that the Netherlands has already spoken on many of the issues now once more on our agenda on various occasions in the recent past, here in New York, in Geneva and elsewhere. I shall therefore limit myself today to only a few topics of general interest, concerning mainly the nuclear weapons items on our agenda. But I also wish to touch briefly on another issue where some new developments invite our attention - the issue of chemical weapons. And finally I shall state the views of my Government on the Soviet proposal contained in document A/C.1/35/L.1.

New developments are unfortunately not a strong motivation for me to speak about nuclear questions today. One has the feeling that negative factors substantially outweigh the few positive developments over the past year since the last session of this Committee.

My Government sincerely regrets that circumstances prevented the SALT II treaty from coming into force after it was signed last year. We hope that in practice the provisions of SALT II will be adhered to. My Government also regrets that the comprehensive test-ban treaty failed to materialize since the last session of the General Assembly. Here the reasons are somewhat more complicated, though of course related - erroneously, in our view - to the failure of SALT II to become effective.

My Government furthermore regrets that the Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference, while making headway on some important questions, did not achieve all the results we had hoped and worked for. No significant headway was made on any of the other nuclear issues - negative security assurances, nuclear-weapons-free zones, cut-off, to name but a few. It has not been a good year for disarmament.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

I shall now address myself to some of the issues that I have mentioned: the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), SALT II, comprehensive test ban (CTB), cut-off, nuclear-weapon-free zones, chemical weapons, and, in a slightly different category, the Soviet proposal.

As we are all aware, the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty was concluded recently. In my Government's view it is to be considered as a setback for the international non-proliferation endeavours that, because of difficulties over nuclear arms control issues, the Review Conference could not agree in the available time by consensus on a final declaration.

It cannot be denied that the continuing vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons, which was one of the causes of the lack of agreement and which is reflected by the delay in achieving a comprehensive test-ban treaty to which I referred a moment ago, poses a danger for the durability and viability of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In the light of the outcome of the Review Conference the words spoken by the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs on 13 August 1980, while addressing the Review Conference, become all the more relevant. He said:

"It will not be possible in the long run to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by additional States if we do not succeed in stopping the nuclear arms race between the present nuclear-weapon States and in creating as soon as possible a credible perspective on nuclear disarmament. Of course, no one expects instant nuclear disarmament. We have to show, however, that we not only agree in word to nuclear disarmament in the long run but also in practice."

If the NPT's objectives are to be maintained, the nuclear-weapon States will have to achieve meaningful measures limiting their own nuclear arsenals. We urge the nuclear-weapon States to make every effort to do so, because we believe it would be erroneous to think of the NPT, after 10 years of operation, as an outdated or even fundamentally ill-conceived instrument. The fact that the NPT -- now encompassing a membership of well over two

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

thirds of all nations from all regions of the world - remains the mainstay of the international non-proliferation régime was impressively borne out by the statements of practically all delegations made both during the general debate of the Review Conference and at its concluding session. All those statements contained reconfirmation of support of the basic objectives of the Treaty.

An important corollary to this continued support was the unanimity reached on an informal basis at the Review Conference on most of the issues relating to the application of international safeguards and the arrangements governing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The common formulas found in this area made the Review Conference worth while. By the clearer perceptions that they provide those common formulas will not fail to have lasting beneficial effect on our continued and further efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation régime.

In this context we look forward to participating in the activities of the Committee on Assurances of Supply (CAS), which was set up by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). While continuing to believe that responsible nuclear export policies should imply world-wide application of safeguards on a non-discriminatory basis, we feel that CAS could be a major focal point for developing common approaches towards a new consensus in the field of peaceful nuclear energy relations.

At the beginning of my statement I expressed my Government's regret that SALT II has failed to materialize in its final legally binding form, although it is important to note that at least one party has gone on record to the effect that it will adhere to its provisions.

I should like, if I may, to quote a few words from a statement that I made in this same Committee, on this same subject, last year, on almost the same date, 1 November, when I said:

"Allow me to mention the unmentionable:"- that was before the events in Afghanistan and all that followed - "if the ratification of SALT II should fail then this must not be accepted as an excuse to abandon the comprehensive test ban and even less to neglect the Non-Proliferation Review Conference. If SALT II should fail, we trust that responsible

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

statesmen would have the political wisdom and courage to follow through immediately with a comprehensive test ban. This is all the more important as otherwise the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference might be in some difficulties." (A/C.1/34/PV.25, p. 27)

Let us hope that next year will be a better year for international relations and disarmament, that SALT II will be ratified, and that a CTB will be put into effect. But again I say that, even if for some unfortunate reason the entry into force of SALT II should remain postponed, my Government would maintain its support for pursuing the CTB talks to their logical conclusion.

Notwithstanding our disappointment at the lack of real progress last year, my delegation wishes to express appreciation to the three CTB negotiating Powers in Geneva for having submitted to the Committee on Disarmament this year a more substantive report than was the case in previous years. We take this as an encouraging sign, although this presentation was rather late in the session.

That trilateral CTB report led the Netherlands delegation to the Committee on Disarmament to make a number of technical comments. Certain aspects of the draft treaty - which appears to be a draft for a multilateral treaty, not only a trilateral one - have our approval. There were, however, also a number of suggestions we made - for example, regarding the duration, the interim period between completion of the draft in the Committee on Disarmament and its entry into force, the complaints procedure and, in this respect, the establishment of a consultative committee. We hope those and some other suggestions we made at that time will be taken into account by the three negotiating Powers.

I wish also to place on record now that the Netherlands is in favour of setting up a working group on a comprehensive test ban in the Committee on Disarmament, although we do not see much use in doing so if any of the trilateral negotiating Powers declines to participate in it. Nevertheless we urge all five nuclear-weapon States to reconsider their attitude and to co-operate with the rest of the members of the Committee on Disarmament in establishing a CTB working group under an appropriate mandate.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

In view of the rather disappointing state of affairs with regard to nuclear arms control in general, to which I have already referred, it is not surprising that progress with regard to the proposals to "cut-off" the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes was also absent during the last year. I need not say that we regret this, although it is understandable in view of the complexity of the matter and the lack of progress in curbing the nuclear arms race and the absence of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

Nevertheless, we feel that all efforts should be made to further the preparations for the day - and we trust that day will eventually come - when serious negotiations can begin on a cut-off agreement which can be verified basically by universal application of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

We would therefore welcome a proposal in this Committee recommending in realistic and practical terms appropriate measures necessary to further these preparations for a cut-off.

I wish now to say a few words about negative security assurances, a subject on which the Netherlands has spoken on more than one occasion both in the General Assembly and in the Committee on Disarmament.

I should like to address myself first to the form as opposed to the substance of the international instrument which might be chosen. The choice seems to be either an international convention or a Security Council resolution.

We hold that both approaches should be explored, but we are also convinced that for fairly obvious reasons the convention form would be most difficult.

The Security Council resolution format would of course also be difficult as far as the substance is concerned, but the procedure would be much simpler and much more routine. In view of the urgency of the matter, we would therefore wish to pursue the Security Council resolution approach with priority, while not excluding the convention form in the long run.

Once we have decided on the Security Council procedure, the crucial question arises whether or not a meaningful common formula can be found to constitute the heart of such a Security Council resolution. After very careful consideration, the Netherlands is convinced that this can be done.

Let us first examine what could be done to achieve such a common formula and then what cannot and should not be attempted if we are to achieve the desired results.

To begin with, we should keep clearly in mind what is the basic purpose of the whole exercise. That purpose is to enhance the security of non-nuclear-weapon States and thereby, inter alia, promote the cause of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. That is what it is all about.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

We should therefore remember that the object of the exercise is an arms control measure, but as such it is not a disarmament measure meant to reduce the number of nuclear weapons possessed by one or the other nuclear-weapon State. That praiseworthy goal should also be pursued vigorously but in another context and not in the context of negative security assurances.

I should like now to say what we believe can be done. After very careful study of the various unilateral negative security assurances solemnly placed on record so far, we believe that at least most, if not all, of them contain sufficient common ground from which a meaningful, coherent formula can be assembled. Such a formula would not detract from the vital security interests of any one of the nuclear-weapon States. At the same time, the existence of such a common formula would make a very significant contribution to the system of negative security assurances for the non-nuclear-weapon States.

It is obvious that, if the nuclear-weapon States would agree upon such a common formula, and this formula could be enshrined in an authoritative international instrument, such as a Security Council resolution, this would not only greatly benefit the security of non-nuclear-weapon States, which, as I have already mentioned, is in itself highly desirable, but also strengthen the non-proliferation régime, which, as I also said earlier, is our basic purpose and in the interest of the entire world.

We would assume that when this matter is being dealt with in the Security Council national statements would be made by the nuclear-weapon States prior to the adoption of the resolution containing the agreed common formula and that those national statements need not necessarily all be identical. In such national statements, the nuclear-weapon States could each express their own views in addition to the ground covered by the common formula.

The Netherlands is willing to pursue this matter with those who are sincerely interested in achieving results for this common goal.

In this statement today I do not intend to speak on the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in general nor on any nuclear-weapon-free zone in particular. That in no way means that my country has no interest in this matter or will have nothing to say on it later on. On the contrary. But I intend to revert to the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones during the second phase of our deliberations when the draft resolutions are discussed.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

At the beginning of my statement I said that 1980 had not been a very good year for disarmament. But as far as chemical weapons are concerned this is not altogether the case, although there have been persistent reports of the actual use of chemical weapons in various parts of the world. Those rumours should be investigated, and in the process of that investigation the international community would be doing in practice what the 1925 Geneva Protocol lacks de jure - putting into action a verification of use procedure. My delegation will actively support any realistic, impartial and balanced undertaking to investigate those reports, if only to establish the precedent of verification of use.

If I have said just now that 1980 has not been such a bad year with regard to chemical weapons - apart from those reports - I was of course referring to the progress on chemical weapons, modest though it may have been, made in the Committee on Disarmament as compared to previous years. The Netherlands Government strongly urges that the Committee on Disarmament should continue along the new road that has been opened up. We consider it the duty of all the members of the Committee on Disarmament to work together in a major effort to solve the remaining problems, which are - we realize this only too well - many and complex.

We are all aware of the fact that one of the major stumbling-blocks lies in the requirement of adequate verification. The Netherlands Government attaches great importance to provisions that assure adequate verification, but, at the same time, we have become convinced that we should not allow exaggerated and unnecessarily cumbersome provisions on which agreement is practically impossible to stand in the way of finalizing a treaty, especially if there are compensating elements in other sectors of the international arrangement which, in their totality, can be accepted as sufficient.

In this connexion I should like to refer to the statement made by the Netherlands delegation in the Committee on Disarmament on 24 July 1980. In that statement the thesis was put forward that, if a chemical weapons convention provided for a good definition of scope, a reasonable system of verification methods and, finally, an adequate system of protection measures, then we would have achieved our goal. In other words, we should not become prisoners of perfection.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

I now wish to make a few comments on the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union under the title "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war" (A/C.1/35/L.1). That draft resolution must, of course, be interpreted in the light of the statements made in this general debate by the Soviet Union, which were repeated by other members of the Warsaw Pact. As already stated a few days ago by my delegation in an intervention on behalf of the Nine, we consider that draft resolution completely unacceptable.

In the statement to which I referred, ample reasons were given for objecting to Part I of the draft in particular and the draft resolution as a whole in general. I need not repeat those reasons. But before going on to discuss the various other parts of the draft resolution, I wish to add just a few remarks of my own concerning Part I.

I was somewhat puzzled to read in that draft resolution that the Soviet Union, in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations, attempts to prevent States Members of the United Nations from seeking protection against foreign intervention by joining with other States Members of the United Nations that feel themselves equally threatened, in a defensive alliance.

I was puzzled and at the same time reminded of an occasion when I was equally surprised by a statement of the representative of the Soviet Union in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva not so long ago, a statement which was very relevant to the proposal now contained in Part I. On 14 February 1980, while addressing the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva and answering certain remarks made by other members of the Committee on Disarmament, including the Netherlands, concerning the military intervention in Afghanistan, the Soviet representative stated, inter alia:

"I would merely like to emphasize once again that Soviet military assistance was provided upon the request of the Government of Afghanistan in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Co-operation concluded by Afghanistan and the USSR in December 1978. As you know the Charter of the United Nations accords each State the right to collective or individual self-defence, and this right has been exercised frequently by other States, including States members of the Committee on Disarmament." (CD/PV.60, pp. 20 and 21)

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

Similar views were also expressed by other members of the Warsaw Pact at that time. For instance, the representative of Bulgaria stated on 7 February 1980 in a formal meeting of the Committee on Disarmament that the Soviet action was:

"...a completely lawful action, based on a bilateral Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Co-operation concluded by Afghanistan and the USSR in December 1978 and stems from the right of each State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, to individual and collective self-defence" (CD/PV.56, p. 25)

I could quote other statements in the Committee on Disarmament by other members of the Warsaw Pact along the same lines as contained in those two quotations.

I cannot help but conclude that, in view of the interpretation given here to a so-called Treaty of Friendship in the case of Afghanistan, such treaties of friendship should also have been mentioned in Part I of the draft resolution as qualifying for treaties and alliances to which no military functions should be assigned.

The other parts of the Soviet proposal are equally objectionable and unrealistic. The proposal in Part II, which proclaims New Years Day 1981 as the first day of the big freeze of the armed forces and conventional weapons at the level then pertaining, is, of course, unrealistic and designed for propaganda purposes only. The Soviet proposal, for example, contains no provisions for any verification measures whatsoever.

As to Part III concerning negative security assurances, my delegation feels that that subject is a bit too sensitive to deal with in the way it is presented in the Soviet proposal. As to the Netherlands' opinion of the subject matter, I refer to the earlier part of my statement that dealt with this subject.

Part IV, again of the draft resolution cannot really be taken seriously: a one year moratorium - and any short-term moratorium for that matter - is not the answer to the very serious problem of continued testing. Here again the Soviet proposal makes no mention at all of any verification provisions.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

I have already stated earlier what my Government thinks concerning the comprehensive test ban and we would hope that the Government of the Soviet Union would take this matter seriously and do its share in bringing to a speedy conclusion a complete ban on all testing for all times and not just for one year.

Mr. TARUA (Papua New Guinea): Speaking for the first time in this Committee, I should like to extend to you, and the other officers of the Committee, my delegation's sincere congratulations on your elections to your respective offices in the Committee. We have every confidence that under your capable leadership and guidance we shall be able to discharge effectively the responsibilities bestowed upon the Committee by the General Assembly.

My Government's views on the question of disarmament have been expressed previously in this forum on many occasions. On each occasion we have expressed great concern at the escalation of the arms race because it threatens international peace and security and the existence of small States like Papua New Guinea. Should the present trend be allowed to continue without any genuine attempts being made to reverse it, the consequences would, undoubtedly, be devastating and serious for all of us - nuclear-weapon as well as non-nuclear-weapon States. We are particularly concerned that the development, production and stockpiling of arms, both conventional and nuclear, have reached quite alarming proportions and that the armed forces of many States have also been increased to the highest levels since the Second World War. We all know that these developments threaten peaceful co-existence within recognized and secure boundaries.

We do, however, note that it is an unavoidable responsibility for a nation to provide a sufficient level of defence for its security, given the insecure circumstances of the world in which we live. Nevertheless, the continued arms race presents a growing threat to international peace and security and even to the very survival of the human race. It could mean the end of civilization as we know it today. The opening words of the Declaration on disarmament contained in the Final Document of the tenth special session clearly illustrate this concern by stating:

(Mr. Tarua, Papua New Guinea)

"Mankind today is confronted with an unprecedented threat of self-extinction arising from the massive and competitive accumulation of the most destructive weapons ever produced. Existing arsenals of nuclear weapons alone are more than sufficient to destroy all life on earth." (Resolution S-10/2, para. 11)

The time has therefore come for the international community to take appropriate measures to reverse, if not halt, this dangerous trend and to seek security in disarmament through a gradual but effective process commencing with a reduction in the present level of armaments to be followed by exercising limitations on any further developments and production of these weapons.

(Mr. Tarua, Papua New Guinea)

Disarmament has thus become an imperative and most urgent task facing us today. Although some efforts have been made to reduce the increasing build up in arms, it is not satisfying to note that there has not been any real progress made in that direction. Nevertheless it is encouraging to note that some partial agreements have been reached to limit certain weapons or to eliminate them altogether, as in the case of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. But the fact remains that those agreements are limited; the arms race continues in spite of various attempts to find ways to curb it.

The world we live in today is characterized by internal political, economic and social turbulence. There are Governments taking refuge in building stronger military defences against external enemies, while the extension of military power dominates world priorities. A situation is thereby created where military expenditures increase faster than the rate of inflation. Consequently, nuclear weapons are widespread and now number over 50,000. While military expenditures increase, world prices of essential commodities rise faster, energy supplies become tighter, more people are unemployed and more live without adequate food and clean water -- the minimum necessities of civilized living. The inevitable consequence of these interactions is the decline in the living standards of the masses. These conditions are brought about as a result of Governments devoting a greater part of their national budgets to military expenditures than to economic aid and social development.

It is regrettable to note that while economic and social conditions continue to decline, military expenditures are steadily rising and have reached the level of \$500 billion annually. Such a trend clearly indicates the scope of the global arms race and the relentless push to still higher levels of intensity. World outlays appear to have exceeded \$460 billion in 1979, compared with a yearly average in the 1960s and 1970s of \$370 billion. If the present trend continues, world military outlays will go higher than \$600 billion a year. At the centre of this arms race is the military rivalry between the two super-Powers: the United States and the Soviet Union. Those two nations alone account for a majority share of 58 per cent of the world's military outlays: with their alliances they account for 80 per cent of the total.

If a significant portion of this colossal amount of military expenditure were diverted to improving the welfare standards of the peoples of the world, my delegation feels sure that some of the prevailing economic and social diseases could be reduced to manageable levels. We realize, however, that those problems would not be totally eradicated. But just and lasting peace cannot be built on poverty, starvation, unemployment and inhuman living conditions. As long as there exists a disparity between the rich and the poor there will always be insecurity and instability in the world. Genuine and lasting peace will, to some extent, be brought about through the utilization of some of the resources, both human and material, used at present for military purposes.

The ever-increasing international trade in arms and military hardware reflects two of the most dangerous aspects of recent military trends: the movement of sophisticated weapons and technology through the world and the role of governments in the industrialized nations in aiding and abetting the proliferation. The latest figures show that the world arms trade in 1978 amounted to \$21 billion, with over two thirds of it going to developing countries. The competition for sales has heightened, however, as more countries, including developing countries, enter the market with major weapons to sell. It is a fact that very sophisticated weapons can often be purchased on the arms market by the developing countries even before they enter the arsenals of the producer countries.

Importing States are interested in diversifying sources of supply as a buffer against political domination. In promoting this trade, governments are active sales partners, often justifying their role on military, political and economic grounds. The arms trade is also seen as an integral part of foreign policy which ensures political influence by creating a special bond between seller and buyer. In actual fact, the benefit to nations of arms sales has proved to be dubious. The short-term economic benefits to the trade balance and to powerful multi-national arms merchants are more than offset on a national level by long-term adverse effects: the pressure on world prices and the serious loss of competitive advantage in the civilian market. As for political insurance for the sellers, arms, whether given or sold, have a poor record for cementing friendly relations.

The question we may ask is where will all this end? If one thing is clear from a review of the arms race in recent years it is this: the intense competition to refine the weapons of war will not diminish and die of its own accord. There is no end in sight except a catastrophe of mutual destruction unless there is a political willingness to stop it. The will to make a political decision requires more serious and innovative diplomacy than has recently been evident, and that political decision will come about when the public realizes that defence is a very expensive exercise and that the machinery of defence can no longer defend against the range of options available to an aggressor. A State can create more vicious weapons of revenge, but it is now powerless to protect populations against them.

My delegation is disappointed with the slow progress being made towards the conclusion of a treaty on general and complete disarmament. It appears that any progress achieved thus far has been on procedural matters rather than on any concrete measures towards the substantive goal of general and complete disarmament. Even the Recent Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons ended without achieving any tangible results. We do note, however, that partial agreements have been reached in some areas of disarmament, such as the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty signed in 1963 and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which entered into force in 1970. We would urge those nuclear Powers that have not yet become parties to the Treaty to do so without any further delay. We welcome the General Assembly's decision to declare the 1980s as the second Disarmament Decade, and hope that something concrete will be achieved during that period.

(Mr. Tarua, Papua New Guinea)

I now turn to the question of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world constitutes an important disarmament measure. It is important that any developments pertaining to nuclear activities in various regions of the world take full cognizance of the States belonging to that particular region. It is equally important that all States of the region undertake to comply fully with all the objectives, purposes and principles of the agreements or arrangements establishing the zones, thus ensuring that they are genuinely free from nuclear weapons, the testing of nuclear weapons and the dumping of nuclear wastes. To this end, my delegation draws the attention of this Committee to General Assembly resolution 3477 (XXX) of 1 December 1975 which deals with the concept of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific. It is our view that such a regional arrangement would be in conformity with the objectives of the Final Document of the tenth special session on disarmament. It is also the intention of the peoples of the South Pacific to keep their region free from all forms of nuclear activities.

Member States of the South Pacific community, to which Papua New Guinea belongs, are concerned about the arms race and its serious consequences. We are more concerned about the security and the welfare of our peoples because of the continuing nuclear testing in the region. The peoples of the South Pacific are anxious to keep the South Pacific free from the risk of nuclear pollution and conflict. In this connexion, on 3 July 1975, the heads of Governments of the South Pacific Forum adopted a communiqué on the halting of all forms of nuclear testing in the region. The communiqué commended the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region as a means of achieving that aim. The adoption of the communiqué was affirmed by the General Assembly resolution of 1 December 1975 endorsing the concept.

(Mr. Tarua, Papua New Guinea)

In spite of these measures, testing of nuclear devices still takes place. Further tests will undoubtedly cause serious damage to life and the environment in the area. It is disappointing to note that some countries in the Pacific region, while advocating the concept of a nuclear-free zone, are not even prepared to support or even to take steps to promote the concept of a nuclear free zone in the Pacific. Indeed, those in a position to do so are only paying lip-service to the idea. Nuclear testing is continuing unabated as evidenced by the development and testing of the neutron bomb, the effects of which are even more devastating. We would urge that those who are responsible confine the testing of these catastrophic and inhuman weapons to their own soil.

My delegation's opposition to all forms of nuclear testing -- atmospheric or otherwise -- has been made known in this forum and in others. We are equally opposed to the dumping of nuclear wastes everywhere, particularly the South Pacific region. We therefore once again call upon the responsible Governments to cease all forms of nuclear testing and nuclear waste dumping in the Pacific. To this end I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the statement during the general debate in the plenary Assembly by my Foreign Minister on 9 October 1980. He said:

"We do not believe that the tests and low-level nuclear waste dumpings in the Pacific region are harmless. Indeed, the long-term effects could be catastrophic. As a demonstration of faith in their own technology, the nations responsible should carry out their nuclear tests and dumping of nuclear wastes within their immediate boundaries."

(A/35/PV.30 p. 21)

The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is a matter of concern to all of us. We recognize the right of all States to develop and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, but those who undertake such programmes must ensure that nuclear energy used for peaceful purposes is prevented from being converted into nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Tarua, Papua New Guinea)

We urge that international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be conducted under agreed and appropriate international safeguards applied on a non-discriminatory basis and that the nuclear facilities of all States must be subject to regular checks by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Any negotiations on partial measures of disarmament should be conducted within the context of more comprehensive measures with a view to reaching a treaty on general and complete disarmament under effective international control. It is my delegation's view that universally accepted disarmament agreements would help create confidence among States. It is our hope that, in order to create favourable conditions for success in the disarmament process, all States will abide by the provisions of the United Nations Charter. It would also be helpful if they refrained from actions which might adversely affect efforts in the field of disarmament. There is clearly also a need for the display of a constructive approach to negotiations and of the political will to reach agreements.

Before concluding my remarks, I should like to express my Government's views on the signing of the SALT II agreement. We have stated before, and we will state again, that Papua New Guinea welcomes the signing of the SALT II agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union. However, we are both disappointed and concerned that the ratification process is being prolonged for some unknown reason, thus preventing the agreement from being implemented as well as presenting obstacles to negotiations for the SALT III agreement. We had hoped that both the signing and the ratification of the agreement would set limits on strategic offensive weapons systems, and so provide a political climate for future efforts towards general and complete disarmament. It is our view that the two super-Powers, which account for the bulk of the conventional as well as the nuclear weapons in the world, must play a positive and leading role in the realization of this goal. They have a special responsibility towards the international community.

(Mr. Tarua, Papua New Guinea)

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate that various measures proposed in the Declaration on general and complete disarmament will not materialize unless all States, particularly the nuclear-power States, show some political will to take measures outlined in the Programme of Action of that declaration. We believe that the greater part of the responsibility for bringing about the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament rests with those latter States. We will contribute our share towards achieving that goal.

Mr. vanden HEUVEL (United States of America): I should like to begin, Sir, by adding the voice of my delegation to those who have congratulated you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. The task of dealing with the complicated issues touching on the peace and security of the entire world is certainly not an easy one. We are confident that your experience and demonstrated skill will enable you to guide us successfully through the current session. I, for one, am constantly amazed at your ubiquity, at your presence at the important places of crisis and negotiation in our international system, and this delegation regards your boundless energy and your intellectual integrity as among the most important assets of the international community. We of the United States delegation wish you well and pledge our full co-operation in the days ahead.

(Mr. vanden Heuvel, United States)

During the observance of Disarmament Week, which is now coming to a close, we have had occasion to reflect on the purposes of the United Nations set forth in the eloquent preamble to its Charter. The very first of those purposes - "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" - is the stimulus that has shaped the agenda of this Committee.

In recent days we have heard dire assessments of where efforts for peace and security stand and where they are now heading. Sadly, it is true that the noble aspirations of the founders of the United Nations thus far have eluded the grasp of the world community. As we proceed with our work in the First Committee this year, we cannot ignore the climate of fear and suspicion that grips the world today. But we can try to ensure that our actions do not contribute to it and, indeed, we should search unceasingly for opportunities to alleviate it.

The clash of national positions is, of course, an inevitable element of debate in a forum such as this. Clear and vigorous defence of the points of view of the sovereign States represented here can make a useful contribution to mutual understanding. But the cause of peace and the effective limitation of arms can best be served by avoiding gratuitous attacks on other countries, by searching for the threads of commonality that run through our wide-ranging discussions and by seeking constantly to find a basis for consensus where it might be possible.

In that vein, I should like to set forth the main strands of United States policies in the area of arms control and security.

The United States has always sought to control arms rather than to pursue an unrestrained build-up. From the first concrete proposal to try to stop the spread of nuclear armaments - the proposal of 1946 known as the Baruch Plan - through the anti-ballistic missile treaty and the initiation of the SALT process, to the most recent talks aimed at limiting long-range theatre nuclear forces, the United States has taken initiatives consistently aimed at the achievement of realistic, effective and verifiable arms control agreements. We

(Mr. vanden Heuvel, United States)

have avoided ill-defined and unrealistic proposals in the belief that a step-by-step approach is the only practical way to achieve progress in limiting and reducing arms. The achievement of such progress has been and remains the objective of the United States.

In the current circumstances, however, we have had to live with reality, and reality means living in a heavily armed world so long as there are no international agreements in effect which substantially reduce armaments. Reality also means that significant progress on arms control can only be made in an international climate where there is an underlying confidence among nations, despite inevitable policy differences. Such a climate clearly depends not on what Governments say, but rather on what they do. And here, I must be blunt. The Soviet Union, while laying down a barrage of propagandistic proposals for instant disarmament, dissolution of alliances and the like, has continued the steady build-up of its military strength. In contrast to western governments, the Soviet Government takes decisions on such matters without public analysis and scrutiny. The consequences of those decisions become known at best only after the decisions have been implemented.

Some preceding speakers have criticised the policy of nuclear deterrence as a means of preventing the outbreak of war. The fact remains, nevertheless, that until conditions are right for finding some more effective alternative measures, deterrence is the most reliable means at our disposal. United States nuclear policy is premised on the maintenance of adequate forces to assure that deterrence does not fail. It is not premised on the initiation of nuclear war, limited or otherwise.

It is to be regretted that some in this room have sought to portray our policy as aimed at conditioning the world to accept the concept of nuclear war or as deliberately planning for a limited nuclear conflict. These charges have stemmed from irresponsible speculation on the implications of the United States nuclear targeting doctrine about which there was so much public discussion earlier this year.

(Mr. vanden Heuvel, United States)

To set the record straight, I should like to quote from the testimony of Secretary of State Muskie before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 16 September 1980. Secretary Muskie said:

"The countervailing strategy underscores and unmistakably communicates to the Soviets two fundamental truths. First, they could derive no conceivable benefit from initiating the use of nuclear weapons, no matter how limited or extensive the attack and no matter at what stage in a conflict they might be launched. Second, nuclear conflict cannot be an instrument for achieving national policy goals, either for us or for the Soviet Union; there surely will be no victor in a nuclear war."

Secretary Muskie went on to say:

"I do not want anyone to wrongly conclude that we suddenly have become confident about our ability to orchestrate nuclear exchanges and control escalation or that we have become complacent about the use of nuclear weapons."

Secretary Muskie also stressed that the United States Government does not regard the countervailing strategy as in any way a substitute for arms control or as a symptom of disenchantment with the arms control process. On the contrary, the countervailing strategy is fully consistent with the SALT II treaty and our longer-term arms control objectives.

Despite the shadow that has been cast by the events in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the United States recognizes that it is precisely now, when international tensions are greatest, that efforts to achieve peace and stability and steps aimed at preserving and promoting arms control become all the more urgent. Grandiose schemes whose chances of fulfilment are virtually zero offer little hope for success. It is practical, effective and verifiable arms control measures that enhance the security of the countries directly concerned and of the world at large. The record of my Government in this regard is clear.

(Mr. vanden Heuvel, United States)

President Carter is committed to ratification of the SALT II treaty and intends to consult with the leadership of the United States Senate soon after the election with a view to resuming the ratification process as soon as feasible. And we remain committed, following SALT II ratification, to enter into negotiations with the Soviet Union on further mutual limitations on and reduction in nuclear weaponry. In the meantime, pending ratification, as we have stated before, we believe it desirable that neither side take any action inconsistent with the provisions of that Treaty.

Just recently, in Geneva, we began preliminary discussions looking forward to meaningful and equal limitations of United States and Soviet theatre nuclear forces within the framework of SALT III.

My Government is also fully committed to the early achievement of an effective and verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty. As the report of the three negotiating parties presented to the Committee on Disarmament on 31 July demonstrates, substantial progress has been made. The remaining issues are, with few exceptions, matters of considerable technical complexity and political sensitivity, and solutions simply do not come easily. But we are continuing our efforts in the current round of the negotiations which began on 6 October.

(Mr. vanden Heuvel, United States)

The United States, in concert with its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, is pursuing its long-standing commitment to seek mutual and balanced force reductions and limitations in Central Europe.

In regard to chemical weapons, we are continuing bilateral negotiations with the Soviet Union and have given our full support to the work of the Committee on Disarmament on that subject.

A joint United States-Soviet Union initiative on radiological weapons has been submitted to the Committee on Disarmament and we look forward to further work in the Committee to convert that initiative into a multilateral treaty.

The United States made a major effort to contribute to a successful conclusion of the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. As a result of intense negotiations that Conference reached consensus earlier this month on useful accords that extend the laws governing armed conflict.

In the light of this record it is strange that the Soviet Union and certain other countries have accused the United States of breaking off arms-control negotiations or putting obstacles in the path of achieving positive results. A sober examination of the facts leads to a rather different conclusion.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has drastically altered the political climate in which arms control negotiations are taking place. The Soviet actions have violated the fundamental principles of non-intervention, sovereignty and self-determination. Recent attempts by some speakers here to distort the record cannot mask that fact, nor its damaging consequences to efforts to promote peace and security. A State seeking to reduce the dangers of war can best prove it is in earnest by stopping its own aggression, not by introducing resolutions that attempt to divert international attention from the fact of its aggressive actions. One such resolution has already been circulated by the Soviet Union. The United States finds it completely unacceptable. In that connexion we commend to the Committee the views that the nine States members of the European Community, speaking through the representative of the Netherlands on 28 October, have expressed on that proposition.

(Mr. vanden Heuvel, United States)

Actions such as those that the world has been witnessing in Afghanistan cannot but have a profound impact on how the people and leaders of the United States view the matter of negotiating and entering into agreements affecting national and international security. For example, in 1978 the Soviet Union engaged in a build-up of naval forces in the Indian Ocean area in connexion with its own involvement in the Horn of Africa conflict, even though at the same time it was engaged in talks with the United States on the limitation of force levels in the Indian Ocean. The Soviet naval build-up was inconsistent with the spirit of those talks and we had no choice but to suspend them. In the intervening period, increasing regional instabilities further lessened the chances for productive talks on Indian Ocean force limitations. But again, it was Soviet actions - this time the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, a hinterland State of the Indian Ocean area - that virtually destroyed prospects for such talks.

The brief summary I have given today of the tangible efforts the United States is making in the field of arms control and disarmament is of course only a partial accounting, but it does serve to emphasize the point that, in spite of the difficulties brought on by the deterioration of the international climate, the United States is determined to work towards the achievement of effective and verifiable arms-control agreements to assure a more peaceful world. But if the goal of arms control is to succeed we must not only seek new measures: we must also be diligent in ensuring that existing arms-control measures are fully observed.

For some months now we have been intensely concerned about reports that chemical weapons may have been used in Afghanistan, Laos and Kampuchea. The reports alone, while numerous and persistent, are not sufficient to permit definite conclusions to be drawn. For that very reason we believe that an impartial investigation to determine the facts behind all those reports is essential. The issue is too serious to be ignored by the world community. It would be in the best interests of all to have it clarified. Not to do so would undermine both arms control and international law. Besides helping to ascertain the facts, action by the world community through the United Nations will also help to deter the use of chemical weapons and serve to strengthen the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

(Mr. vanden Heuvel, United States)

We note in that connexion that the Committee on Disarmament, at its most recent session, emphasized the need for international efforts to determine the facts behind those reports of chemical-weapon use. It is now up to us as members of this Committee to make every effort to clarify those disturbing reports.

Prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons is one of the most serious and challenging tasks that the world community faces. A corner-stone of the international effort is the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Many among us here participated in the recent Conference to review that Treaty. Despite the absence of a final declaration, there was unanimous agreement on the fundamental soundness of the Treaty and the desirability of universal adherence. The Conference fulfilled its basic purpose of providing the Parties an extended opportunity to review together the operation of the Treaty and the progress made towards achieving its objectives. There was virtually no criticism of the Treaty itself nor of its objectives. There were of course serious concerns expressed about the slow progress towards fulfilling the objectives of article VI relating to nuclear-arms control and disarmament. As we made clear at the Review Conference, the United States shares the strong and widely felt desire for a more rapid achievement of concrete results. If we are to succeed in our efforts, however, we must accept that there are no short-cuts to realizing effective and enduring arms control agreements. They require steady, patient, hard and painstaking effort, and to that we pledge ourselves.

There are, of course, many other issues on the agenda of this Committee. The views of the United States on most of those issues are well known and I shall not dwell on them at this time. My delegation will set them forth when we begin considering the relevant draft resolutions.

Before closing I should like to turn from the present to the future. Just over two years ago, on the initiative of the non-aligned States, we gathered here for a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and reached a consensus agreement on a Final Document that included a Programme of Action -- a broad guide for future actions. This General Assembly will take the first preparatory steps for the second special session devoted to disarmament, scheduled to take place in 1982.

As we begin those preparations we need to consider carefully what we expect the second special session to accomplish. Clearly we shall want to review the progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action laid out at the first special session. What we can usefully accomplish in addition to that review, however, will take much more thought and study.

Whatever we decide, the success of the second special session will depend on the degree to which we all avoid superficial and impractical proposals and concentrate on serious consideration of constructive, effective and verifiable arms-control measures that enhance security and stability. Clearly also its success will be affected by the state of the international political climate. There are no mysteries about what needs to be done to improve that climate. A world free of aggression would provide a much more favourable setting for a constructive dialogue on the limitation and elimination of armaments.

In the meantime we must do what we can here to keep faith with the objectives of the United Nations Charter that I recalled at the beginning of my remarks. Let us make good use of this session of the General Assembly to explore the basis for a broad consensus that will carry us towards the goals we seek. In that way too we can help to begin the process of restoring the climate of trust among nations that is essential to reaching our ultimate objective - a world free of the arms that make aggression possible.

Mr. de la GORCE (France)(interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, the French delegation wishes, first of all, to extend its heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to you and the other members of the Bureau. Your authority and experience assure us that the First Committee's debates will be conducted in the best possible way, and we wish to assure you of our full co-operation.

This year our debate is taking place in circumstances which have had a most definite effect on the disarmament outlook, which, as some would maintain, cannot be separated from the general political situation: the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the conflicts which have broken out or which persist in the Middle East, South East Asia and Africa have all had a deleterious effect on security and confidence. That situation naturally leads to a military build-up and is liable to restart the arms race.

However, the very dangers inherent in that should encourage us to seek ways and means of restoring security and confidence and, consequently, to pursue disarmament efforts wherever possible.

But we must learn from past events. Progress towards disarmament now requires greater vigilance and stricter demands pertaining to the conditions which are to be the foundation for such security and confidence in future agreements. The success of these efforts will largely depend, of course, on the international situation. For the time being, whatever doubts and anxieties may exist, the momentum given to the disarmament efforts by the tenth special session of the General Assembly must be maintained. To that end the action taken can and must be pursued in a number of areas of major importance.

This is true, first and foremost, of the work being done in the Committee on Disarmament, which this year has considered thoroughly four questions entrusted to working groups, and, although the results have not been uniform, we note with satisfaction that the Committee is now playing its role as a negotiating body.

The primary question of chemical disarmament, with particular reference to the main aspects of a future convention, was the subject of substantive debate which made possible exploration of the difficulties and the elaboration of

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

a tentative list of points of agreement and disagreement. That, in our view, is the first stage in multilateral negotiation. It provides a sound basis for continued efforts in that necessary enterprise, although we do not underestimate the difficulties involved. The French Government attaches fundamental importance to this, justified by, among other factors, its position as depositary of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 on the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. In that connexion, it cannot but give attention to any information, from whatever source, relating to the possible use of such weapons in certain parts of the world.

The negotiations on a convention on radiological weapons, which began this year, must be pursued and, we hope, reach a successful conclusion in 1981. While this may not seem to everyone to be of major importance, the fact remains that it does fall within the competence of the Committee, and that conclusion of the convention would be to its credit.

The guarantees against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons which States possessing such weapons have been called upon to give to non-nuclear-weapon States were once again this year the subject of discussions in the Committee on Disarmament, although those discussions revealed no changes in the positions of the Powers concerned. The search for a uniform solution seems unlikely to be successful in the present circumstances. However, the assurances already given or offered, whatever their diversity and limitations, are a substantive response. It would be unfair not to recognize that.

The Committee at long last took up the study of the comprehensive disarmament programme to be submitted to the special session of the General Assembly scheduled for 1982. The Committee has before it, in this regard, recommendations of the Disarmament Commission regarding the elements of that programme. We attach great importance to its preparation, for its discussion and adoption will doubtless be one of the main tasks of the second special session devoted to disarmament. That session will also help maintain the desired momentum. The declaration which the General Assembly is to adopt, a draft of which has been prepared by the Disarmament Commission, will attest to the will of the international community in that respect.

(Mr. de la Corce, France)

Another set of questions relating to current efforts falls within the jurisdiction of the group of experts created by the General Assembly. Among those efforts, the French Government attaches particular importance to those relating to the proposals for an international satellite monitoring agency and a disarmament fund for development, both of which were presented to the General Assembly in 1978 by the President of the French Republic.

The group of experts studying the first of those proposals held two sessions this year, it is to complete its final report early next year and submit it to the Preparatory Committee for the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We particularly welcome the growing support for that proposal among Members of the international community. As disarmament and security are everyone's business, we feel that it is legitimate and necessary to make available to the United Nations sophisticated monitoring techniques for verifying the implementation of disarmament agreements and thereby perhaps helping to monitor and avert crises. The provisional report of the experts contained positive conclusions. We are convinced that their final report will provide an appropriate basis for the decisions which the General Assembly would like to reach in 1982.

As regards the proposed creation of a special disarmament fund for development, it has been submitted for study to the working group presided over by Mrs. Thorsson. Under that proposal, resources would have to be released for development before implementation of the disarmament agreements, with contributions to be made on the basis of the principal existing weapons by those Powers with the biggest arsenals. We think it only right for those Powers to acknowledge the existence of a link not only between disarmament and development but also between the level of armaments and the duty to contribute to the development effort.

(Mr. de La Gorce, France)

I should like to add to this list of current actions - which reflect the kind of momentum that the United Nations is trying to provide - a reminder that the Institute for Disarmament Research was recently created and set up in Geneva. This Institute, the proposal for which was presented to the United Nations in 1978 by the President of the French Republic, is now in a position to begin work. We are quite confident that it will discharge its specific and necessary task in a satisfactory manner and work with other bodies engaged in the study of disarmament.

The French delegation would like to speak now about two kinds of negotiation which, although not having to do with disarmament strictly speaking, are linked to it. The first is the use of certain weapons in the case of conflict, and the second is security.

The United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons concluded its work on 11 October with the adoption of a general convention and three protocols dealing respectively with weapon fragments not detectable by X-rays, land mines and booby-traps, and incendiary weapons. Notwithstanding the reservations that we have regarding certain provisions and gaps in the convention, the French Government welcomes the positive outcome of the negotiations. The rules stipulated improve in particular protection for civilian populations and ban certain reprehensible techniques in connexion with land mines and booby-traps.

As it was called upon to do in General Assembly resolution 34/80 B, the French Government decided to take part in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean from its first session held in 1980. We wished in that way to express France's interest in its work, in its threefold capacity as a littoral state of the Indian Ocean, a permanent member of the Security Council and a maritime nation.

In this regard, the French delegation hopes that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean will, in accordance with its consensus rule, propose to our Committee a realistic and constructive report reflecting the soundness of the regional approach to the problems of security and disarmament in an area whose strategic and economic interests are of concern to all States, and particularly so in view of recent events.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

The French delegation has presented a number of proposals to the Ad Hoc Committee and we hope it will take them into account in its preparations for the Conference on the Indian Ocean that will be convened at an appropriate time.

I cannot close my reference to the regional approach to disarmament without commenting on the Disarmament Conference in Europe.

Since 1978 when it was put forward, the proposal to convene a conference has enjoyed broad support among the countries concerned, namely the States signatories of the Final Act of Helsinki. This proposal has given rise to a number of consultations that have taken place among the 35 States members of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). It is to be hoped that the meeting which will soon begin in Madrid will lead to a number of significant results and help us define the mandate of the Disarmament Conference. That mandate should be to decide on a number of significant confidence-building measures at the military level, leading subsequently to further progress towards disarmament.

All those initiatives, negotiations and decisions that we have mentioned show that the renewed disarmament effort which emerged in 1978 has maintained its momentum, notwithstanding difficult circumstances, although in a limited area and at a slower pace. But there is still movement, and that movement must be maintained as we look forward to the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

What conditions must be fulfilled if there is to be success?

First of all, there must be a sufficiently favourable international situation. It is obvious that the aggravation of tension and conflicts would ruin the enterprise. Progress cannot be made towards disarmament if one disregards the international situation and the conditions that must be met for there to be confidence and security.

Then, progress in areas already examined must be pursued. The presentation of a positive balance-sheet of actions since 1978 would provide great encouragement, an element that would help build confidence at a time when the international community is about to discuss a new stage in the disarmament effort.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

Next, the maintenance of an agreed basis for disarmament principles, objectives and conditions is necessary. This basis is provided by the Final Document which, as we see it, is a kind of disarmament charter. The Final Document does not reflect a moment in an evolving process over the short or medium term; it expresses certain permanent facts pertaining to disarmament in the present stage of history. It should not be amended or renegotiated.

Finally, there must be suitable preparation for the special session; such preparation, in our opinion, would involve the following main elements: the creation of a preparatory committee established by and large in keeping with the precedent set in 1976; preparation by the Committee on Disarmament of a comprehensive disarmament programme, as set forth in the Final Document of the 1978 session; and, finally, preparation of concrete proposals relating to specific measures. A number of expert groups are at present working on that task.

In the course of the present session the French delegation will set forth its views on the various agenda items during debates on the draft resolutions. It should like, however, to mention the common stand of the States members of the European Community on the draft submitted by the delegation of the Soviet Union, entitled "Urgent measures for reducing the dangers of war", on which I should like to make the following comments.

In its section I, the Soviet draft wishes to establish a link between the danger of war and the existence of alliances, considered at least implicitly as an element of danger. That position gives rise to basic objections which were set forth on 28 October by the representative of the Netherlands.

From the standpoint of law and principles, the demands presented to Member States are directed against the right of self-defence or collective defence under the Charter, in other words the freedom of every State to choose in complete sovereignty its own security methods and measures. Such freedom would include the decision to join an alliance, to set one up and to entrust responsibility in matters of security to a regional group, all of which are within the exclusive competence of the States concerned and their views regarding the

BG/15

A/C.1/35/PV.21
64-65

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

status of their security. The Soviet text is directed against alliances, is intended for States which are not parties to alliances and calls upon them to renounce their right to meet their own security requirements in association with others.

(Mr. de La Gorce, France)

With regard to section II of the text, operative paragraph 2 calls upon States members of the Security Council and countries which have military agreements with them

"not to increase their armed forces and conventional weapons with effect from 1 January 1981".

That proposal, which is not coupled with any provision making it possible to ensure that the resulting constraints would be assumed equally by the parties concerned and does not envisage any verification measure, is too clearly geared to unilateral concerns to be acceptable.

Sections III and IV, dealing with negative security guarantees, nuclear tests and a moratorium on such tests, take up again previous proposals on which the French delegation has already had occasion to make its position known.

The draft resolution submitted by the Soviet delegation is therefore not acceptable to the French delegation.

These remarks on the document submitted by the Soviet delegation lead us to repeat that it will not be possible to make progress towards disarmament if there is not respect for security conditions - respect for balance, international verification and the taking into account of regional situations.

Notwithstanding criticism of the role of deterrence, note must nevertheless be taken of the fact that peace and security have been maintained in that part of the world where France is located. Here the facts are the sole criterion of success.

Nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence have for a long time constituted an essential factor for balance and, hence, for security in that region. A reduction of nuclear weapons in the area can be brought about only through a specific process dealing first with the nuclear arsenals of the two main Powers. Indeed, there is no European nuclear theatre which can be separated or isolated from global balance.

(Mr. de La Gorce, France)

In making these observations, the French delegation has wished to draw attention to the specific nature of the disarmament effort, which is the loftiest, most ambitious and most complex of all the undertakings of the international community. That endeavour can make progress only if States bear in mind a multiplicity of factors and inevitable constraints. It does not lend itself to Utopian thinking, doctrinaire views or political exploitation. It is in that spirit that the French Government intends to continue to co-operate fully in the disarmament undertaking.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.