



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 25TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

CONTENTS

DISARMAMENT ITEMS

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

- General debate

Statements were made by:

Mr. Romulo (Philippines)
Mr. Sola Vila (Cuba)
Mr. Waliur Rahmar. (Bangladesh)
Mr. Mittal (India)

- Programme of work

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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

The CHAIRMAN. We are indeed privileged to have as our first speaker this morning a very distinguished member of the world community, in fact one of the founding fathers of the United Nations, and it gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Carlos Romulo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines. In fact, in spite of his other very heavy schedule and his other preoccupations, the Foreign Minister has already addressed the First Committee seven times in the last few years, and that demonstrates his personal commitment to the cause of disarmament, with which this Committee is dealing.

I have great pleasure in inviting His Excellency, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, to address the First Committee this morning, for the eighth time.

Mr. ROMULO (Philippines). May I avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate the First Committee on having you, Sir, as its Chairman. This is one of the most important committees in the General Assembly. The most significant items are always referred to this Committee. The decisions of this Committee are crucial, and so it is my pleasure that under your chairmanship I should address this Committee for the eighth time. In fact, I have been interested in this subject since the founding of the United Nations in 1945 and have always taken advantage of the First Committee to express my views on disarmament. So I shall proceed now to deliver the statement that I have prepared on this all-important question that faces the United Nations.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The time for our annual review has arrived again. We try, I believe sincerely, each year to find the ways to reduce the threat of extinction of the human race, and indeed of all life on this planet. The threat, we are without exception convinced, is real, very real. The danger has continued from the first days of the nuclear age and, I am sorry to say, has grown immeasurably. I fear that at times a sense of inevitability of disaster numbs our capacity to respond. Yet is there any promising avenue we have not indicated and explored? I can think of none. And so we repeat ourselves, apparently without effect.

A recent newspaper article (The New York Times of 29 October) gives us new and more dire information about the sensitivity of the nuclear trip-wire. In it we are informed that in an 18-month period the United States alone perceived 3,854 nuclear missile alarms. Of these, 147 were serious enough to require an evaluation as to whether they constituted a nuclear attack, and four of them caused an alert of long-range bomber crews and nuclear-missile launchers.

Previously available information informed us that among the more serious alerts were those caused by mechanical and human failure. In the latter instance, a taped programme simulating a missile attack was fed into the alarm system. This is very dangerous.

We have no comparable data from similar sources. We must assume, however, that it would not differ in kind. In times of relative international accord, such lapses may be more easily discounted. When tensions between States run high, as at present, such alarms are more apt to be given increased credence.

We must add to this picture a shift on the part of at least one major nuclear Power toward a counter-force, or fight-and-win missile targeting strategy. Under this policy, it is conceived that a graduated nuclear exchange is possible and desired foreign policy ends can be achieved by measured nuclear attack, or that in times of high crisis a nation's capacity to respond can be nullified by a first strike against its missile bases.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

This is, of course, a revivification of a policy examined in detail long ago and abandoned as being provocative, non-productive, destabilizing and highly dangerous. Because of the emplacement of multiple warheads of enhanced accuracy on missiles, highly destabilizing in itself, this old policy has once again become attractive to nuclear war planners, who glimpse the evanescent possibility of being ever able to knock out the opposition's forces by a pre-emptive first strike. The result, of course, is to place an enormous premium on striking first without warning at times of highest tension, a jeopardy to which we are all, without exception, held hostage.

It has never been successfully argued that the capability to deliver 200 or so nuclear warheads on the population centres of the opposition is not an effective deterrent. A stable nuclear balance of numbers of weapons in that range would provide the most security that we could hope for in a nuclear-armed world. What we have instead is a situation with a hundred-fold greater number of weapons and a thousand-fold lesser degree of security. Who does not believe that the nuclear house of cards, if built high enough, will not collapse of its own weight and its inherent insanity?

Several years ago, I pointed out in this Committee that the three-way political stand-off between the major Powers would in time be reinforced by a three-way nuclear stand-off among the same Powers. I made two observations at that time. The first was that there can be no parity in a three-way race. Each Power of the three will require twice as many weapons to offset the other two - an unattainable goal and yet one which refuels the arms race drastically and continuously. Indeed, in the case of at least one of the super-Powers, we see that this dual capability is already considered necessary.

The second observation which I made many years ago was that nothing would serve the security interests of the United States and the USSR so much as to reduce drastically their nuclear arms to the level of those now possessed by the People's Republic of China in order to facilitate multilateral nuclear

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

disarmament negotiations and to forestall a long and dangerous period of continued nuclear escalation by all three. Those suggestions were radical at the time. They will still be considered radical, or at least politically unpalatable. This very fact illustrates the apparent no-exit insanity to which our lives are beholden. Nevertheless, it is important occasionally to look down the road ahead, in the direction our present course is taking us.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The course of the arms race leads constantly to new and astonishing leaps in invention and expense. Before each leap is a threshold at which further escalation could be forestalled. One such threshold was the invention and deployment of hydrogen bombs, replacing simple fission bombs. One was the invention and emplacement of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM). Another threshold was the placing of multiple warheads on each missile, and a further step consisted of providing them with individual guidance systems. The new major threshold, beyond which expense soars but once again, concerns the science-fiction race for military supremacy in space. Lord Bertrand Russell once declared, "Mankind never refrains from any folly of which it is capable". As each new folly is approached, one hopes once again to prove Lord Russell wrong. At each new threshold, a major disaster looms for the world in loss of security and the draining of resources which could have been avoided. Each threshold crossed has made success infinitely less likely, until now we are faced with greatly compounded difficulties in halting or reversing the arms race.

Preparing for the great space war which will now, with increasing likelihood, accompany the nuclear destruction of the world will drain human and material resources in a way which threatens to dwarf all investments in war up to the present day. This threshold has not yet been passed, despite the intense research now going on in the field of laser and particle beam weapons, space stations and hunter-killer satellites. There is still time to call a halt before deployment and before large-scale production. Soon this will no longer be the case. Yet disarmament negotiations have not even achieved a nuclear-weapon-test ban, after 20 years. Think of that. Our efforts are 20 years behind the current negotiating necessity; as at each previous threshold, negotiators are struggling with the results of the threshold before.

I turn now to more immediate, although equally discouraging, developments. I refer first of all to the results of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Review Conference. If the Conference had a positive result, it was in the clearing of the air. There was a candour not so present at the previous Conference. The results, however, were basically no different at all. Differences in the first Review Conference were papered over; in the second, they were not. Words like "failure" and "success" have no meaning in this context. The failures reside not in the

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Conference, but in the unwillingness or inability of the super-Powers to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty to take positive steps in arresting vertical proliferation and in the reduction of nuclear arms. In retrospect, it might have been better not to allow the nuclear Powers the degree of comfort provided them by the first Conference.

As the number of nuclear-weapon States continues to increase, present members of what must be history's most dubious club should be stirred to action. Their interests are seriously threatened and their security rapidly declining because of the spread of weapons. Their failure to take the steps which can make the non-nuclear option attractive has led them into the present situation, which is sharply worsening and will continue to worsen. Surely, even the most narrowly defined self-interest of the major Powers would require determining a different course.

Most grievous and most hazardous is the scene we are now witnessing, playing itself out in the Middle East between countries which have nothing to gain by their conflict. Fragmentation of solidarity in the Middle East among countries bound by common concerns, common interests and common responsibilities is exceedingly tragic. We must note that it is made possible by the dissemination of conventional weapons from the major weapons-supplying States. They are therefore co-perpetrators of the actions which such weapons fuel. We cannot but see here another mishandling of the mutual responsibilities which the great and powerful must bear.

We are pleased to express in this regard our appreciation of the newest initiative on the part of Denmark designed to help the world contain and control of sophisticated weaponry and the destructiveness it carries, now reaching all parts of the world. While this initiative is in the form of a study, it is at least a beginning and, one may hope, will lead further in the direction of limitation and control than have previous ill-fated efforts.

With the priority of the proposals presently before the appropriate disarmament bodies within the United Nations structure and outside it we can have no quarrel. The level of accomplishment is disheartening, however, and, in the face of the dangers before us, truly astonishing. I mentioned the lack of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Once again, official bodies have confirmed that

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

there is no technical bar to verification of such a ban. Those essential facts are now 15 years old. We support the earliest possible achievement of a draft treaty by the tripartite negotiators. At the same time, however, we cannot therefore discharge the Committee on Disarmament of its responsibilities in the field to proceed towards multilateral negotiations.

Let me add that we should be disappointed and dismayed if, after all these years, the treaty should emerge attached to a limited duration. It is literally unthinkable under the circumstances that prevail for such a limited treaty to carry any conviction or to represent any meaningful forward step. An unlimited moratorium would probably be more significant. Indeed, we are in accord with other States which have pointed to the desirability of a moratorium, to be initiated immediately, pending the completion and coming into force of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

We have for years heard of the possibilities of a treaty on chemical weapons, in particular on the "most lethal", or nerve gas, weapons. This agreement remains uncompleted. Major Powers seem unwilling to deprive themselves of any form of redundancy in killing power, however repugnant. One must call attention here to the revived interest in "binary" chemical weapons, in which two constituent chemicals remain harmless and separated until combined in the act of delivery. This potential development had been held in abeyance until the present. It would be most disappointing if at this late date production and deployment of binary nerve gas weapons should be allowed to militate against completion of a treaty. We recognize that verification of compliance with a treaty is a problem. Indeed, it will remain a problem with any significant disarmament step.

We are convinced that adequate inspection for implementation of arms control and disarmament steps can be carried out without any reasonable complaint of interference with national sovereignty. Indeed, the inconvenience must be measured against the much greater gains in security for the State concerned and for all States. Such verification measures are at the heart of any effort to achieve arms limitation and disarmament, and this reality must be faced and accepted if, in fact, the arms burden is to be put aside, or even reduced.

From my remarks on the nuclear arms race it will be apparent that I believe that the earliest possible implementation of SALT II is critical - not only because of the new momentum that the arms race will continue to develop in the interim, but also because as a "time dated" agreement, its usefulness will rapidly decline.

I will refrain from attempting to comment on every possible disarmament measure, and instead will return now to a topic to which I have given voice previously. It has been noted by a number of speakers that the environment, or atmosphere, in which arms talks are taking place can prejudice or enhance the chances of success, and of their being carried out. I should like to add at the outset that the more tense the atmosphere, and the higher the levels of suspicion, fear and anxiety, the more vital agreements become and, at the same time, the more difficult of achievement.

I have frequently proposed, and I propose here again today, that the States primarily concerned review once again the possibility of taking steps at their own initiative which improve and enhance the atmosphere and make more likely the prospects of success. Security cannot be measured alone, if at all, in terms of additional weapons acquired. Mankind is wired to a nuclear time-bomb. Security resides also, and even dominantly, in improving conditions for agreement.

Steps which easily commend themselves, because of their small impact even on "perceived security", involving no real diminution in security, certainly include, and I shall name them: an immediate

moratorium on nuclear testing pending completion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty; a halt to the production of fissionable materials for weapon purposes; a moratorium on the production or deployment of chemical weapons, and the destruction of existing stocks, pending a verified agreement; a moratorium on the testing, production or deployment of new strategic-weapon systems; announced reductions in contentious areas, such as Central Europe, of stated numbers of troops, weapons, or both.

Truth becomes what we perceive it to be. Thus it is very important to give evidence of a desirable truth so that attitudes can change, perceived threats be modified, and common ends sought. We know well how the arms race escalates. We know almost nothing and do not experiment in how to de-escalate the arms race. Yet, it stands to reason that progress lies in a process which is opposite in kind to that which has produced the present massive threat to a human future. I am not, of course, suggesting the pursuit of steps which radically or sharply reduce the security of any State; nor am I suggesting that such steps be pursued ad infinitum without reciprocation. What I am suggesting is the initiation of desirable counter-trends and counter-indications.

Achievement of international security, however, goes considerably beyond our preoccupation with measures to limit and reduce arms. In fact, many feel, as I do, that the ability to disarm depends, in the last analysis, on the implementation of a system for world security under which States can feel able safely to reduce and eliminate arms. For the past two years, the Group of Experts on the Interrelationship between Disarmament and International Security, over which I have the honor to preside, has been meeting. It is attempting - perhaps not as successfully or as rapidly as we might wish - to explore new dimensions of this ancient dilemma. My own experience and observations suggest that recourse to arms is inevitable except within legally ordered societies. It takes little insight to observe that the global community has not yet decided to implement its obligations under the United Nations Charter to provide for the common defense, the common security, for peace-keeping and peace-making, effective enough to render national arms and armies obsolete.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Nevertheless, the light has begun to dawn. That there is a parallelism between disarmament and international security, and between emplacement of a system for international security and ability to achieve disarmament is becoming increasingly apparent to all. The real question is whether the gulf between realization and implementation is not too great to bridge in time to secure the world against nuclear incineration. There is only one thing which argues in favour of this course: all of past human history. There is only one thing that argues against it: self-interest of nations so narrow as to preclude the awareness necessary for their own survival.

My years of life may be numbered: soon I will be 82 years old. But they may not be any more numbered than those of the members of this Committee and, indeed, of the entire human family. That fact does not elate me at all. My entire life has been devoted to the pursuit of peace and of equity through this, our world Organization. It is the only lifeboat available to humanity. There is no survival in any "-ism". There is no survival in any unilateral approach to human affairs. Survival depends on concerted and generous approaches to our common problems, which can only be met in common solutions. It is for this that I argue, and will continue to argue. Our joint responsibility is immense. I hope my fellow members of this Committee realize that. We must discharge it with the wisdom required by the hour in which we live.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines for the kind words that he addressed to me, which I sincerely reciprocate by wishing that distinguished Founding Father of the United Nations good health and many more years and long life so that he can continue to contribute to the cause of peace and security in the world.

Mr. SOLA VILA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I should like to congratulate you most sincerely on your election to preside over our First Committee. We are confident that under your leadership the work of our Committee will be conducted most correctly and speedily and that positive results will be achieved. You may rest assured of the full support of the Cuban delegation.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

At the recent special meeting of Foreign Ministers and heads of delegations of non-aligned countries at the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, held early in October, unanimous concern was expressed at the continued deterioration of the international situation and the emergence of new sources of tension in the world. It was with alarm and great regret that the Ministers and heads of delegations of the non-aligned countries noted that threats to our survival had never before been as serious as they are today.

The year 1980 has been characterized by an obvious deterioration in the international situation, due primarily to a decision by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, influenced by the United States Government, to emplace new medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe, an obvious attempt to upset the present military and strategic balance in the area, and due also to the arms escalation by the United States in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Gulf and the Middle East. The deterioration has been due also to the postponement of the ratification of the SALT II agreements, the continued policy of the Western Powers of interfering in the internal affairs of States and the emergence of new sources of tension and, more recently, to new views which have emerged in the United States regarding the possibility of limited nuclear war, all of which considerably increases the risk of a nuclear catastrophe.

This dangerous situation must be dealt with by making new efforts to further disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, with the aim of stopping and reversing the arms race in its most disturbing aspects, so that more resources can be released for economic and social development.

Among the important items on our agenda there are a number that are of particular interest to my delegation and to the non-aligned countries in general. Of special interest is the question of the economic and social consequences of the arms race and its profoundly detrimental effects on peace and security in the world. Disarmament not only would serve to prevent needless killing but also would provide millions of human beings with acceptable living standards.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

With regard to the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade my country has played an active part, particularly at this year's meetings of the Disarmament Commission, whose report we have before us. We are confident that the few differences of opinion or approach which remain with regard to certain passages of the text of the Declaration can be eliminated through contacts exhibiting a spirit of mutual accommodation and an awareness of the urgent need to bring about during the new decade decisive achievements in disarmament; but there must also be a spirit of realism making it possible to adopt this important document with broad universal support.

The questions connected with the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace will also receive maximum priority from my delegation at this session. Our view is that these zones, as set forth in the Programme of Action of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, should be established

under appropriate conditions, to be clearly defined and determined freely by the States concerned in the zone, taking into account the characteristics of the zone and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and in conformity with international law' (resolution S-10/2, para. 64).

As far as Latin America is concerned, to those obstacles that my delegation has identified in past years there should be added further unfavourable events which have occurred in recent months. The most important of these is the escalation of militarism and aggressiveness in the Caribbean region by the only nuclear Power in our hemisphere. This dangerous situation - which is in effect a return by the United States to the policy of the cold war and an attempt to resuscitate gunboat diplomacy - is also a kind of boon to those responsible for genocide in Latin America, who have been condemned by the international community, and of course it makes it impossible to establish such zones on our continent in the near future.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

There have also been more threats to the initiatives, which have been supported by the overwhelming majority of the countries of the Middle East and Africa, to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in those regions. The acquisition by Israel and South Africa of nuclear capacity has entailed obvious risks for the countries of the region, particularly in the past year. This development has been made possible not only because of the close co-operation between Israel and South Africa but also, and mainly, because nuclear technology has been provided over a period of years to those repressive and aggressive régimes of zionism and apartheid by the very Western Powers that pose as champions of non-proliferation.

Never before in history has tension in the Indian Ocean and its natural extensions been as great as it is now. Paradoxically, this is at a time when the island countries, coastal countries and hinterland countries of that region are stepping up their efforts for the effective implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The further fortification of Diego Garcia, as well as the threat to establish more bases and military facilities, together with the growing presence of warships in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf, confirms this general imperialist inclination to increase tension in the area to a very dangerous level. This dangerous trend must be curbed and reversed as soon as possible, so that it may be possible to establish the conditions necessary for the convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean scheduled for next year in Sri Lanka.

The consideration this year of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the first special session devoted to disarmament will have special significance. A start must be made now on preparations for the second special session on disarmament, which will be reviewing what has been achieved since the first special session in 1978 and considering what still has to be done. The thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly will have to take a decision on the establishment of a preparatory committee for the 1982 Conference. The position of my delegation on this matter is that the second special session must be devoted primarily to a review of how the Final Document adopted in 1978 is being implemented.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

It should, moreover, consider the new developments which have arisen in the area of disarmament and international peace and security between the adoption of the Final Act and the second special session itself. The 1982 session, to which my delegation attaches great importance in view of the present international situation, must be preceded by careful preparations and to this end the tasks of the Preparatory Committee are especially responsible ones. My delegation will be prepared to make every effort, along with the non-aligned countries and the rest of the international community, in the preparations needed to guarantee the successful development of the second special session devoted to disarmament.

As regards the question of security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States, the position of my delegation, which has already been set forth on previous occasions, remains unalterable. We believe that nuclear-weapon States should pledge generally to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons against States not possessing such weapons. As an intermediate step towards the general and complete prohibition of nuclear weapons, and until that is achieved, the most timely and desirable measure which could be taken would be the conclusion of a treaty by which the nuclear Powers would pledge not to use such weapons against non-nuclear States. As is known, negotiations are under way and declarations exist on this subject on the part of the five nuclear Powers which, while there are differences among them, support the idea of so-called negative guarantees.

Without abandoning the idea of negotiations towards the conclusion of such a treaty, my delegation considers that it would be acceptable and useful at present for the Security Council to adopt a resolution acknowledging and reflecting the declaration of the five nuclear Powers regarding the security guarantees they will make to non-nuclear States. It is our opinion that those declarations should contain pledges which are clear, explicit and similar in content to one another. A formulation reflecting the commitment not to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances against a State not possessing nuclear weapons and which contains no such weapons on its territory or under its jurisdiction or control would be, unquestionably, a formulation which could command broad support.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

Cuba gives the highest priority to nuclear disarmament for obvious reasons. In this area we attach special importance to the urgent ratification by the United States Government of the SALT II treaty - which should not be delayed beyond the present Assembly session - and to the beginning of the SALT III talks. We consider as an encouraging fact in this regard the beginning of talks on the limitation of the emplacement of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

Within this context of a total prohibition of nuclear weapons, my delegation agrees with the view that one of the most significant measures that could be taken is a complete ban on nuclear tests. More than 17 years have passed since the Moscow Treaty entered into effect, and yet two nuclear Powers have not become parties to the Treaty. Nor has the negotiating process been completed on the conclusion of a general treaty banning tests in all environments. Recently another nuclear explosion in the atmosphere by China was announced; its radioactive fall-out is threatening several countries, especially in the northern hemisphere, causing world-wide concern. By this test, China has revealed its true position on the subject of disarmament.

Notwithstanding the General Assembly's repeated appeals to the multilateral negotiating body, the latter has not been able to deal adequately with the subject thus far. We cannot fail to insist on the need to arrive as soon as possible at the consensus required for establishing in the Committee on Disarmament a working group to deal with a general and complete ban on nuclear weapons tests.

We note with satisfaction, however, the progress made in the trilateral talks conducted by the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom pursuant to the provisions of the final document presented by those parties to the Committee on Disarmament last July which, while somewhat delayed, shows that understanding is emerging on the thorny and complicated question of verification.

In discussing the work done by the Committee on Disarmament during the current year of 1980, my delegation wishes to say that, even though concrete results have not been achieved on the various items under discussion, progress has been made in considering them. Worthy of note is the significant progress on several items on which for the first time working groups have been created, namely radiological weapons, chemical weapons, agreements on guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States, and a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

My delegation is in favour of maintaining a constructive spirit of negotiation in that body. The establishment of working groups and the negotiations being pursued in them have demonstrated the correct and useful approach of entering into substantive negotiations and not spending all one's time on debates which merely divert the Committee from its objective. The Committee on Disarmament, as the multilateral negotiating body, should devote itself to its mandate, which is to negotiate multilateral, effective and concrete measures which will lead to general and complete disarmament with the necessary international guarantees.

As everyone is aware, substantive work in the Committee on Disarmament was interrupted for some time because of discussions on the participation of non-member States in the deliberations of that body. My delegation strongly rejects attempts to prevent interested non-member States from participating in the work of that Committee. This runs counter to the spirit of paragraph 120 of the Final Document of the first special Assembly session devoted to disarmament, which was adopted by consensus and which states in part that the Committee on Disarmament will

"(g) Make arrangements for interested States, not members of the Committee, to submit to the Committee written proposals or working documents on measures of disarmament that are the subject of negotiation in the Committee and to participate in the discussion of the subject-matter of such proposals or working documents;" (resolution S-10/2, para.120 (g))
and

"(h) Invite States not members of the Committee, upon their request, to express views in the Committee when the particular concerns of those States are under discussion". (ibid., para. 120 (h))

These sub-paragraphs clearly state the right of any State not a member of the Committee on Disarmament to participate in its work.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

In 1979, there were no difficulties in that respect in the Committee on Disarmament. But this year, in the only multilateral negotiating body, there was a disgraceful attempt by two States members of the Committee to prevent a favourable solution to this problem. Everyone knows what happened in that connexion in the Committee on Disarmament, where once again the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam took a position as an honest and worthy country and did not insist on its application in the Committee on Disarmament so as to enable the Committee to make progress and not be diverted from its fundamental purpose.

We support the setting up of a working group on chemical weapons in the Committee, and it should play a fundamental role in the negotiations and the final achievement of a convention on the subject. Negotiations on chemical weapons have been taking place now for many years, but only since 1979 has tangible progress been made. The fact that progress was achieved through bilateral negotiations does not in our opinion, lessen the role of the Committee on Disarmament in the matter, but rather makes it easier by promoting understanding and making work on the subject more flexible.

During deliberations in the working group on chemical weapons, useful work was done towards the final goal: a multilateral convention on the complete effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. The working group confirmed general recognition of the fact that there is an urgent need to negotiate and prepare that convention.

Turning now to the question of weapons of mass destruction, we consider that the establishment, in the Committee on Disarmament of a working group on radiological weapons is a positive step. Intensive negotiations on the subject must be conducted as a matter of priority.

Equally desirable would be the creation of a group of experts, within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament, on the general question of studying a ban on new weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

It is also encouraging that, by way of contrast to the dangerous deterioration in the international situation, progress has been made in the recent United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Chemical Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

The Convention adopted on prohibitions or restrictions on use of certain chemical weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects and its protocols on certain conventional weapons, such as non-detectable projectiles, land mines and booby-traps and other devices, and incendiary weapons is a contribution to the control of the use of those weapons and therefore to the cause of disarmament.

Notwithstanding the results achieved, it is true that the primary objective of general and complete disarmament is nowhere near attainment. The interests conspiring against real progress towards disarmament and the obstacles the belligerent policy of the imperialists has always raised against this cherished aspiration of mankind are known to all. It is therefore our view that following the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, a world-wide disarmament conference should be convened as the sole forum in which crucial binding decisions can be adopted. We shall continue to work along those lines confident as we are that this initiative, if carried out, would provide an appropriate forum in which the plenipotentiaries of all countries could work together towards progress in disarmament, which has been so anxiously awaited by the international community for many years.

On the initiative of the Soviet Union, the item "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war", which deserves the careful attention of this Committee, has been placed on the agenda of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

A universal commitment preventing the future expansion of existing political or military groups or the emergence of others would promote the confidence of States and represent a first important step towards the final objective, which is the subsequent dissolution of those groups.

Of similar benefit, both to the international climate in the short term and to the development of and subsequent achievement of détente over the medium and long term, would be the following measures: a halt to the build-up of armed forces and conventional weapons by all States, especially the permanent members of the Security Council and other States linked to them by military agreements; a commitment by nuclear-weapons States not to use those weapons against States that do not have those weapons on their territory; and a one-year moratorium on nuclear explosions by nuclear-weapon States. That interval would provide time for the conclusion of an international treaty on a general and complete ban on nuclear-weapon tests.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

Now, 35 years after the creation of the United Nations, we should redouble our efforts to create a world of peace and security. To achieve that, we will spare no effort to meet mankind's ardent wish for general and complete disarmament, primarily in the area of nuclear weapons. Let us devote the money which those weapons cost, the human and material resources being used for war, to the creation of a more just world, a world in which there will be schools, work, health and development for all.

Mr. WALIUR RAHMAN (Bangladesh): Mr. Chairman, I have had the good fortune of knowing you personally for a number of years and acquainting myself with your deep and abiding interest in the cause of disarmament. This Committee is fortunate in having you as its Chairman to guide its deliberations and work this year.

While we have witnessed some progress in limited areas, resulting from long and painstaking negotiations, the positive steps taken have been countered more often than not by the ever-accelerating pace of the arms race, particularly in the nuclear field. The conflicting interests of the super-Powers as well as other militarily-significant States, together with the relentless efforts of the military industrial complex to produce even more weapons of greater destructiveness, have contributed to the current unprecedented waste of human and natural resources and have brought all of human civilization closer to annihilation by a super-Power confrontation.

(Mr. Waliur Rahman, Bangladesh)

The spirit of détente that pervaded the better part of the 1970s has given way to an air of distrust and disbelief and erosion of trust and confidence. This breakdown of the process of confidence-building has been a great setback for the efforts to reach even a minimum goal of disarmament and international security, which would at least diminish, if not eliminate, the grave risk of complete destruction which mankind is facing now.

The corner-stone of Bangladesh's foreign policy on disarmament is based on its constitutional commitment according to which we are wedded to the concept of general and complete disarmament. It is this dedication to the cause of disarmament that undergirds not only the principles we espouse in this field but the concrete and tangible action that we are prepared to take in the appropriate context. It was our commitment to the concept of general and complete disarmament that prompted President Ziaur Rahman of Bangladesh at the eleventh special session of the United Nations General Assembly, on international economic co-operation and development, to state:

"The current global military expenditure is nearly \$500 billion a year and is increasing at the rate of \$40 billion annually. By contrast, official development assistance is on the decline and is today less than 5 per cent of the amount spent on armaments. The economic picture for the developing countries as a whole fills us with foreboding and gloom. The combined foreign debt of the developing countries is now in excess of \$300 billion. Forty billion dollars a year is spent on servicing the foreign debt, which accounts for more than 20 per cent of the total exports of the developing countries. Partly owing to this and partly owing to the trade policies of the developed countries and the increase in the price of their products, the developing countries suffered a balance-of-payments deficit of \$45 billion in 1979. In 1980, this figure is likely to increase to \$60 billion." (A/S-11/PV.3, p. 11)

The existing arrangements on the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons beyond countries already having them are considered by my delegation to be only an interim measure. The ultimate goal should be the destruction of all nuclear weapons. The arms race, particularly in its nuclear aspects, runs counter to the efforts to achieve further relaxation of international tension. The present arms race goes against the establishment of

(Mr. Waliur Rahman, Bangladesh)

international relations based on peace, coexistence and trust between all States. It militates against the spirit of the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. For that reason the elimination of nuclear weapons as part of a comprehensive programme of disarmament is essential if a nuclear holocaust is to be avoided.

While the problems of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons continue to be our predominant concerns, Bangladesh's particular interests will lie in the measures directed towards the protection of the interests of the non-nuclear countries, including security guarantees and positive action towards the creation of nuclear-free zones, zones of peace, freedom and neutrality, in South and South-East Asia, the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, as well as in other parts of the world. Bangladesh believes that the attainment of those goals will be made easier once the basis of co-operation has been established through regional forums and arrangements.

Bangladesh attaches the utmost importance to the recommendations that emerged from the meeting of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean held in July 1979. We are particularly gratified to note that, pursuant to the recommendation of that Committee, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean has been expanded with the inclusion of all the permanent members of the Security Council, militarily significant States and other major maritime users, which in our view has lent the Committee's activities the weight and momentum necessary for its work to be successful. It is in this spirit that my delegation has favoured the idea of holding a conference on the Indian Ocean in Sri Lanka to achieve the desired goal set forth in General Assembly resolution 2382 (XXVI) through co-operation and negotiations.

We believe that the Final Document of the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, convened at the initiative of the non-aligned countries, constitutes a good basis for the realization of a process to deliver mankind from the scourge of war and to remove the growing threat to man's survival. That document accords

(Mr. Waliur Rahman, Bangladesh)

the highest priority to nuclear disarmament and also calls for measures to reduce armed forces and conventional armaments. Although the adoption of the Final Document was a positive step forward it falls far short of immediate measures that could be taken in nuclear and conventional disarmament and in strengthening the non-proliferation régime.

This debate is taking place at a moment that is ushering in the Second Disarmament Decade, at the end of the First Disarmament Decade. We attach great importance to this new Disarmament Decade largely because the first one was in fact characterized by more armament than disarmament, which unfortunately was almost totally absent. One of the primary objectives of the Decade -- reduction of the huge expenditures on armaments and use of the resources thus freed for purposes of development, particularly of the developing countries -- is far from being attained. We are encouraged by the growing awareness that world peace and security cannot be maintained or guaranteed in the existing conditions of economic disparities.

As a member of the Group of 77, and in particular as a member of the Group of Least Developed Countries, Bangladesh attaches the utmost importance to implementation of measures of disarmament that would result in the saving of important financial resources and human potential in both the developed and the developing countries and their reallocation for development needs. That is why Bangladesh attaches particular importance to the proposals put forward by Romania and Sweden regarding the freezing and reduction of military budgets. In the same spirit my delegation has noted with satisfaction that the Second Disarmament Decade was proclaimed almost simultaneously with the declaration of the 1980s as the Third United Nations Development Decade as well as the launching of the global round of negotiations.

(Mr. Waliur Rahman, Bangladesh)

The tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, was aimed at halting the arms race and ushering in the process of disarmament. The Programme of Action adopted on that occasion provided, on a priority basis, disarmament measures whose early implementation is the essential sine qua non for getting out of the present impasse. The cessation of underground tests, the conclusion of SALT II and the commencement of negotiations on SALT III were mentioned as measures immediately needed to arrest the juggernaut of the nuclear arms race. The other measures referred to, particularly in paragraph 50 of the Final Document, are of paramount importance in that respect. It is indeed a matter of great concern that practically nothing has been done to implement the Programme of Action in the course of the last two years.

We acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty last year, in good time for us to be able to attend the Review Conference in August this year. It is a sad commentary that the Review Conference could not agree on the adoption by consensus of a final document giving an appraisal of the implementation of the Treaty and incorporating steps to be taken to strengthen the Treaty and reduce the risk of the horizontal and further vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Review Conference was doomed to failure from the beginning because of the diametrically opposed views of the nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States.

Whereas the non-aligned and developing countries, acting in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, were unanimous in their demand for arresting the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons and for wider international co-operation without discrimination in the use of nuclear technology and energy for peaceful purposes as an essential prerequisite for giving a universal character to the Treaty, the nuclear countries were unfortunately not ready to accept that position. My delegation would call upon all parties concerned, particularly the nuclear States, to consider seriously the need to honour their Treaty obligations in letter and spirit, without which the future of the Non-Proliferation Treaty could be placed in serious jeopardy.

(Mr. Waliur Rahman, Bangladesh)

Against the background of that unsatisfactory development in the field of disarmament, my delegation expresses its gratification at the positive results achieved by 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. The adoption of the general convention and the three protocols on land-mines, some incendiary weapons and non-detectable fragments represents a concrete step forward in international humanitarian law based on the Geneva Conventions. In the view of my delegation those agreements on the protection of civilian populations in time of war constitute a major step towards restricting or prohibiting certain conventional weapons. Although agreement was not reached on all the issues, it is the expectation of my delegation that the results so far achieved can provide us with the momentum necessary for making more accelerated progress in the framework of the Committee on Disarmament.

The hopes placed in the Committee on Disarmament have not been misplaced. In our view the Committee has made good progress in the improvement of its organization and method of work. We have favoured the proposal of setting up four ad hoc groups for the holding of substantive talks on various disarmament issues. We believe that that methodology, if followed properly, will enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Committee as the main negotiating body in the field of disarmament. As regards the participation of non-members in the work of the Disarmament Committee, we believe that no State Member of the United Nations can be denied the right to participate in and contribute to the work of the Committee in various fields of negotiation.

In that connexion, I wish to state that Bangladesh has consistently favoured the idea of concluding a comprehensive test-ban treaty as a means of halting the nuclear arms race and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The tripartite negotiations, which have been going on for quite some time without any definitive results, should be reinvigorated and the results submitted to the Committee on Disarmament so that negotiations in a multilateral setting may not be subjected to any further delays.

(Mr. Waliur Rahman, Bangladesh)

We are satisfied with the progress made in the work of the second substantive session of the revived Disarmament Commission, whose most important recommendation is the Declaration of the 1980s as the second Disarmament Decade. The conclusion reached in the Final Document of the special session on disarmament will help us to provide the guidelines necessary to ensure the success of that Decade. In regard to the implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the second Disarmament Decade, the measures suggested by Ambassador Adeniji of Nigeria deserve our commendation.

In our statement last year we expressed our deep concern at the reported detonation of an atomic device by the racist régime of South Africa. In the course of our debate we endorsed Nigeria's proposal that the Secretary-General should conduct a thorough investigation into that matter. My delegation is gratified at the comprehensive report submitted by the Secretary-General on South Africa's plan and capability in the nuclear field. I should like to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Centre for Disarmament for the dispatch with which the report was prepared. The content of the report amply demonstrates South Africa's nuclear capability and it is incumbent on the world community to face up to the challenge posed by South Africa in the nuclear field.

My delegation has noted with satisfaction the disarmament fellowship programme and its gradual development into a concrete programme of action organized under the active initiative of the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Centre for Disarmament. While commending that initiative in instituting disarmament fellowships, my delegation would urge the Secretary-General to expand the scope of the fellowship programme so that more young men and women can join this useful course and become acquainted with various disarmament issues.

Those are some of the thoughts my delegation would like to share with the members of this Committee. My delegation reserves the right to speak again during this debate and to reflect on other issues of importance in the field of disarmament.

Mr. MITTAL (India): During the past two weeks we have had a very useful and constructive debate in this Committee on various items on our agenda. We have all listened with interest to the differing views and perceptions of the delegations of the countries represented here. Even though fundamental perceptions may remain unaltered every delegation, including my own, has no doubt obtained at first hand a better appreciation of the others' positions.

Several representatives have drawn attention to the worsening climate of international relations and increasing suspicions among States of each other's intentions. However, to us this situation points to the need for even greater efforts in making a success of our endeavours in disarmament negotiations.

Some of the speakers have argued that lack of progress in arms control and disarmament can be traced to the prevailing lack of international confidence and lack of trust among States. We should like to draw attention to another aspect of the problem which may not be so obvious. We need to reflect on to what extent the existing lack of trust among States is not itself the result of the continuing arms race and build-up of armaments.

The prevailing logic that governs inter-State relations is that of deterring threats to security by inspiring fear in the potential adversaries by a display of greater military strength. However, while such logic may seem relevant for an individual State or group of States, it ceases to operate if potential adversaries follow the same logic and also seek to acquire a matching, if not greater, military strength.

What we are left with, then, is a greater sense of insecurity for all concerned but at a higher level of armaments. Both individual and collective security would increase if inter-State relations were governed by the logic of inspiring confidence, not fear, and trust, not doubt, about one country's intentions towards the other. Is it not possible that a climate of trust would significantly improve as a result of perceptible progress in disarmament?

My country has consistently stressed the importance of achieving nuclear disarmament and has rejected such dangerous concepts as nuclear deterrence and balance, which are often advanced to explain away the continuing upward spiral in the nuclear arms race. We have heard arguments which would

(Mr. Mittal, India)

have us believe that nuclear weapons have a war-preventing and stabilizing effect. We have been told that the possession of nuclear Weapons is precisely for the purpose of avoiding nuclear war. This reminds us of the earlier slogan of about "a war to end all wars".

It has, at the same time, been argued that nuclear weapons are needed in certain situations so as to make up for a perceived imbalance in conventional arms. Those who advance such notions, however, argue eloquently at one and the same time about the dangers of the spreading of nuclear weapons to States that do not so far possess them. Can they not perceive the contradictions involved in this position? Those who use such arguments to justify their continued possession of nuclear weapons, and indeed to justify the acquisition and further development of ever-growing arsenals of nuclear weapons, do not seem to realize that they are themselves acting as promoters of a possible horizontal proliferation of such weapons. After all, the same arguments could be used by any State to justify its acquisition of nuclear weapons.

The core of the nuclear dilemma that we face today is the fact that, for certain States the possession of nuclear weapons seems to confer an illusory but much-sought-after prestige and status in international affairs. It is this equation that fuels the danger of nuclear weapon proliferation, and as long as the nuclear-weapon States prove unwilling to cancel out this equation by accepting their responsibility to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race neither nuclear disarmament nor, for that matter, non-proliferation can become a tangible objective.

While nuclear-weapon States seem keen on pursuing the objective of horizontal non-proliferation, through restrictive nuclear export policies if necessary, they are not willing to accept any commitments themselves towards giving up their nuclear-weapon status. It has become equally clear that for the majority of non-nuclear-weapon States a non-proliferation régime divorced from the question of nuclear disarmament is becoming an increasingly unacceptable proposition. Those engaged in the continued vertical proliferation of nuclear arms would do well to heed the warning.

(Mr. Mittal, India)

I should like to turn to the question of the relationship between nuclear and conventional weapons. When nuclear weapons came into existence the unique character of those unprecedented weapons of mass destruction was recognized by all. This character continues to be recognized, at least theoretically, and that is why nuclear disarmament has been accorded the highest priority by the world community.

Slowly, however, in developments in weapons technology and the evolution of new nuclear doctrines there has been a deliberate attempt to blur the distinction between conventional and nuclear arms. Nuclear weapons are projected as only another more destructive kind of conventional weapon. This trend has also led to the arguments being advanced whereby nuclear weapons are seen as substitutes for conventional armaments.

The whole basis for nuclear disarmament rests on the catastrophic and destructive consequences for the entire world that would follow the use of such weapons. It was precisely this danger that led to the recognition of the need for nuclear disarmament and the eventual return to a non-nuclear-weapon status by the nuclear-weapon States. If, on the other hand, it is now argued that nuclear weapons are necessary for a nation's self-defence and that in disarmament negotiations equal emphasis must be placed on conventional armaments, there is little doubt that the original basis on which nuclear disarmament has been pursued will be seriously undermined.

My delegation holds that there can be no question of equating in any manner weapons of such horrible destructive power as nuclear weapons on the one hand and conventional armaments on the other. We reject, therefore, the argument that nuclear disarmament must be linked to conventional disarmament. It would be equally misleading to argue one-sidedly that progress in nuclear disarmament would be facilitated by corresponding progress in conventional disarmament. Rather, the reverse may be closer to the truth. We are not against conventional disarmament, but this must be pursued on its own and not used as an excuse to delay or deflect attention from the priority accorded to nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Mittal, India)

Another aspect of our current debate that we should wish to comment upon is the role of verification in arms control and disarmament agreements. We recognize that adequate verification under effective international control is indispensable to the implementation of such agreements. However, it is important to guard against the question of verification becoming a pretext for postponing the conclusion of such agreements. In judging the efficacy of disarmament agreements we must carefully evaluate whether with the package of practicable and feasible verification measures contained in a treaty the parties to the treaty would enjoy greater security than would be possible without the treaty.

My delegation is of the opinion that, judged by this yardstick, lack of proper verification can no longer be advanced as a valid obstacle to the conclusion of a truly comprehensive and universal prohibition of nuclear weapon testing. Unfortunately, verification has been used as a pretext for delaying the the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. But surely it is stretching logic too far also to use this pretext to justify continued nuclear weapon testing. We would therefore once again urge all nuclear-weapon States to agree to an immediate cessation of such testing pending the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

We should like here to touch very briefly upon the question of military alliances. As a non-aligned country, we are opposed to competing military blocs and alliances. We do not believe that either individual or collective security is advanced through such military groupings. The simple fact is that the formation of military alliances has invariably led to the creation of an atmosphere of tension and confrontation among nations and generated suspicions of each other's intentions. The main casualty of this process has been international security. We are therefore convinced that dissolution of military alliances would lead to more and not less security, for the States concerned as well as for the world as a whole.

(Mr. Mittal, India)

My delegation had felt it necessary at this stage of the debate to correct what it considered a distortion of the perspective in which the issue of disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, must be approached. Despite our differing perceptions, however, we are convinced that all nations represented here remain committed to our ultimate goal - that of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Given this universal commitment, differing approaches and perceptions can and must be reconciled. The late Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in a speech at the United Nations General Assembly in 1961, had said:

"I am convinced that the modern world cannot continue for long without full disarmament. It is perhaps true ultimately that the material advance which has taken place in the world and which is magnificent has gone far ahead of the development of the human mind. A mind which lags behind and thinks in terms of how nations functioned and wars occurred a hundred or two hundred years ago does not fit in with the modern age. Emotionally, we do not fully understand the possibility of a nuclear war. Otherwise it seems to me impossible that there should be continuing deadlocks and impasses, for under modern conditions war must be ruled out or human civilization has to submit to the ending of all that it has laboured for thousands of years to build. If that is true, it is important and urgent that we should approach this question of disarmament with speed, deliberation and determination to solve it".

It is this spirit which will guide my delegation in the conduct of its work in this Committee.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Before we adjourn I should like to inform members that the officers of the Committee have considered the manner in which our programme of work should continue. As representatives know, the general debate will be completed at our meeting tomorrow afternoon, and in the light of that the officers of the Committee wish to submit the following recommendations.

First, at the end of the general debate two working days would be allocated to the open-ended ad hoc working group established last year with a view to elaborating and finalizing a declaration on the inadmissibility of intervention and interference in internal affairs of States. This working group should function on the basis of the resources available for the First Committee, since no financial implications are attached to resolution 34/101, by which the group was established. Accordingly, four meetings will be allocated to the working group to take place in this conference room on Wednesday and Thursday, 5 and 6 November. Further meetings of the group would be scheduled taking into account the First Committee's work-load. In other words, whenever time could be made available for meetings of the working group I would make the relevant arrangements.

Secondly, on the morning of Friday, 7 November, the Committee would start considering the draft resolutions before it. For that purpose a list of speakers is now open, and in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee at the beginning of this session we would hold a meeting only when at least four speakers were inscribed.

Thirdly, as members will recall, the Committee agreed that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions would be noon on Friday, 14 November. Consequently, most of the draft resolutions will be submitted for decision as from that date. However, if I found that some could be acted upon earlier, we could take action on them on the understanding that due advance notice would be given to all members of the Committee and that we would apply that procedure to those draft resolutions which did not present major difficulties.

(The Chairman)

These recommendations are in line with the programme of work agreed on by the Committee, and I hope that they will be acceptable to all members.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the recommendations of the officers of the Committee are approved by the Committee.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.