



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 27TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. OYONO (United Republic of Cameroon)  
(Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. WU Zhen (China) (interpretation from Chinese): In my statement today I should like to make some comments on the agenda items concerning the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace, the World Disarmament Conference and the Second Disarmament Decade.

First, on the question of the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace.

Since the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 2832 (XXVI) in 1971 on the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, all the countries and peoples that support the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, particularly those of the Indian Ocean region, have made unremitting efforts for its realization. The Ad Hoc Committee also did a considerable amount of work, as entrusted to it by the General Assembly. In accordance with the General Assembly resolution, the Ad Hoc Committee has done intensive preparatory work during the past year in order to create conditions for the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean and to promote the early implementation of the purposes and objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

In the course of its preparatory work, the Ad Hoc Committee engaged in an exchange of views on such questions as the geographical limits of the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace, the elimination of foreign military presence, guarantees for the peace and security of the Indian Ocean region, the denuclearization of the Indian Ocean, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the use of the sea lanes of the Indian Ocean.

(Mr. Wu Zhen, China)

The Chinese delegation has had occasion to clearly state its position of principle on all these questions. Our views can be summarized as follows: The geographical limits of the Peace Zone must not be limited only to the waters of the Indian Ocean itself, but should also include the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean. The foreign military presence in the Indian Ocean region should be eliminated, to permit the solution of the problem of peace and security in the region by the countries and people of the region through co-ordinated efforts, and without any influence and interference from outside. The nuclear-free status of the Indian Ocean region must be respected by all States; all nuclear States, in particular, must unequivocally undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against States of the Indian Ocean region. All ships that use the waterways of the Indian Ocean and aircraft overflying its airspace must abide by the principles of the United Nations Charter and the norms of international relations, respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States of the Indian Ocean region and not pose a threat to their peace and security.

We also wish to stress that, in the interest of peace and security in the Indian Ocean region, and in order to achieve the purposes and objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, the Soviet Union must be called upon to implement resolution ES-6/2 of the General Assembly, that is to withdraw immediately and unconditionally all its armed forces which invaded Afghanistan. In our view, the Soviet Union's armed invasion and military occupation of a hinterland State of the Indian Ocean constitute the most direct and dangerous threat to peace and security in the Indian Ocean region and have created enormous difficulties for the convening of a Conference on the Indian Ocean. Its 100,000 aggressor troops in Afghanistan constitute the biggest foreign military presence in the region, a presence which must be eliminated. Some people say that the question of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has nothing to do with that of the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace. This argument is completely untenable. If the Soviet Union's flagrant armed aggression against

(Mr. Wu Zhen, China)

Afghanistan is tolerated, if the Soviet Union is given a free hand to use Afghanistan as a spring-board for further aggression and expansion against South Asia and the area around the Persian Gulf, then not only will the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace be reduced to empty talk, but even more countries will become the direct victims of Soviet aggression and expansion. Such a situation would have serious consequences for the cause of peace not only in the Indian Ocean region but also in the whole world. Thus, to demand that the Soviet Union withdraw its troops from Afghanistan is an inseparable part of any discussion on the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace, and is a key issue in the efforts to achieve the objectives and purposes of an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace. We hope that the Conference on the Indian Ocean will be able to make its contribution towards opposing super-Power armed aggression in the region and defending the independence and security of the States of the region.

I should now like to make a few remarks on the draft resolution contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. We had proposed two amendments to this resolution. The first one is that in the first preambular paragraph there should be a reference to General Assembly resolution ES-6/2 of 14 January 1980 calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan. The second one is that the last preambular paragraph should explicitly express deep concern at the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops. We consider these amendments to be both necessary and important. For various reasons, these two above-mentioned amendments have not been reflected in the draft resolution, and we wish to state our reservations in this regard.

However complicated the situation, China will, as in the past, firmly support the just proposals of the countries and peoples of the Indian Ocean region aimed at establishing the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We are firmly convinced that through the unremitting efforts of the countries and peoples of the region and with the support of all peace-loving countries and peoples in the whole world, the objectives of establishing the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace will certainly be achieved.

(Mr. Wu Zhen, China)

On the question of a world disarmament conference, the third-world countries and other peace-loving countries wish to convene a world disarmament conference when the conditions are ripe. We fully understand their well-intentioned desire to safeguard world peace and security. From the very outset, the Chinese delegation has made known its views on the necessary conditions for the convening of such a conference and has reiterated its position on numerous occasions.

In the wake of the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1978, devoted to the question of disarmament, there is obviously less need to continue the discussion on the convening of a world disarmament conference because that session, the first in the history of the United Nations devoted to disarmament and in which all Member States participated, has opened up new possibilities in the field of disarmament. The General Assembly has also decided to hold a second special session on disarmament in 1982. In these circumstances, to by-pass the United Nations for a world disarmament conference would be an unnecessary duplication, aside from running the risk of weakening and diverting the efforts to implement the decision of the tenth special session. At the time of the adoption of the Final Document of the special session, we had already stated these views on the convening of a world disarmament conference.

(Mr. Wu Zhen, China)

The development of the international situation within the last two years has raised even more doubt in the minds of people as to the possibility and necessity of convening a world disarmament conference. While the basic demands we made at the very beginning, such as the withdrawal of all foreign troops, have not even come close to being met, incidents of naked armed invasion and military occupation of other countries have taken place one after another in blatant violation of the United Nations Charter and the norms of international relations. The most ardent advocates of a world disarmament conference also happen to be the countries most actively engaged in external aggression and expansion. What they are playing is a game of sham disarmament and genuine aggression, using rhetoric about disarmament as a cover for their aggression and expansion. Therefore the Chinese delegation has serious reservations with regard to the further consideration of the question of a world disarmament conference in the present circumstances. What is most important at present is to put an end to foreign military aggression and occupation and to ensure the inviolability of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries. Otherwise, the good intentions in calling for a world disarmament conference would only play into the hands of those who harbour ulterior motives.

Third, thanks to the guidance of Ambassador Vellodi and the joint effort of its members, the United Nations Disarmament Commission in May and June of this year completed its report to the present session of the General Assembly. The report contains the Commission's recommendations, including the main elements of draft resolutions on the second disarmament decade, nuclear and conventional disarmament, the reduction of military budgets and other agenda items. These recommendations basically reflect the views and aspirations of the third-world countries and other peace-loving countries in that they have correctly taken note of the fact that the first Disarmament Decade failed to reach the expected goals; pointed out in an analysis of the present international situation that world peace and security are being threatened by the use of force against the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of other countries, by military intervention and occupation of other countries, by hegemonism and by interference in the internal affairs of others; called upon the countries with the largest

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arsenals to assume special obligations in disarmament and the reduction of military budgets; and prescribed certain reasonable targets for future efforts in the field of disarmament.

While we basically endorse these formulations, we are obliged to point out certain inadequacies in the recommendations and proposed draft resolutions in the report. Our views in this regard, as stated during the deliberations in the Commission, can be summarized into three main points as follows.

First, it has been the consistent position of the Chinese delegation that the two countries with the largest arsenals of both nuclear and conventional weapons and the highest military budgets should be called upon to assume special obligations in both nuclear and conventional disarmament and in the reduction of military budgets. This is a fundamental principle in the field of disarmament. The lack of substantive progress in disarmament during the last Decade is primarily due to the fact that the two super-Powers have been calling for disarmament in words and engaging in arms expansion and an ever intensifying arms race in deed. If real achievement in disarmament is to be made in the next decade, past mistakes must be avoided and the two super-Powers must be explicitly called upon to assume the obligation of being the first to reduce their armaments.

Secondly, the Chinese delegation has stressed on numerous occasions that nuclear and conventional disarmament should be given equal importance and should be carried out in conjunction with one another. It is quite understandable why some representatives prefer to give the highest priority to nuclear disarmament in view of the enormous destructive power of nuclear weapons. It is also a fact of life, however, that, while the danger of a nuclear war does indeed exist, it is the more real danger of conventional war that is threatening international peace and security. More often than not, it is the enormous amount of conventional arms on which the super-Powers depend in their aggression and expansion. This has been further borne out by the present military aggression and occupation of neighbouring countries by the hegemonists.

(Mr. Wu Zhen, China)

Thirdly, on the question of the comprehensive test ban, the Chinese delegation has repeatedly stated that the only way to eliminate the threat of a nuclear war is the complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons. To this end, the countries with the largest nuclear arsenals must be called upon to be the first to reduce drastically their nuclear weapons, and when the huge gap between their nuclear arsenals and those of the other nuclear countries has disappeared the other nuclear countries should then join them in destroying all the nuclear weapons on this planet and putting an end to all nuclear tests. This position of ours is fair, proper, sensible and reasonable. The super-Powers obviously have ulterior motives when they side-step the question of the complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons and clamour only for a complete test ban, especially in proposing a so-called moratorium of one year on all nuclear tests. After they have conducted countless tests in all environments, such a moratorium would do nothing to stop them from further developing and improving their nuclear weapons, and would bring us no closer to the goal of removing the threat of a nuclear war. On the contrary, the danger of a nuclear war would in fact be increased because such an approach would only tie the hands of countries with weak defence capabilities and benefit the super-Powers by consolidating their position of nuclear monopoly and paving the way for their policy of nuclear threat and nuclear blackmail. Therefore, the correct path towards eliminating the danger of a nuclear war is for the super-Powers to end their nuclear tests once and for all and take the lead in the drastic reduction of nuclear weapons.

The times have changed. It will no longer be that easy for the super-Powers to go on cheating in disarmament matters. The people of the world are fully entitled to demand that the super-Powers fulfil their unshirkable responsibilities during the second disarmament decade and do what they should for the achievement of genuine disarmament.



Mr. FONSEKA (Sri Lanka): Though I am speaking late, on this last day of the general debate, I should like to extend my delegation's congratulations and good wishes to the Chairman on his election. He has already demonstrated that admirable quality expected of a chairman, namely patience, and, may I add, forbearance, which he has shown during this protracted debate.

Our debate commenced three weeks ago with a presentation by my colleague Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico on the unprecedented threat of self-destruction which mankind faces with the accumulated arsenals of nuclear weapons. His apprehensions were supported not only by similar assertions in the General Assembly but also by serious writers in reputable journals and the responsible media. Those views have been repeated by several speakers during our debate, except perhaps by some of our colleagues in this First Committee who have grown accustomed to living with this fearsome reality.

(Mr. Fonseka, Sri Lanka)

Our debate is of course an opportunity to review what has been achieved in the disarmament area in the last 12 months. At least on that - the measure of our achievement - there seems to be almost general agreement that little has been accomplished. That admission has been followed by charges and counter-charges of culpability for our present plight. We have given our views in other forums on events which have seriously distorted the political spectrum and revived instead of reversing the arms race. To repeat or recount them here would be an exercise in futility; yet that silence should not be construed as unconcern. It is more than just concern because most of those events took place, and the violence and conflict continue, in our part of the world, namely Asia. I can only conclude these remarks by expressing the hope that, since military solutions have proven inconclusive, those who have the capacity will initiate the political solutions which only they can provide.

The disarmament picture, as widely acknowledged, is bleak but there has been some break in the clouds which should also be acknowledged. A review of the bacteriological weapons Convention ended with a document, notwithstanding accounts of possible violations of its provisions. The other gain, just on the eve of this Committee's commencing its work, was the success achieved in the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on inhuman weapons. While we would congratulate the participants in the Conference and its Chairman, Ambassador Adeniji of Nigeria, it is worth repeating the reason he himself gave for that Conference's adopting a convention. He did say that it was the emergence of political will among the crucial negotiating parties and a willingness to abandon rigidly held positions in order to arrive at an agreement.

The report of the Committee on Disarmament, whose work will be the subject of further comment, reveals that, although old customs associated with its predecessor body still hamper its role, the Committee has at least made a beginning in its function as the sole multilateral negotiating body. During its 1979 session it was able to set up an Ad Hoc Working Group on negative guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States. During its

(Mr. Fonseka, Sri Lanka)

1980 session, besides renewing the mandate of that Ad Hoc Working Group, three more ad hoc working groups were set up on chemical weapons, radiological weapons and the comprehensive programme of disarmament respectively. The setting up of ad hoc working groups is by itself not disarmament and the multilaterally negotiated agreements or conventions which the working groups are to conclude are not necessarily closer to being reached. But the General Assembly can at least be told that the restructured negotiating body is endeavouring to perform its assigned role of negotiation. That last remark is not intended in any way to belittle the painstaking efforts which the Chairmen of those working groups have devoted towards moving ahead on the slow and difficult road to agreements.

Sri Lanka has, with other interested States, been in the forefront of efforts to bring about a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. That effort has persisted for nine years. As the Committee is aware, while we have still some distance to go to realize the goal of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean has reached a consensus resolution. The membership of the Ad Hoc Committee was increased to 45 and the new members include the other four permanent members of the Security Council. The resolution which was adopted last week at the resumed session of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean leaves the question of the decision on the dates of the forthcoming Indian Ocean Conference to the meeting in February of the Ad Hoc Committee. It is our sincere hope that all arrangements for the Indian Ocean Conference will be finalized in time and that the Conference will take the first concrete steps to implement the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

During the General Assembly's debate and again in this Committee, year in and year out, nuclear disarmament is of course emphasized as our main focus. It was the highest priority issue at the special session of the General Assembly in 1978, was accorded prime position in the meetings of the Disarmament Commission and appears as the first item in the agenda of the Geneva Committee on Disarmament.

(Mr. Fonseka, Sri Lanka)

We had another opportunity for protracted debate and perhaps negotiation regarding nuclear disarmament during the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons this August-September. As members of the Committee know, that Conference ended without a final document and, some might say, in disarray. The difference or dispute was over the undertakings in article VI of the Treaty, namely, whether or not negotiations in good faith on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament had taken place. The position of the non-nuclear-weapon States parties which are not members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the Warsaw Pact was that article VI had not been complied with. And on that point my delegation must say that the members of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact thought otherwise. I must make this last point clear because it is of relevance to nuclear disarmament, which is a major preoccupation of this Committee, in which resolutions have already been submitted. Those who opposed a resumed Review Conference derived some small satisfaction from the belief that, although there was no document, there had been a review and the non-proliferation régime was not being endangered. However, we all know that there are at least half a dozen States not parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty which are believed to have the capacity to go nuclear.

I must come back to nuclear disarmament. The last remarks were something of a digression, although not irrelevant. As several delegations keep saying every year in this Committee, there can be no reliance on repeated assertions of commitment to nuclear disarmament while nuclear testing continues. One need hardly say that a test-ban treaty is not disarmament per se. It is only evidence of the bona fides of the nuclear Powers, of their willingness to commence nuclear disarmament.

Adherents of the theory of the nuclear deterrent must of necessity be lukewarm to a treaty banning nuclear-test explosions, for logically the deterrent can be sustained only through superior weaponry, which requires continual testing, or at least one-upmanship at the time of the conclusion of a test ban. The trilateral negotiators - the United Kingdom, the United

(Mr. Fonseka, Sri Lanka)

States and the Soviet Union - claim progress in their negotiations, which they say are slow owing to the complexity of the issues and also verification problems. They hold the view that the trilateral negotiations are the best way forward. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has stated that technicalities and verification are non-issues and that only political will is needed for a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

(Mr. Fonseka, Sri Lanka)

While on the subject of nuclear tests, my delegation must express its great regret and concern that China, which had refrained from any testing in 1979, carried out an atmospheric test last month. Admittedly, the number of tests carried out by China is minimal, compared to the record of the two super-Powers, but one would have preferred China to have responded to the world-wide sentiment against a continuation of nuclear testing.

The majority of non-nuclear weapon States, members of the Committee on Disarmament, have asked for an ad hoc working group in the Committee on Disarmament, and this Committee should recommend its establishment at the beginning of the Committee on Disarmament's 1981 session if there is to be hope of a treaty's materializing, with the widest possible adherence, before the second special session on disarmament in 1982.

My delegation has yet to comment on a wide range of questions on this Committee's agenda. We will do so at the appropriate time or when draft resolutions on those issues come before this Committee. My Government has welcomed the signature of SALT II and, like its signatories and the many delegations that have referred to it, we trust that its ratification will permit the early commencement of negotiations on SALT III. That decision may well be in the making today.

The Committee has before it a draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union bearing the title "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war", which some delegations have already declared unacceptable. It is wide-ranging in scope, covering détente, politico-military alliances, nuclear and conventional armaments, security guarantees for non-nuclear States and a one-year moratorium on nuclear tests. The interconnexion between these several aspects of disarmament is recognized, but the draft resolution's present formulation limits the scope for its consideration. It would be sufficient to say that the origins of non-alignment can be traced to the consolidation of military blocs, and non-aligned countries would prefer to see a dissolution of military blocs, let alone no enlargement of their membership.

(Mr. Fonseka, Sri Lanka)

My last remarks are on the second special session on disarmament, which is just 18 months away from us, just as we commence the Second Disarmament Decade. The Final Document of the first special session was a rare manifestation of a consensus reached not without difficulty. Its Programme of Action remains, by and large, yet to be fulfilled. Those on whom special responsibility has been placed by virtue of their preponderance in armaments must strive to discharge those responsibilities, lest our preparations for the special session be marred by differences over undertakings and performance. Regrettable though it be, we seem to have agreed that the first Disarmament Decade fell far short of expectations. We do have some time to avoid a similar pronouncement on the achievements expected under the Programme of Action agreed upon during the first special session.

Mr. BEDJAQUI (Algeria) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, this being my first statement before you, I should like first and foremost to convey to you my delegation's and my own heartfelt congratulations on your election to one of the vice-chairmanships of our Committee. The respect that your deep knowledge of the problems inspires in me, your erudition that I personally have repeatedly had occasion to observe and admire, as well as your wisdom and courtesy and the many years we have known each other, add to the pleasure and honour that I feel in speaking before you today.

The undeniable renewal of tension observed this year in international relations, in addition to concern over events themselves, arouses serious anxiety over the new trend for which this renewed tension has served as a pretext. Some basic aspects of this new trend are very characteristic, in fact, of an apparently predominant approach today: that of treating all international problems in terms of conflict.

(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

From that point of view, it is significant that the readjustment of certain military doctrines, which has been made possible by international tensions, has been reflected in the extension of strategic analysis to the economic field, as well as to raw materials and energy supply.

On the one hand, a very flexible concept of "vital interests" has been extended to the point of making one great Power feel entitled to consider its security threatened in any part of the world. Drawing inspiration from colonial practices, the authors of this approach have actually betrayed their inability to imagine alternatives to the exploitation of peoples. They continue to perceive relations between producer and consumer countries in terms of conflict whenever producing countries exercise their sovereign right over their natural resources.

On the other hand, the geographical areas covered by such an analysis are made subject to strategic doctrines that identify power interests with world interests, thus flouting the sovereignty of States. The raw logic of this system has led to a great redeployment of forces to ensure the security of energy and raw material supplies.

Thus, for example, despite the proclamation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and the efforts to implement the United Nations Declaration which confers such status upon it, never has that area been placed in such jeopardy as it is now by the presence of a formidable concentration of armed forces. We have witnessed the creation of new foreign military bases and the re-equipping of already existing ones on the eastern flank and all along the coast of Africa and everywhere else that new positions can be taken. The analysts responsible seem to have a horror of a strategic vacuum, which they conjure up wherever their country has no presence.

Symptomatic of this rush towards confrontation is precisely the avid determination to narrow the gap between the possibility and the probability of an outbreak of nuclear war. Indeed, the accent has been placed on the determination of politicians to use the nuclear weapon in case of conflict. And that determination is based on a doctrine that has come into favour because it is tantamount to saying that the risk of world-wide confrontation can be reduced to an acceptable level. It is a suicidal illusion to believe and to persuade others to believe that the limited use of nuclear weapons is possible without causing, through escalation, universal annihilation.



(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

That doctrinal development has been accompanied, naturally, by an arms race which has been given a further impetus, without any guarantee - indeed, less guarantee than ever - of better security. In fact the continual growth of the nuclear arsenals has not increased national security; on the contrary, it has reduced it. Terror does not breed peace. Fear is often aggressive.

It is a fact that the international tension that has developed this year has borne all the disquieting signs of feverish preparations for a major conflict. This further testifies to the fact that the order of nuclear terror is maintained only by the memory that the big Powers have of the balance of terror. More than ever now it is a case of reaffirming the need for a determined undertaking and a persevering attempt to establish international peace and security and to maintain and strengthen them. While this undertaking has so far been called détente, we must recognize that the way in which it was conceived has proved the obvious limits of its value as the only alternative to confrontation. Détente is a common goal which calls for the joint efforts of all States. It involves, if it is to be lasting, a review of the positions on which the actions taken to secure it have been based.

First, it is necessary to break away from the European centrist concept of détente. Détente must be universal and its benefits must be extended to all parts of the world. So far, since the Second World War, détente has been confined to the developed part of the world and everywhere has stopped at the gates of the third world, to which the great-Power conflicts have been transferred, because, they said, it had the advantage of reducing by several degrees the risk of escalation leading to direct confrontation between these great Powers. However, we do not deny that in certain geographical regions there are specific problems which require regional efforts.

First of all, we must question this partial, fragmentary approach. Problems which arise in one region or another, although often distinct, are nevertheless most of the time closely linked. To the extent that a generalized process of détente would take on universal dimensions, efforts undertaken in a regional context could constitute the various concentric circles of the wave of world peace.

(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

In order to achieve this, it is not enough merely to envisage systems of communication which would trigger each other in a period of crisis in order to avoid the worst. If so far it has been a matter of controlling tensions, it is imperative now that there be a greater commitment to eliminating the causes, by pursuing concerted efforts to find just and lasting solutions, which should not be the prerogative of the great Powers alone when the majority of the pockets of tension are situated in the third world.

That most pockets of tension are situated in the third world is a tragic fact that is demonstrated every day. To the natural scourges and to underdevelopment are thus added wars imposed on the peoples of the developing countries, which see in this way their hopes for a better future vanishing. Hence, the third-world countries first and foremost need peace, so that all their peoples' energies may be harnessed to the development effort. However, we cannot really hope to achieve such peace simply by measures limiting transfers of arms to countries of the third world - as if it were a case of exorcizing their warlike frenzy in this way; as if war had suddenly become the prerogative of the poor. Such an initiative not only would be misguided but would do serious damage to the rights of States to ensure and organize their own national defence in a sovereign manner and it would also affect the right of peoples fighting for their self-determination and independence. To cite the edifying examples of southern Africa and the Middle East, how can it be claimed that tension or open conflict would be the result of the purchase of arms by the front-line States in Africa or the countries of the Middle East when South Africa and Israel have, to support their respective policies of domination, a military capacity for aggression that could at any time cross the nuclear threshold? In those two cases, unquestionably, we have a disproportion between on the one hand conventional military potential, which is often embryonic, used for national defence purposes and on the other an impressive military destructive capacity used for aggressive purposes.

(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

It seems quite clear to us, then, that the elimination of pockets of tension requires that we go right back to the causes and not act on some of their effects which run the risk of jeopardizing the exercise of the right of those peoples to organize their national defence. The only real, clearly identified way of eradicating crises remains the cessation of foreign intervention and foreign occupation, the dismantling of foreign military bases and, finally, the elimination of colonial and racist domination.

The recent United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons achieved some useful results, under the competent guidance of Ambassador Adeniji of Nigeria. In accordance with its mandate and by means of the agreements it reached that Conference contributed to the strengthening of humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts. While we applaud the results of that Conference and do not wish to denigrate any of the benefits of such an enterprise, however meagre, we must nevertheless count it among the partial and limited measures which, far from attaining the level of real and significant progress towards the final goal of general and complete disarmament, on the contrary represents an approach which shows the persistent absence of readiness to embark on a real disarmament process in what constitutes the priority of priorities, nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

Whereas immediately following the Second World War nuclear disarmament was the subject of direct negotiations and specific proposals, it is significant today that there are only sporadic initiatives which are assigned lower degrees of priority. Negotiations on nuclear disarmament have thus been diverted from their objective, promoting the appearance and the strengthening of an international nuclear order which sanctions a nuclear arms race between those who should be reversing it and condemns the developing countries to refrain from even the use of nuclear energy for civilian purposes.

Obviously, this nuclear arms race is becoming more and more qualitative, Miniaturization efforts and the prospect of the development of "conventional" nuclear weapons render more and more credible scenarios of conflict where nuclear weapons would be used and, even more formidable, the risk of a nuclear war of whose inevitable consequences we are all, alas, aware.

A year ago, in this very place, we were voicing the hope that SALT II would usher in the start of a halt to the nuclear arms race. We sincerely hope that that agreement will be ratified to provide an encouraging sign of a return to co-operation, which the consultations between the United States and the USSR seemed to indicate, so that a process of limiting nuclear arms in the European theatre may get under way.

The results of the second Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference reaffirmed the fears expressed many times by several delegations in the face of the absence of significant results - an absence observable at three levels.

First, from the outset the Treaty envisages only prevention of the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. The commitment undertaken by the nuclear Powers parties to the Treaty under Article VI was never binding as they saw it, and accordingly has in fact never been put into practice, because no concrete nuclear disarmament measure has supervened in any meaningful manner. The fact that the Treaty was from the outset essentially discriminatory was an inherent handicap which foreshadowed the present disappointments.

(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

Then, the closing off of access to nuclear weapons that the NPT system was intended to establish proved to be singularly ineffective in the case of those whose pursuit of aggressive escalation is a threat to international peace and security, that is, Israel and South Africa.

Finally, as regards co-operation in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, it must be noted that the NPT system showed itself ineffective for the developing countries parties to the Treaty at the same time as it cemented the denial to those that are not parties of the right to development - which naturally includes the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy for purposes of economic and social development.

Recognition of that right inherent in the right of development could not, as a quid pro quo, demand the alienation of part of the sovereignty of a State by obliging it to accede to a treaty in which the necessary balance of responsibilities and obligations among the parties is not respected.

Furthermore, the gaps in Security Council resolution 255 (1968) were never bridged as regards providing positive guarantees, and an international agreement on the so-called negative security guarantees has not yet been reached.

All the limitations of this system thus bring us back to an inescapable need, and that is nuclear disarmament. Only a nuclear disarmament process would give meaning and credibility to the prevention of nuclear proliferation in its double dimension, both vertical and horizontal.

Only nuclear disarmament, in the final analysis, would guarantee the non-nuclear States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and it would be the only effective measure for preventing nuclear war. Only nuclear disarmament, finally, would establish the exclusively peaceful role of nuclear energy.

(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

The Secretary-General's remarkably thorough report on a comprehensive study of nuclear weapons, dated 12 September 1980, reaches the conclusion, inter alia, that

"It is furthermore not acceptable to establish, for the indefinite future, a world system of nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. This very system carries within it the seed of nuclear-weapon proliferation. In the long run, therefore, it is a system that contains the origins of its own destruction." (A/35/392, annex, para. 497)

Faced with the danger that thus threatens the very existence of humanity, the Final Document of the tenth special session has already stressed the political will which must be shown in the undertaking of nuclear disarmament, which has been classed as an absolute priority.

The Secretary-General's report on the study of nuclear weapons in all their aspects reaches the same conclusion. That is why we staunchly believe that a major effort must be made on this question in connexion with which all States unanimously and world public opinion are agreed on the danger represented by nuclear weapons.

The Committee on Disarmament, as a primary multilateral negotiating forum, this year gave proof of the great work that it can accomplish and the progress that it can record once good will and good faith are shown, and thus gives reason for hope that political will will lead to concrete measures.

From this point of view, the four working groups set up on various questions dealing with chemical weapons, negative security guarantees, the comprehensive disarmament programme and radiological weapons have done useful work and have proved that that form of organizing the work of the Committee is the most appropriate.

(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

Thus we must hope that it will be extended to other priority issues on the Committee's agenda.

Both as regards the question of the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament and that of the total prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, we hope that concrete negotiations will take place in 1981 in the Committee on Disarmament.

Thus, within this Committee and within a working group, the negotiation of a treaty on the total prohibition of nuclear-weapons tests would testify to a fortunate twofold trend: first, towards a determination speedily to draft a treaty, then towards greater democratization in negotiations on disarmament issues.

The report of the Secretary-General on this question clearly shows that political will alone is necessary for such a treaty to be drafted.

Furthermore, the report submitted to the Committee by the three States parties to the trilateral negotiations informs us of considerable progress in the very field that gave rise to the most serious difficulties, that is, verification.

An agreement on the total prohibition of nuclear tests would, over and above its real significance, have a symbolic value as well. It would be the first complete and general step on the basis of which a process to halt the arms race could be begun and existing nuclear weapons could be gradually reduced, provided that account were taken of all the comments that have been made in the Committee on Disarmament by the member countries of the Group of 21 when the tripartite report was presented.

The danger represented by nuclear weapons for the survival of humanity should have led to urgent and immediate steps for their destruction and banishment. Nevertheless, we have gone along with the gradual approach since it aimed at the same goal, but by progressive steps. It must, however, be a real process conceived in a systematic context, including binding objectives and compulsory deadlines.

This necessarily implies that nuclear disarmament should remain the primary objective which no other negotiations on other disarmament agreements should make us lose sight of. Other parallel measures on other disarmament or collateral questions can naturally be encouraged, but they cannot replace nuclear disarmament or hold it up.

(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

The priorities, principles and objectives of disarmament have been clearly identified. Serious-minded studies have been carried out. Various mechanisms have been established. They have proved their effectiveness. What remains to be done is to make sure that this spirit of staunch determination which should inspire a resolute process of forward movement towards the final goal of general and complete disarmament is present. It was of this spirit that the tenth special session of the General Assembly was intended to give a foretaste by breaking with the traditional approach. It is this firm determination that we want to see assumed for the Second Disarmament Decade.

In a world which each day seems increasingly more bent on its own destruction, a world in which human intelligence seems to be given up to the demon of destruction and testifies to the immaturity of man as man, any postponement of progress towards general and complete disarmament, any fresh impetus given to the arms race would considerably reduce our calculation of the life-expectancy of the human race today. It is time to usher in a "new order of human intelligence in the service of peace".

The nuclear bomb, a great theoretician of nuclear strategy stated, does not proclaim either the death of God or the death of man, but the death of Death itself, in so far as that bomb has become not the "instrument of war" but the "instrument of non-war" by the mutual terror it arouses. In truth, since the dawn of civilization man has been carrying on a dialogue with God and has even challenged God's existence. But faced with the bomb, man is seized with an all-consuming anguish. Fear cannot favour dialogue. Man cannot carry on a dialogue with the bomb. The bomb dictates its own law, that of "a mass nameless death affecting the greatest numbers of people in this twilight of civilizations".

That is not an enviable lot for the future of the species or for the grandeur of man.

Mr. OUNAIES (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): The Tunisian delegation welcomes the election of Ambassador Naik as Chairman of the First Committee and considers that Pakistan is certainly one of the countries that are in the best position to ensure the success of United Nations activities in this particularly sensitive subject of disarmament. Our congratulations go to the officers of the Committee, whom we wish every success in their duties.



(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

This year our debate is taking place at the beginning of the Second Disarmament Decade and halfway between the tenth special session of the General Assembly of 1978 and the forthcoming special session of 1982, both devoted to disarmament. For that reason we might be tempted to focus our attention on a long-term order of priorities, being guided by the recommendations and projections likely to ensure the full realization during the decade of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

But such an approach assumes that international relations will develop in a sufficiently harmonious manner to contain within manageable limits the differences and the initiatives of those Powers that bear primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The very principle of a disarmament strategy implies a flexible and adaptable concept of stability but one that will not abruptly upset the geopolitical balance of either camp. As a matter of principle, this strategy must be agreed upon and must be based on clear and constantly reaffirmed political will.

(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

But our debate is taking place in a situation in which all these assumptions, which for some time produced hope, détente, understanding and co-operation, are now in jeopardy. Major negotiations on the various aspects of disarmament have broken down and have even retrogressed, and there has been a crisis of confidence undermining international détente and therefore an important part of the guarantees of international security.

These concerns relate to the technical responsibilities of the major Powers, and we should add the emergence of the phenomenon of polarization in the third world, which is neither the prolongation nor the reflection of the East-West confrontation, but is in fact the source of a series of conflicts sapping security and stability in the third world.

The direct consequence of that phenomenon has been to raise the standard of conventional weapons in the developing countries and to increase the risks and scope of armed conflicts at the regional level.

The convergence of those factors hardly makes for optimism, at least as regards the specific goals that the General Assembly has set for disarmament. It is clear, however, that the main United Nations bodies dealing with disarmament have worked satisfactorily and have made a valuable contribution which we consider to represent progress. As a result of their representative nature and their smooth functioning, those bodies offer guarantees, above and beyond the expression of world aspirations, or the preparation and development of the necessary elements of a world disarmament strategy. This framework which the United Nations provides will surely, at the appropriate time, be a decisive factor in the conclusion of multilateral and perhaps also regional agreements in the field of disarmament. Furthermore, the reports submitted by the Secretariat, which sum up the present status of a number of disarmament problems, with special reference to regional implications, provide information valuable to the majority of Member States, including important data enabling us to assess the situation. We should like to stress that this contributes to a unified international approach to this problem and paves the way for a businesslike and responsible dialogue at the level of each country.

(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

Of course, this methodical progress cannot compensate for the setbacks and obstacles which have occurred in the negotiations and the reverses on matters of substance. The Tunisian delegation would like to mention just two aspects which have the most direct relationship with international peace and security in our part of the world. The deadlock as regards problems relating to nuclear armament cannot be overcome merely by analysing the consequences, however dramatic they may be. The causes must be identified. No one, clearly, can afford a unilateral renunciation of those weapons and any real disarmament measures must be linked to real and reciprocal security guarantees. The principle of balance and deterrence has induced the principal nuclear Powers to seek bases for understanding and identify the conditions of reinforced security. A series of negotiations began on that basis, the early results of which were welcomed as decisive progress in this field. We wonder, however, whether the stalemate in the SALT negotiations and the decision not to ratify the SALT II agreement are due to any definite event or whether they are not the result of a new assessment which condemns the principle itself.

We fear that there are deeper reasons for that stalemate, apart from the international situation, of which we do not underestimate the short-term effects. The basic development of strategic weapons threatens to make them almost impossible to control, either because they are so sophisticated or because the devices for concealment or the ease with which carriers can be manipulated make preventive or objective verification impossible. The impossibility of perfect control, which has generally been admitted in the conventional field, applies even more strictly to so-called strategic weapons.

The common belief at the beginning that the use of nuclear weapons would inevitably lead to collective destruction has now yielded to the view that a nuclear war can be conducted and won without jeopardizing everyone's survival or security. At one point there were qualms regarding this problem and it was felt that mankind must be spared a nuclear war because it would mean its annihilation, and that led to the process of détente. But those convictions have been shaken and it is now believed that a nuclear war could be unleashed and

(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

be won. In this way the partial benefits of the SALT negotiations have now been jeopardized by a more radical approach, which cannot fail to have more far-reaching consequences, particularly in the field of disarmament.

In this regard, we should like to reaffirm, as a non-aligned country, our attachment to the policy of international détente and our conviction that peace and prosperity in the world can be attained not by the reckless destruction of both blocs but by the strengthening of détente and international co-operation. Negotiations rather than acts of force offer the best assurances and remain the best instrument for settling disputes.

On the other hand, the build-up of nuclear weapons increases the risk of confrontation inasmuch as it induces a feeling of superiority and breeds hegemonistic pretensions. Such a build-up increases the risk of an accidental triggering of nuclear war because the management of such complex nuclear stockpiles has of necessity been entrusted to machines.

Nuclear over-armament can only reduce the security of regions of the world which do not have those weapons, quite apart from the question of overflight and the approach of armed fleets with nuclear warheads, which pose direct risks, it is clear that the use of such weapons, whether deliberate or not, could not fail to affect the areas of the world which do not have those weapons. For those reasons, no one can dissociate himself from the question of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

That is why we support the need for a policy of nuclear disarmament conducted at several levels and involving all countries possessing those weapons, those which are technologically in a position to achieve control over them and those that have agreed not to acquire nuclear weapons. As a matter of principle, we cannot at the outset subscribe to absolute technical control in order to impose a complete and universal suspension of nuclear tests. On the other hand, we shall always support the principle of an international control agency endowed with the broadest possible powers. Finally, we believe that in this area self-discipline as much as collective discipline are a true indication of the desire for peace and peaceful co-existence and evidence of a degree of international morality.

At the regional level, there are two cases of nuclear weapons being developed under the hypocritical pretext that nuclear energy is being used for peaceful purposes. Israel and South Africa, which enjoy close relations with each other and with a small number of Western countries, are quite unabashed about this and loudly proclaim their determination for that reason not to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We simply cannot understand the blindness of those Western Powers which believe that lucrative contracts are sufficient justification to push two racist régimes into the nuclear club. Have they any idea of what nazism can do when equipped with nuclear weapons?

Our second point concerns conventional weapons. In this area, the scope and the pace of the race are growing with the same regularity as world inflation. We see no hope of putting an end to this, let alone of beginning a move towards limited disarmament, other than through determined efforts to tackle the very causes of the scourge.

We wish to recall for the record the activities and the effectiveness of the big armaments industries which mobilize the machinery of the industrial metropolitan countries and which, through the arms trade, jointly enter into lucrative contracts and long-term relationships, always in a North-South direction. But it is true that this factor explains more about the nature and the relative permanence of the links between the suppliers and their clients than it does about the scope and the rate of the transfer of conventional weapons to the countries of the third world.

The intense feelings motivating the client States is more thoroughly explained by two factors.

(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

The first of these is the persistence of almost permanent disputes related to the adventuristic and provocative policies of Israel and South Africa. Although those two centres have long raised their conflict to the world level, it is principally the front-line countries and those of the region as a whole which unjustly suffer the consequences by having to match the permanent aggression of those two racist régimes with a high level of defence which is always being challenged by the vertical increase of the arms wielded by Israel and South Africa. The development of these two problems has meant that in each of those regions military domination overrides any other consideration. This is the inevitable, crushing but nevertheless vital key to the arms race.

The surplus of weapons thus accumulated creates in itself risks of instability and conflict and results in exposure to permanent interference by foreign Powers while worsening the effect of the dependence caused by the client State relationship.

Thus, there is no hope of stabilizing or reducing levels of weapons except through decisive progress towards the fundamental solution of the two conflicts. We believe that the United Nations is in a position to bring about that settlement and to spare the countries of the region and the world the risks of a new war as well as the consequences of a permanent state of military tension, overshadowed by the most massive arsenals of the third world.

The second main motivation has to do with the pressing needs of some developing countries which, through their own choice, consider themselves possessors of a hegemonistic mandate over their neighbours and, in this long-term adventure, squander enormous financial, human and technical resources in order to accumulate enormous quantities of luxury weapons, greatly out of proportion to their populations, and then to engage in a policy of annexation, intervention and intimidation as a prelude to overtly military operations. The appearance of such pockets in the third world is accompanied by a new surge of rearmament, and soon by a real initiation of armament programmes, which are planned and diversified in relation to the disturbances occurring around them.

(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

This factor alone, through the direct effect of the massive accumulation of arms and the inverse effect of defensive reactions, gives rise to a multiplying coefficient on a vast scale which has speedily and lastingly raised the level of conventional arms in developing countries and has implanted in them permanent nuclei of interests fueled by the ongoing military activities. Thus, the inevitable contagion of the arms race in the developing countries paradoxically increases their weakness and their collective vulnerability.

(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

The great hegemonistic axes succeed in gaining a critical offensive capacity without much difficulty by simply transferring natural resources and thus triggering an automatic increase in armaments in their regions, and we have difficulty in seeing how that cycle can really be stemmed or controlled. Bodies studying disarmament throughout the world and the great issues discussed by negotiators in this field still concentrate on the major threats to world security arising from nuclear arsenals or other macro-military arsenals. Despite its destructive capacity, which is very high on the regional level, this very real scourge, because of its relative scale and its position in the structure of economic relations, remains a neglected phenomenon.

Our denunciation is based on the fact that there has been a real increase in arms levels in third-world countries; on the importance of the considerable financial and human resources that have been committed to this venture; and, finally, on the appearance of a new form of military base in the new complexes that have been built throughout the world. We see them, under strictly national banners, being effectively controlled by foreign influences, through massive flows of armaments from abroad, ever more sophisticated military equipment, increased numbers of experts and thousands of manipulators, all supplied from abroad because they are, obviously, beyond the abilities of national users as well as strictly defensive regional needs. We wonder about the degree of real control that can be exercised over these gigantic machines and the real hierarchy of responsibilities entrusted to the foreign experts. These military complexes have in fact acquired the characteristics of foreign bases, and as such they must resolutely be dismantled.

The obligations entered into by the international community are the same for all. Any global disarmament effort is tied to détente and to confidence. For the mass of the economically and militarily weak countries those terms acquire extreme importance if they are also accepted and applied at their own level.

The deliberate increase in the level of armaments in certain parts of the third world naturally adds a factor that complicates the world debate on disarmament and impairs the clarity of the collective commitments entered



(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

into on a basis of solidarity in the face of the two blocs. In order to identify with greater clarity the bases of unswerving solidarity in the face of the policies of the two blocs we should like to dissipate confusion, denounce the new policy of foreign bases and emphasize the dangers of those hegemonistic enterprises within the third world. A clear disarmament policy is an imperative for the military alliances as it is for the non-aligned countries. That is the basis of our concept of international responsibility.

In conclusion we should like to express our alarm and concern at the impressive evidence of the use of chemical weapons in certain theatres of operations, so far limited to Asia. It is necessary to reiterate the indignation and horror caused by the use of such weapons, anywhere at any time.

My delegation gladly joins in the appeal made by the countries directly concerned that the Secretariat be entrusted with an urgent and exhaustive mission of inquiry to take note of any use of chemical weapons, past or present, of which there remain any traces anywhere. We are convinced that efforts to secure information in this field can be a decisive factor in laying the foundations for and expediting the decision that is so important to the international community.

Mr. AMORIN (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): First, my delegation would like to congratulate the Chairman and the other members of the Bureau on their election. We should like to congratulate the Committee on its wise choice, which has already been justified by the excellent manner in which the deliberations of the First Committee have so far been conducted.

My country is speaking in this general debate on disarmament subjects because it believes that it has the same obligation as any member of the international community to express its opinion on solutions to the difficult problems facing the world at this time of tension and growing risk of world conflict.

At the same time my delegation believes it has a right to express its opinion on these subjects not only as a Member of this organization and the international community but also, and primarily, as a peace-loving country

(Mr. Amorin, Uruguay)

that defends international law, a policy that has always been a feature of our international relations.

That policy entitles my country, like other countries with similar preoccupations, to call on the major Powers to act in accordance with the same principles to maintain and defend international peace and security and to respect international law. That is why my delegation would like to make it perfectly clear that it holds the major Powers responsible for the present aggravation of international tension. This is a very serious matter inasmuch as those very Powers maintain that because of their position, and because of their responsibilities under the Charter as permanent members of the Security Council, they have primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is, moreover, a serious matter that in the present situation there are Powers that represent a great danger to international peace and security because they carry out actions that violate the United Nations Charter, in particular the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and non-use of force in international relations. More specifically, some of those Powers have used force to prevent peoples from exercising their right to self-determination.

My delegation would like to join in the warning that has been sounded by many delegations regarding the dangers of the arms race and, recalling the words of the Foreign Minister of Uruguay, Mr. Folle Martinez, in his statement at this session of the General Assembly on 26 September last, reaffirm the overriding need to halt the arms race and the consequent waste of resources and to redirect those resources to productive activities. There is no need to repeat what an important contribution to development could be made by the use of part of those resources for the industrialization of the developing countries and the improvement of the living standards of their peoples.

(Mr. Amorin, Uruguay)

In that connexion, responsibility for those expenditures undoubtedly rests with the major Powers, both because of their expenditures on their own armaments and in that they also supply weapons to developing countries, thereby promoting regional arms races, which in turn contribute to increasing tensions and the danger of war in those regions.

We should like to recall not only the dangerous political consequences and the enormous burden on the world economy represented by the arms race, but also the changes in the environment that can be produced by nuclear tests or by the use or testing of chemical or radiological weapons, which can alter the climate.

My delegation would also reaffirm its position against nuclear proliferation, both vertical and horizontal. That affirmation is supported by the facts, namely, that as party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Treaty of Tlatelolco my country abides strictly by the provisions of both. As regards the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the only treaty to have established a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the world, my country firmly supports the appeals of this Committee and of the General Assembly that those countries which have not yet ratified Protocol I thereto should do so. Also we should welcome the accession by all countries of Latin America as parties to that Treaty.

Our delegation takes the same approach in firmly supporting the initiatives directed towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world. Although it is quite understandable that in areas or continents with focal points of conflict, co-operation in that regard is clearly more complex than in Latin America, that is no reason for setting aside such initiatives. On the contrary, efforts should be stepped up so as to make possible the realization of concrete results in that area.

With respect to the subject of horizontal nuclear non-proliferation, we wish to emphasize our opposition to its use as a pretext for denying developing countries access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Of course the transfer of technology must be subject to safeguards, but they must be the safeguards established by the International Atomic Energy Agency or those arising from multilateral conventions.

(Mr. Amorin, Uruguay)

The last general topic that my delegation would like to raise is the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In that document general and complete disarmament is established as the final objective - a long-term objective, with many obstacles in the path of its achievement, but an essential one whose attainment calls for a realistic programme and concrete measures which can be taken gradually, by means of negotiations, if the political will really exists. In the final analysis, the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament outlines a path which we must undertake to follow, by means of dialogue and negotiation, notwithstanding present tension.

My delegation would like to comment briefly on a few of the more concrete items which appear on the agenda of this Committee.

First of all, we should like to touch on a question which has long been considered a priority matter and in our opinion it is a goal which can be achieved: that is, the conclusion of a general nuclear-test-ban treaty. In this area we would mention the valuable precedent of the Moscow Treaty of 1963 but we believe that at the present time there is a priority need to conclude a general test ban as one of the viable ways of trying to stop the nuclear arms race. In addition to the negotiations in progress between the three signatories of the Moscow Treaty, my delegation believes that the beginning of multilateral talks on the subject should be expedited in the framework of the Committee on Disarmament. The beginning of multilateral talks would, on the one hand, make it possible for all members of the international community to take part in the clarification of a subject which affects all States. On the other hand, multilateral negotiations might possibly yield positive elements which would be a step towards the conclusion of a treaty.

Finally, we believe that, on the subject of the general and complete prohibition of nuclear testing, the participation of all nuclear Powers in the negotiations and as parties to the eventual treaty is essential. We should like to urge all nuclear Powers not parties to the Moscow Treaty to co-operate closely in the negotiations on this subject because the participation and compliance of all States is the only way of bringing about progress in this area, so that the general and complete test ban can achieve its ends rather than being merely a partial treaty confined to a few States.

(Mr. Amorin, Uruguay)

My delegation would also like to give its views on the subject of chemical and bacteriological weapons. There have recently been persistent reports of the possible use of chemical weapons in regional conflicts. This has given rise to serious concern in my country, because some of those reports would show that there have been violations of existing international conventions, such as the Geneva Protocol of 1925. Moreover, if those violations were to be confirmed, that would constitute a dangerous precedent, which could still further undermine confidence in international relations. That in turn would present a serious obstacle to any negotiations that might take place on the reduction of armaments or disarmament. It also indicates that there is an urgent need to conclude a convention providing for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons, and their destruction. Here we should like to state that there is a need for such a convention on the total prohibition of chemical weapons which would provide effective verification machinery. That would make possible the monitoring of its implementation and the avoidance of situations that might arise because of a lack of verification machinery in the international instruments in effect in this area.

Finally, we should like to refer to the question of assurances which should be given to States not possessing nuclear weapons against the use of such weapons. On the one hand we view as very positive the unilateral declarations by the nuclear Powers to the effect that they will not use nuclear weapons against States that do not have such weapons on their territory.

If a resolution of the Security Council were to reflect those declarations that would augur well for the future and confer on them a more binding character as emanating from the Council.

However there is no doubt that a much more complete guarantee for non-nuclear-weapons States would result from the conclusion of an international convention on the subject. That would make it possible for those assurances to be based on legal norms, binding on all States parties to the convention, and preclude the possibility of there being any exceptions whatsoever.

(Mr. Amorin, Uruguay)

We should like to draw the attention of this Committee to a more procedural aspect of this subject, without for the moment having in mind a concrete proposal: namely, that the subject might be divided into three distinct topics, although that might undermine the unity which we believe ought to be maintained and lead to an unnecessary duplication of effort. My delegation considers that a single item -- guarantees to States that do not possess nuclear weapons against the use or the threat of use of such weapons -- should encompass the establishment of a convention and other related measures to that end. We believe that the conclusion and entry into force of a convention on guarantees to States that do not possess nuclear weapons on their territory against the use of such weapons is necessary and that a separate convention on the strengthening of guarantees on the security of nuclear-weapon States is unnecessary. The security of both States that do not have nuclear weapons and States that do possess them should be guaranteed by strict compliance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.