

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 2 February 1982, at 10.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Mohammad Jafar MAHALLATI (Iran)

PRESENT AT THE TABLEAlgeria:

Mr. A. SALAH-BEY

Mr. M. MATI

Argentina:

Mr. V. BEAUGE

Miss N. NASCIMBENE

Australia:

Mr. D.M. SADLEIR

Mr. T. FINDLAY

Belgium:

Mr. A. ONKELINX

Mr. J.M. NOIRFALISSE

Miss R. de CLERCQ

Brazil:

Mr. C.A. de SOUZA E SILVA

Mr. S. de QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. TELLALOV

Mr. I. SOTIROV

Mr. K. PRAMOV

Mr. P. POPCHEV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

U THAN HTUN

Canada:

Mr. G. SKINNER

China:

Mr. T. JIN

Mr. Y. MINGLIANG

Mr. F. ZHENYAO

Mr. H. XIAODI

Cuba:

Mr. L. SOLA VILA

Mr. P. NUÑEZ MOSQUERA

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. J. STRUCKA

Mr. E. ZAPOTOCKY

Mr. A. CIMA

Egypt:

Mr. El S.A.R. EL REEDY
Mr. I.A. HASSAN
Mr. M.N. FAHY
Miss W. BASSIM

Ethiopia:

Mr. T. TERREFE
Mr. F. YOHANNES

France:

Mr. F. de LA GORCE
Mr. J. de BEAUSSE
Mr. B. d'ABOVILLE
Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. G. HERDER
Mr. H. THIELICKE

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. H. WEGENER
Mr. N. KLINGLER
Mr. W.E. VON DEM HAGEN
Mr. W. ROHR

Hungary:

Mr. I. KOMIVES
Mr. F. GAJDA
Mr. C. GYORFFY

India:

Mr. A.P. VENKATESWARAN
Mr. S. SARAN

Indonesia:

Mr. N. SUTRESNA
Mr. E. SOEPRAPTO
Mr. HARYOMATARAM

Iran:

Mr. M.J. MAHALIATI
Mr. M. NOSRATI
Mr. S. MOHAMMADI

Italy:

Mr. M. ALESSI
Mr. B. CABRAS
Mr. C.M. OLIVA
Mr. E. DI GIOVANNI

Japan:

Mr. Y. OKAWA
Mr. M. TAKAHASHI
Mr. K. TANAKA
Mr. T. ARAI

Kenya:

Mr. J. MUTHU

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mrs. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO

Mongolia:

Mr. D. ERDENBILEG
Mr. S.O. BOLD

Morocco:

Mr. M. HALFAOUI

Netherlands:

Mr. R.H. FEIN
Mr. H. WAGENMAKERS

Nigeria:

Mr. G.O. IJEWERE
Mr. W.O. AKINSANYA
Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI

Pakistan:

Mr. M. AHMAD
Mr. M. AKRAM
Mr. T. ALTAF

Peru:

Mr. F. VALDIVIESO
Mr. J. BENAVIDES

Poland:

Mr. B. SUJKA
Mr. G. RUSSIN
Mr. T. STROJWAS

Romania:

Mr. M. MALITA
Mr. T. IELESCANU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. T. JAYAKODDY

Sweden:

Mrs. I. THORSSON
Mr. C. LIDGARD
Mr. C. M. HYLTIENIUS
Mr. H. BERGLUND
Mr. G. ANDERSSON
Mr. S. THEOLIN
Mr. J. PRAWITZ

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV
Mr. Y.K. NAZARKIN
Mr. L.A. NAUMOV
Mr. V.M. GANJA
Mr. V.V. LOSHCHININ
Mr. Y.V. KOSTENKO
Mr. B.T. SOURIKOV
Mr. M.M. IPPOLITOV
Mr. S.B. BATSANOV
Mr. G.V. BERDENNIKOV
Mr. V.A. EVDOKOUCHIN
Mr. V.A. KROKHA

United Kingdom:

Mr. D.M. SUMMERHAYES
Mr. L.J. MIDDLETON
Mrs. J.I. LINK
Miss J.E.F. WRIGHT

United States of America:

Mr. L.G. FIELDS
Mr. M. BUSBY
Miss K. CRITTENBERGER
Mr. J. LEONARD
Mr. J. MISKEL
Mr. R.F. SCOTT
Miss L.M. SHEA
Mr. J. GUNDERSEN

Venezuela:

Mr. R.R. NAVARRO

Mr. O.A. AGUILAR

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. VRHUNEC

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC

Zaire:

Mrs. C. ESAKI EKANGA KABEYA

Secretary of the Committee on
Disarmament and Personal
Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the
Committee on Disarmament:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The CHAIRMAN: In the Name of God The Most Compassionate, The Most Merciful,

I declare open the 1982 session of the Committee on Disarmament and its one hundred and fiftieth plenary meeting.

The procession of the English alphabet has brought the Islamic Republic of Iran to occupy the Chair of this Committee during the month of February, and the privilege of doing so has fallen to me as the representative of that country. With the help of God, I shall do my best to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the Chairman in conformity with our rules of procedure and with the assistance of our distinguished Secretary, Ambassador Jaipal, whose counsel has been most valuable. Needless to say, I seek the co-operation of all members, for I am quite new to my task. But I hope that the moral and spiritual sincerity with which our Islamic revolution has armed me will suffice to compensate for any deficiency in my formal experience as a diplomat, as I believe that the cause of disarmament needs strong doses of moral concern for the future of mankind if it is to survive.

At the outset, may I thank Ambassador Anwar Sani of Indonesia for his outstanding contribution to the work of the Committee during his tenure as Chairman. His skill and diplomatic experience guided the Committee through difficult discussions and have been particularly helpful to us all in the preparations leading to the present session.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee, I would like to welcome the new representatives who join us for the first time as leaders of their respective delegations. May I also welcome the presence once again among us of Mrs. Inga Thorsson, head of the Swedish delegation, who will address the Committee today.

I also wish to note the presence of Mr. Ustinov, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs of the United Nations, and of Mr. Martenson, the Assistant Secretary-General of the Centre for Disarmament.

We are commencing our work for this year at a time when the winds appear to be blowing against the ship of disarmament, and therefore the crew will have to work with greater energy in order to keep the ship on its true course and prevent it from following the currents of the arms race. The diabolic weapons of mass destruction that ill-minded and immoral men have invented should make us stop and think how we can collectively prevent global catastrophe. For we cannot possibly live as rational human beings under the growing shadow of nuclear holocaust.

I come from a region in which my country has been defending itself against unprovoked and continuing aggression. We have personal experience of the terrible ravages of war and of the heroic sacrifices made by the flower of our revolutionary youth. Our sufferings have redoubled our faith in the noble cause of disarmament, just as the total failure of the political and strategic objectives of the aggression against us has proved the utter futility of war. We therefore consider it our duty to strive for the establishment of an international mechanism that could be mobilized against the destructive potentialities of the arms race. The human species was not created so that it might destroy itself. There is a higher destiny for mankind, but it cannot be fulfilled unless war and the instruments of war are renounced by all nation States, and especially by those which have the greatest capacity to wage war. This certainly requires man to rediscover the origins of the essence of his "raison d'être".

(The Chairman)

This is no longer the dream of philosophers. It has become the political imperative for man's survival. I hope that in our thoughts and actions we will be guided by the concerns and interests of mankind, and by faith in disarmament.

I now give the floor to the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General and Secretary of the Committee, Ambassador Rikhi Jaipal, who will read out the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Mr. JAIPAL (Personal Representative of the Secretary-General and Secretary of the Committee on Disarmament): The following is the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Committee on Disarmament at the opening of its 1982 session:

"It is with a feeling of profound disquiet and a deep sense of responsibility that I avail myself of this opportunity to address a message to the Committee on Disarmament. As I have only recently assumed office, I wish on this occasion to pledge my wholehearted and resolute devotion to the cause of disarmament, and my strong personal support for your endeavours. Fifty years ago today, here in Geneva, the first international conference on disarmament was convened by the League of Nations. Two basic premises were set forth at the very opening of that conference: first, that armed peace is no guarantee against war, and second, that the arms race, in itself a source of mutual fears and suspicions, paralyses the will to peace.

"As the Committee starts its 1982 session today, against a background of widespread public concern at the deadly dangers of the arms race, these two premises remain as pertinent as they were half a century ago, but the danger to mankind has grown immensely. The arms race has piled up weapons of incredible destructiveness and the existence of nuclear weapons has given particular urgency to disarmament efforts.

"It must be said, in sober truth, that the current levels of arsenals no longer bear any relationship to the rational requirements of self-defence. These arsenals are now so huge that, should they ever be used, they would menace the future of the human species. It is also true that the ever greater accumulation of armaments causes an enormous drain on resources desperately needed for reducing the burden of poverty on the majority of the world's population. The amount required to provide the basic necessities of the entire human race for one year is estimated to be less than the cost of the arms race in a month.

"At the heart of the problem of prevention of war is the question of disarmament, which has been stubbornly resisting the efforts of various organs, including the Committee on Disarmament. A favourable international climate is, of course, highly desirable for the success of disarmament negotiations. The building of mutual confidence, the correction of

(Mr. Jaipal, Personal Representative of the Secretary-General
and Secretary of the Committee on Disarmament)

misconceptions of one another's military capacities and intentions, the peaceful resolution of disputes, the adoption of verification measures, the promotion of mutual security through respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States -- even the reduction of economic disparities between North and South -- these are all as important as the technical aspects of disarmament.

"The world cannot afford to wait for the dawn of ideal conditions before undertaking measures of disarmament. Disarmament cannot be achieved through confrontation and condemnation. The short-term benefit of military advantage is invariably neutralized by the long-term harm of the arms race it provokes. We should recognize before it is too late that the most basic aspect of all peoples and nations is their shared humanity and consequently their shared responsibility for a world without war.

"The present session of the Committee on Disarmament takes place at a time when international relations are under severe strain. The understanding between East and West so painstakingly built over the last decade and so crucial to a stable peace has been eroded. The past year has witnessed major acceleration in the upward spiral of military expenditures around the world.

"At this stage in international affairs, there is a compelling need to make a credible and substantial advance towards arms limitation and disarmament. The United Nations is preparing, at the forthcoming second special session of the General Assembly, to breathe new life into disarmament efforts and to restore the momentum of progress in this field. There is no question that such an effort is vitally necessary if we are to halt the arms race and check the drift towards confrontation. The special session will be closely followed by a growing world audience increasingly alarmed by the prospects of a nuclear holocaust. In this endeavour, the role of the Committee on Disarmament is crucial. There is widespread interest in the comprehensive programme of disarmament that the Committee is engaged in formulating. The importance of such a programme for initiating a planned and progressive process of disarmament in stages would provide the General Assembly at the special session with a solid and encouraging basis for its efforts.

"Another important issue is the long-awaited conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. This would provide a major impetus for further progress towards the limitation and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. It would also be of significance in strengthening the non-proliferation régime.

"Renewed and sustained efforts on the part of the Committee on Disarmament, particularly the nuclear powers, to make substantive progress on the complex issue of nuclear disarmament are also of paramount importance. It is clear that some States have a larger share of responsibility than others, and I hope that proposals and practical suggestions will be made in response to the resolution recently adopted by the General Assembly on the prevention of nuclear war.

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and Secretary of the Committee on Disarmament)

"While the international atmosphere remains clouded at present, the resumption of bilateral negotiations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on intermediate-range missiles marks a step forward. I hope that negotiations will be resumed soon on strategic arms reductions as well. Progress on these questions is of vital importance for the entire world community. They would also have a favourable effect on the work of the Committee on Disarmament and contribute significantly to the success of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament."

"I wish the Committee every success in its endeavours."

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Jaipal and I would request him kindly to convey to the Secretary-General of the United Nations our appreciation for his important message.

In this connection, may I also draw the attention of delegations to document CD/231, entitled "Letter dated 1 February 1982 from the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament, transmitting the resolutions on disarmament adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session".

I announce with deep regret the death of His Excellency Ambassador Vittorio Cordero di Montezemolo on Monday, 1 February.

Ambassador Montezemolo had been the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations Office and the other international organizations in Geneva since July 1979. He was the Permanent Representative of Italy to the Committee on Disarmament until its 1981 session. On my behalf and that of the members of the Committee, I wish to convey my sincere condolences to the delegation of Italy.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Mexico, Netherlands, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Belgium, Czechoslovakia and France.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the distinguished representative of Mexico, Ambassador García Robles.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): This is the second time in the history of the Committee on Disarmament that a member -- in the present instance, Iran -- of what is known as the Group of 21, to which my country belongs, has come to preside over the opening meeting of the annual session of this the only multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament. Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to offer you my delegation's sincere congratulations on that score, and to promise you our utmost co-operation in the performance of your important duties. I should also like to place on record once again our deep appreciation for the distinguished and efficient manner in which your immediate predecessor, Ambassador Sani, the distinguished representative of Indonesia, guided the work of the Committee during the final month of its 1981 session. My delegation associates itself with the warm words of welcome you expressed at the opening of our meeting, and also with the condolences which you have just extended on the occasion of the death of Ambassador Montezemolo.

It is the time-honoured custom for the delegation of Mexico to open the general debate in the Committee on Disarmament, and in doing so today I should like first to refer to one of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session: resolution 36/83, which the General Assembly adopted in December 1981 by 138 votes in favour and none against. In that resolution, the General Assembly, the international community's most representative body, after recalling with satisfaction that the United Kingdom and the Netherlands had become parties, in 1969 and 1971 respectively, to Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, generally known as the "Treaty of Tlatelolco", noted also, with satisfaction, that the United States of America had likewise become a party to that Protocol on 23 November 1981, upon the deposit of its instrument of ratification. Consequently, there remains pending only one ratification, that of France, as the Protocol is open only to the four States which are "internationally responsible" for territories lying within the limits of the geographical zone established in the Treaty.

Two reasons have prompted me to make this choice: the first, which is, I think, readily understandable, is that, as you all know, the Government of Mexico has the honour to act as the Depositary Government of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which created the only nuclear-weapon-free zone covering densely populated areas which it has been possible to establish to date. The second is that the measure to which I have just referred, although modest, is the only concrete disarmament measure to have occurred since the Committee concluded its 1981 session on Friday, 21 August of last year.

Among the very many other resolutions on disarmament which the General Assembly adopted on the basis of draft resolutions referred to it by its First Committee, resolution 36/97 I on "Strategic Arms Limitation Talks" certainly deserves priority. I think it worth mentioning in connection with this resolution firstly that it was adopted by consensus, and secondly that in its preamble the General Assembly.

(1) Reaffirmed once again its resolution 33/91 C of 16 December 1978, in which it, inter alia:

(a) Reiterated its satisfaction at the solemn declarations made in 1977 by the heads of State of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in which they stated that they were ready to endeavour to reach agreements which would permit starting the gradual reduction of existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons and moving towards their complete, total destruction, with a view to a world truly free of nuclear weapons;

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(b) Recalled that one of the disarmament measures deserving the highest priority, included in the Programme of Action set forth in section III of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, was the conclusion of the bilateral agreement known as SALT II, which should be followed promptly by further strategic arms limitation negotiations between the two parties, leading to agreed significant reductions of and qualitative limitations on strategic arms;

(c) Stressed that in the Programme of Action it was established that, in the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, all nuclear-weapon States, in particular those among them which possess the most important nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility.

Resolution 36/97 I of last December did not confine itself to the reaffirmations which I have just read out, important as they are; it went further:

(2) It also reaffirmed that, as stated in its resolution 34/87 F of 11 December 1979, it shares the conviction expressed by the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the joint statement of principles and basic guidelines for subsequent negotiations on the limitation of strategic arms that early agreement on the further limitation and further reduction of strategic arms would serve to strengthen international peace and security and to reduce the risk of outbreak of nuclear war.

Indeed, last December's resolution went even further:

(3) It recalled that, at its first special session devoted to disarmament, it proclaimed that existing arsenals of nuclear weapons alone are more than sufficient to destroy all life on earth; that the increase in weapons, especially nuclear weapons, far from helping to strengthen international security, on the contrary weakens it; and that the existence of nuclear weapons and the continuing arms race pose a threat to the very survival of mankind, for which reasons the General Assembly declared that all the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the sphere of disarmament.

In the operative part of the resolution adopted last December— which, it is worth stressing once again, was adopted by consensus, which means that it was adopted with the full assent of the two nuclear Superpowers— the General Assembly, inter alia:

(1) Urged the United States and the Soviet Union to ensure "that the process begun by the SALT I Treaty and signature of the SALT II Treaty should continue and be built upon";

(2) Likewise expressly urged those two States "to pursue negotiations, in accordance with the principle of equality and equal security, looking towards the achievement of an agreement which will provide for substantial reductions and significant qualitative limitations of strategic arms";

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(3) Welcomed "the commencement of negotiations at Geneva on 30 November 1981 between representatives of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on nuclear arms in accordance with the joint communiqué issued by Secretary of State Haig and Foreign Minister Gromyko on 23 September 1981" and expressed confidence that "such negotiations will facilitate the enhancement of stability and international security";

(4) Invited the two Governments to "keep the General Assembly appropriately informed of the results of their negotiations, in conformity with the provisions of paragraphs 27 and 114 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly"; and

(5) Stressed "the need for both parties to bear constantly in mind that not only their national interests but also the vital interests of all the peoples of the world are at stake in this question".

We must confess that it has been a source of great disappointment to us that, despite the substantial changes which the delegation of Mexico and those of the other States which co-sponsored the original draft resolution—submitted to the First Committee of the General Assembly as document A/C.1/36/L.42—agreed to introduce in the draft in order to make it acceptable to the United States and the Soviet Union and thus enable it to be adopted by consensus, there are those who now maintain that the negotiations on medium-range nuclear weapons which have been taking place in this city and the negotiations on strategic nuclear arms (whether they continue to be labelled SALT or are henceforth known as START) which, in accordance with the provisions of the resolution I have just quoted should already have been or should be on the point of being resumed—there are those, I repeat, who maintain that there should be a "linking" or "linkage" of these negotiations with other events in international life.

Such an attitude could not be more discouraging. The international behaviour of the nuclear Superpowers, it must be acknowledged, often leaves much to be desired, whether on the part of one or of the other or of both at the same time. Obviously, then, to accept the "linkage" argument to which I have just referred would mean that there could never, or virtually never, be serious negotiations on disarmament. This is unjustifiable if it is agreed that, as was emphatically reiterated by the latest resolution which the General Assembly adopted by consensus less than two months ago, both parties must "bear constantly in mind that not only their national interests but also the vital interests of all the peoples of the world are at stake in this question". The incompatibility of this argument with a policy of international peace and co-operation in keeping with the United Nations Charter is all the more evident if we recall what those parties solemnly declared in 1978 when they affirmed in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament that:

"The arms race, particularly in its nuclear aspect, runs counter to efforts to achieve further relaxation of international tension, to establish international relations based on peaceful co-existence and trust between all States, and to develop broad international co-operation and understanding. The arms race impedes the realization of the purposes, and is incompatible with the principles, of the Charter of the United Nations, especially respect for sovereignty, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States."

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The foregoing leads us to hope that the report which, pursuant to the provisions of paragraphs 27 and 114 of the Final Document, the two nuclear Superpowers will surely submit to the General Assembly at its second special session which is to begin on 7 June next, will contain news of positive developments, not only with respect to medium-range nuclear weapons but also as concerns strategic nuclear arms.

Another item, also relating to an aspect of nuclear disarmament, which was on the agenda of the last session of the General Assembly and which has rightly occupied first place on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament—we are certain that it will do so again this year—is the cessation of all nuclear weapons test explosions. I shall now present some comments on this item.

Just as it had done at its thirty-fifth session, at its thirty-sixth session the General Assembly adopted two resolutions on this item, resolutions 36/84 and 36/85.

In the second of these resolutions, somewhat guardedly but nevertheless unequivocally, the Committee on Disarmament was requested "to take the necessary steps, including the establishment of a working group, to initiate substantive negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty as a matter of the highest priority at the beginning of its session to be held in 1982".

The first of these two resolutions, which the Mexican delegation had the privilege of proposing for adoption, was unquestionably the clearer and more comprehensive, both as regards the background of the matter and with regard to the objectives pursued and the means of attaining them.

In its preambular part, assuredly in order to bring these facts well to the fore since they are essential to a correct evaluation of this question, the resolution recalls that the subject has been under consideration for more than 25 years in the United Nations; that the General Assembly has adopted more than 40 resolutions on it; that on seven different occasions the General Assembly has condemned nuclear-weapon tests in the strongest terms; that whatever may be the differences on the question of verification, there is no valid reason for delaying the conclusion of a treaty on that subject; that when the existing means of verification and the exhaustive technical and scientific studies that have been made of all aspects of the problem are taken into account, the only conclusion to be drawn is that all that is needed now is a political decision; that the three nuclear-weapon States which act as depositaries of what is known as the partial test-ban Treaty undertook in that instrument, almost 20 years ago, to seek the achievement of the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time; and that such an undertaking was explicitly reiterated in 1968 in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

In the preamble to that resolution the General Assembly also recalled that in its resolution 35/145 A of 12 December 1980 it had urged all States members of the Committee on Disarmament to "support the creation, as from the beginning of its session in 1981, of an ad hoc working group which should begin the multilateral negotiations of the treaty for the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests", and deplored that, as stated in paragraph 44 of the Committee's report for that year, "the Committee on Disarmament was prevented from responding to that exhortation owing to the negative attitude of two nuclear-weapon States".

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In the operative part of the resolution the General Assembly, in addition to calling upon the States depositaries of the Moscow Treaty to institute a moratorium as a provisional measure, inter alia reiterated its grave concern that nuclear-weapon testing continues "against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of Member States"; reaffirmed its conviction that the treaty which has been the object of fruitless efforts for so many years "constitutes a vital element for the success of efforts to prevent both vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons and a contribution to nuclear disarmament"; and once again urged "all States members of the Committee on Disarmament":

"(a) To bear in mind that the consensus rule should not be used in such a manner as to prevent the establishment of subsidiary bodies for the effective discharge of the functions of the Committee;

(b) To support the creation by the Committee, as from the beginning of its session in 1982, of an ad hoc working group which should begin the multilateral negotiation of a treaty for the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests;

(c) To exert their best endeavours in order that the Committee may transmit to the General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament the multilaterally negotiated text of such a treaty".

It is these three exhortations or recommendations of the General Assembly which we should seek faithfully to carry out when we embark on our substantive work. It should be recalled that on 30 July 1981 the delegations of Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sweden and Yugoslavia presented a working paper (CD/204) suggesting that if, "upon initiation of the Committee's session corresponding to 1982" -- that is, the session which we are beginning today -- "it were not yet possible to give effect to the repeated requests of the Group of 21" for the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the item "Nuclear test ban", the proposal contained in that working paper should be formally considered in plenary session by the negotiating organ. The proposal in question is for the addition to rule 25 of the rules of procedure of the Committee on Disarmament of the following:

"The rule of consensus shall not be used either in such a way as to prevent the establishment of subsidiary organs for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee, in conformity with the provisions of rule 23."

My delegation ventures to hope that it will not be necessary to resort to this revision of the rules of procedure in order to prevent any attempt to transfer the abuse of the veto, so frequently seen in the United Nations Security Council, to this multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, which is of an essentially different nature.

While nuclear weapons have the highest priority, according to the provisions of the Final Document, next in order of priority, according to that same Document, come other weapons of mass destruction, the most important of these being chemical weapons, the only such weapons to be specifically mentioned.

Here again, as in the case of the test ban, the General Assembly adopted two complementary resolutions, 36/96 A and 36/96 B, on the subject of "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons". From the combined content of the two resolutions it is clear that the Assembly wished explicitly and unequivocally:

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

To reaffirm the necessity of "strict observance by all States of the principles and objectives" of the Geneva Protocol and "of the adherence by all States to the Convention" on the prohibition of biological and toxin weapons;

To reaffirm also the need "for the earliest elaboration and conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction";

To call upon the United States and the Soviet Union to "resume at the earliest possible date bilateral negotiations" on the subject and to "submit their joint initiative" to the Committee on Disarmament;

Also to call upon all States to "refrain from any action which could impede negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons and specifically to refrain from production and deployment of binary and other new types of chemical weapons, as well as from stationing weapons in those States where there are no such weapons at present".

It should also be pointed out that the General Assembly appears to have wished to emphasize the importance it attaches to another appeal which should be of particular interest to all members of the Committee on Disarmament as it is addressed to the Committee itself. The Committee is urged, in connection with the proposed convention on the elimination of chemical weapons, "to continue, as from the beginning of its session to be held in 1982, negotiations on such a multilateral convention as a matter of high priority, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives, and in particular to re-establish its Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons with an appropriately revised mandate enabling the Committee to achieve agreement on a chemical weapons convention at the earliest date".

My delegation considers that it is the inescapable duty of this negotiating body to heed this appeal by the General Assembly, which appears in identical terms in the two resolutions that were adopted. Resolution 36/96 A was in fact adopted by no less than 147 votes in favour and none against, with a single abstention.

The six resolutions which I have just rapidly reviewed constitute barely one eighth of the very large number of resolutions which the General Assembly adopted on disarmament questions last December at its thirty-sixth session. It would be out of place to try to examine here, however superficially, all the other resolutions. I should like to say, however, that certain of those resolutions, for example, the resolution on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, are of such particular significance as to merit an entire statement, and I hope to be able to make such a statement when the time comes in our programme of work for the consideration of that item. To conclude my address today, I shall confine myself to adding a few words about the World Disarmament Campaign and the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament.

With regard to the former, the General Assembly adopted resolution 36/92 C by 143 votes in favour and none against, with only 2 abstentions. In that resolution, after noting with satisfaction the contents of the study carried out by the Secretary-General on the subject of the Campaign, and commending its conclusions, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to transmit to it at its second special session both the study and the opinions thereon received from Governments, so that it might proceed to the solemn launching of the Campaign.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

The resolution explicitly states that one of the main actions to be taken for the launching of the Campaign should be the holding of "a pledging conference" to take place at the initial stage of the special session, when Heads of State or Government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs will be in New York, and it is to be hoped that there will be many of them attending the session, as was the case for the first special session in 1978.

With regard to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, I should merely like to recall what I have often said, both here and in New York, concerning our conviction that the success or failure of the special session which is drawing near will depend largely on what happens with respect to that Programme. This increases the responsibility of this Committee, to which the General Assembly at its first special session on disarmament entrusted the elaboration of the draft text. As we all know, the Committee is endeavouring to prepare a draft programme in its Ad Hoc Working Group on that subject, which has now held 47 meetings: 10 in 1980, 24 in 1981, and 12 so far this year. I should also like to repeat what I said last October, upon opening the general debate in the First Committee of the General Assembly, when I ventured to put forward the two conditions which my delegation considers the Programme must meet, namely, faithfully to reflect the guidelines clearly set forth in paragraph 109 of the Final Document of 1978, and, not to contain any provision which, in letter or in spirit, could be interpreted as a step backwards in comparison with that Final Document.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Mexico for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. FEIN (Netherlands): The Netherlands delegation wishes to congratulate you upon your assumption of the chairmanship for this first month of the 1982 session of the Committee on Disarmament. In this function you will carry a heavy responsibility. We wish to assure you of the willingness of the Netherlands delegation to co-operate in all efforts that will be made to promote our common cause and I extend to you our best wishes for success. It is with sadness that I join in the words of condolence that you addressed on our behalf to the Italian delegation with respect to the demise of our good friend Ambassador Montezemolo.

In my statement today, at the opening of this year's session of the Committee on Disarmament, I shall first make some general observations and discuss the nature and the modalities of our work. Then I shall indicate what we see as our main tasks during this year's session.

But first I find myself obliged to make an observation of a political nature. It has been observed many a time in this negotiating body, and never contradicted convincingly, that disarmament negotiations are by their very nature highly sensitive to the general political climate since they are related directly to the security interests of member States. While it might be possible in certain other international forums to isolate oneself from the upheavals of international events in this restless world, this is not so in disarmament negotiations. Having said this, I should also add that on the other hand the Committee on Disarmament is not the proper place to deal substantively with the various international crises as they unfortunately occur from time to time in various parts of the world. If we did so, we would make still less progress in our work than unfortunately is the case, and we would not serve our cause well.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

It is from this balanced stance that I shall say today, in this forum, that my Government deplores the grave developments in Poland, the imposition of martial law, the massive violation of human rights and the suppression of fundamental civil liberties, which are in clear contravention of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Final Act of Helsinki. Moreover, if a great military power time and again deems it fit to impose its will upon its neighbours in the presumed interest of its own security, then this cannot but have adverse repercussions on a wide range of international relations, including disarmament negotiations. For the only conclusion one can draw from such behaviour is that, when all is said and done, the final, overriding factor in its relations with its neighbours is its own national security interest, at the expense of the national interests of others.

I now wish to make a few observations about the multilateral disarmament machinery as it exists today and as it concerns us, that is, the Committee on Disarmament here in Geneva on the one hand, and the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Disarmament Commission in New York on the other.

Those of us who participated in the General Assembly last year were witness to the fact that the First Committee again passed a growing number of resolutions especially dealing with disarmament. And those of us who have been engaged in disarmament work, or at least United Nations work, for a longer period of time will recall that the First Committee has not always been that productive, at least if one counts the proposing of resolutions as proof of productivity. If we go back, say, twenty years -- to the fifteenth session of the General Assembly -- you will note that the First Committee at that time adopted only five resolutions, each with just two or three preambular paragraphs and a few operative paragraphs. Those resolutions were, each of them, negotiated during several weeks, and each word was weighed carefully. As a consequence those resolutions were taken seriously by all Members. Ten years later, in 1969, at the General Assembly's twenty-fourth session, the number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly had grown to nine and their length had grown considerably. Last year the General Assembly adopted no less than 48 resolutions under the title of disarmament, with a total of 623 paragraphs, both preambular and operative.

As I said and Ambassador Garcia Robles referred to this, but I shall not hide from you that I do not consider this development a positive one. The less so since several of these last year's resolutions, which were cheerfully adopted by the General Assembly, are meaningless, if not worse. In my personal opinion, some of these resolutions were propagandistic, or even ill-intentioned. Some I found rather foolish.

The Committee on Disarmament, which is expected to be a serious negotiating body, would do well to keep that in mind, and not to assume that just because there was a majority in the General Assembly for this or that resolution, its recommendations are necessarily useful to real disarmament. In any case, this delegation will treat a resolution just as seriously as we think it was proposed. And I can only express the hope that the First Committee will find a way to conduct its business in a more responsible manner than has unfortunately become its habit of late.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

Having said this about the First Committee in New York, I should add in all fairness that it cannot be said that the Committee on Disarmament itself is entirely without blame as far as the conduct of its own work is concerned. We have at times witnessed in this Committee a tendency to use this negotiating forum as just another platform from which to issue declaratory statements. We have unfortunately also witnessed a growing tendency to employ certain tactical moves, sometimes of a deceptive nature, to prevent progress.

But fortunately we can also say that there have been some very serious attempts to improve on our working methods and procedures.

In this context I wish to recall the useful exchange we had last year on improving the functioning of the Committee on Disarmament. Upon reflection, we believe that ideally the Committee on Disarmament should be in session the year round, in three or four sessional periods with intermediate recesses for study, evaluation etc. If the Committee on Disarmament were to meet the year round, delegations could be staffed with negotiating experts who would not be bothered by deliberations elsewhere. Actually, it is a curious phenomenon that under the present system those responsible for conducting negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament are also called upon to judge the results of Committee on Disarmament negotiations in deliberative organs, such as the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. Thus, the viability of the Committee on Disarmament suffers. Valuable time which could be used for negotiations is instead sacrificed to meetings of a purely deliberative nature.

We propose, therefore, that the Committee on Disarmament should reach its conclusions on a more efficient work structure before the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. For both practical and constitutional reasons, it is for the Committee on Disarmament itself to put its house in order rather than to leave this task to the General Assembly at its second special session.

We would suggest that the Committee on Disarmament should be given the function of a steering committee, a board of management, under which permanent, possibly perennial, working groups would operate. These working groups would enjoy a somewhat independent status, so that they could set their own schedules and create subsidiary bodies. They would have the same chairmen all along as well as a medium-sized bureau. There should be no obligation for the full membership of the CD to participate in each of them. At the same time, participation in their work should be open to States that are not members of the CD and that have an interest in the subject matter of the working group. This arrangement would go a long way towards solving the membership problem of the CD. The Committee on Disarmament secretariat could be expanded with experts. It might be desirable for the Committee on Disarmament to recruit again, as the EMDC and the CCD did for a while, a complete team of translators and stenographers. Then, verbatim records would come out at much shorter notice and delegations would no longer feel obliged to read out prepared statements. Serious negotiations would warrant the additional cost which I presume would be shared by members of the Committee. The working groups could report back to the Committee on Disarmament at regular intervals or as required. The Committee on Disarmament could then evaluate results and, where appropriate, supply further guidance to the working groups. At the same time, a Committee on Disarmament acting as a steering committee would be free to function as a clearing house for political tensions, so that the working groups would not be exposed to them.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

We realize that organizational improvement of the Committee on Disarmament does not in itself guarantee better results. Still, we cannot ignore the serious flaws in the present system under which each working group meets once a week. One of the shortcomings of this system is that it does not reflect the fact that during various phases of negotiations one subject might become much more time consuming than another.

Coming now to the second part of my statement, in which I shall outline the Netherlands approach to this year's work programme of the Committee on Disarmament, I should be remiss if I did not hail the initiation here in Geneva of bilateral talks between the United States of America and the USSR on intermediate range nuclear forces. We consider not less important the resumption as soon as possible of bilateral negotiations between the United States and the USSR on the reduction of strategic weapons, since a substantial reduction in nuclear weapons would be the most important step towards nuclear disarmament. The Netherlands Government hopes strongly that the prospects for these negotiations will improve in the near future. We have always deplored the fact that the SALT-II Treaty did not enter into force. All the more, therefore, we now express the hope that the two new sets of negotiations I mentioned a moment ago will constitute between them a basis for further and broader arms control negotiations between the two States involved. We strongly urge the United States and the USSR to expand their joint efforts to other realms of no less vital importance, such as, firstly, a comprehensive test ban, where resumption of the trilateral talks together with the United Kingdom is called for, secondly, a convention banning chemical weapons, and thirdly, the arms race in outer space.

It stands to reason that most activities in the Committee on Disarmament spring session will be geared to contributing to successful preparations for the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In that connection, priority should be given to the initiation in the Committee on Disarmament of practical discussions on a comprehensive test ban, to which item the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament attaches the highest priority. I shall not dwell at length on the reasons which bring us to focus on a CTB. In many forums we have repeatedly expounded them time and again. We hope for a gradual diminishing of the role of nuclear weapons. To that end a CTB treaty would make a significant contribution, helping to stop both vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. In fact, achieving a CTB treaty would be a concrete, practical demonstration of how to come to grips with the many highly complicated aspects of the nuclear arms race. Another pressing reason for establishing a CTB treaty at short notice is that without a CTB the maintenance of a non-discriminatory and credible non-proliferation régime is difficult to achieve.

The Netherlands delegation calls for the opening of serious and constructive negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament on a comprehensive test ban, but we fear that in fact interest in a CTB treaty is on the wane. It is a matter of great concern to the Netherlands Government that every now and then, from various quarters, the relevance of a CTB treaty for all time is questioned or belittled.

In our view both the ripeness of the file and the urgency of the matter call for the establishment by the Committee on Disarmament of a CTB working group with a meaningful mandate. We hold the role of the Committee in achieving a CTB treaty for all time to be an essential one if the ensuing treaty is going to attract -- as it should -- the widest possible international support and adherence. In our view,

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

not only is it necessary to arrange adequate verification measures in a CTB treaty but we are convinced that adequate verification is also possible. As far as there are technical problems, we are confident that they can be overcome, inter alia, by drawing on the experience gained and to be gained in the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts on seismic events, in which the Netherlands participates. I may recall that significant progress has been made by this Group in the design of a global verification system. Effective continuation of these efforts, including a full scale test of the seismic system, is called for. The time is also ripe for working out the administrative elements for such a seismic system within a CTB treaty.

A corollary to a CTB treaty would be a so-called "cut-off" agreement which would ban the production of fissionable materials for weapons use. This, too, would be an effective step in curbing the nuclear arms race. We are not unaware of the verification problems involved, but a cut-off presents one of the few effective nuclear arms control measures for which in principle an international verification system has already been worked out, to wit: nuclear safeguards. It seems logical, therefore, that the Committee on Disarmament should deal with this matter as well.

It stands to reason that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons should be re-established. The Netherlands delegation is one of those who hold that under the inspiring chairmanship of Ambassador Lidgard of Sweden the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons came close to exhausting its mandate last year. We hope very much, therefore, that a new mandate can be agreed upon now, enabling the Ad Hoc Working Group to elaborate, as a matter of high priority, a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and on their destruction.

Next to matters relating to the scope of a chemical weapons convention, the Ad Hoc Working Group will have to deal extensively with its verification provisions. We believe that verification should serve as one component in a system that, together with a meaningful scope and a reasonable amount of protective measures, will give a State more national security than the maintenance of the chemical weapon option would do. Without adequate verification, States will not be confident that the provisions of a convention will be observed. As we stated before, it is our considered view that within the framework of a chemical weapons convention, national and international verification are complementary. After all, we are dealing with a proven weapon system, ready and available in large amounts.

At the end of last year's summer session, at the 143rd meeting of the Committee on Disarmament, on 4 August 1981, I had the honour to introduce document CD/203 concerning consultative and co-operative verification measures and a complaints procedure in the framework of a chemical weapons convention. This document gives a complete outline of a reasonable, but effective, verification system and was designed in such a way as to take care especially of practical needs. Allow me briefly to recapitulate the main characteristics of our proposals:

Consultation, co-operation, verification and complaints are not treated individually but form elements of one integrated, consistent system;

National and international verification are therefore interlinked;

The establishment of national implementation agencies will be called for;

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

The national implementation agency will, inter alia, work closely together with a consultative committee to be established;

The consultative committee should permanently oversee the destruction or diversion for permitted purposes of declared stocks of chemical weapons;

The consultative committee must carry out the supervision of the destruction and diversion through on-site inspections on a permanent basis;

Through random on-site inspections the consultative committee will check periodically that the production of supertoxic lethal chemicals does not exceed agreed quantities;

With a view to enhancing confidence, the consultative committee should undertake inspections on a random basis at facilities on the territory of States parties that will on a regular basis be assigned by lot;

The consultative committee shall be competent to enquire into facts concerning alleged ambiguities in, or violations of, the compliance with the convention;

In the context of such an enquiry the consultative committee would be competent to undertake on-site inspections after consultation with the State party concerned. If the latter State party, however, does not agree to such an on-site inspection, it must provide appropriate explanations;

Each State party to the convention may use national technical means of verification;

Complaints can be lodged with the Security Council. Each State party undertakes to co-operate in carrying out any investigation which the Security Council may initiate.

In view of both the outcome of last year's activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Security Assurances and of the massive support for General Assembly resolution 36/95, introduced by Pakistan, my delegation is certainly in favour of the re-establishment of the negative security assurances Working Group. In fact we were pleased and encouraged by the positive attention which we received when last year we proposed a model "common formula" for a Security Council resolution covering the common ground contained in the national statements of the nuclear-weapon States. It seems, however, that last year the Ad Hoc Working Group took things as far as we can carry them and that the ball is now also very much in the camp of the nuclear-weapon States. We call therefore for a joint effort by the nuclear-weapon States involved to bring their respective negative security assurances nearer to each other and possibly to harmonize them. As long as such a joint effort is not undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States involved, we can hardly conceive of room for much further work for the Ad Hoc Working Group on Security Assurances. The Working Group would therefore be more or less on a stand-by basis.

During the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly the Netherlands delegation actively worked for the adoption of a draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The General Assembly decided to entrust this important

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

matter to the Committee on Disarmament. We would suggest that the Committee should adopt a two-phase approach to this complicated and rather sensitive problem. The first phase, during the Committee's spring session, would consist of a mapping effort aimed at establishing an inventory of all the problems which might crop up. To that end, next to giving statements in plenary and submitting working documents, the CD delegations might be well advised to hold a series of informal meetings with experts. After that, in the second phase, which might coincide with the CD summer session, further appropriate action could follow, e.g. the establishment of an ad hoc working group.

Developments in the Committee on Disarmament in relation to the so-called radiological weapons have not persuaded us to change our position from that which we defined in 1970 in working paper CCD/291 when we concluded that: "Judging by the available information, possibilities for radiological warfare do exist theoretically but do not seem to be of much or even of any practical significance".

We largely agree with the excellent analysis contained in the statement of Ambassador Lidgard of Sweden at the 122nd meeting of the Committee on Disarmament, on 7 April 1981. We appreciated the Swedish attempt to beef up the otherwise skinny parameters of the draft radiological weapons convention. That is why, at the 137th meeting of this Committee, on 14 July 1981, the Netherlands delegation introduced a formula which slightly amended the original Swedish proposal.

Whatever the outcome of the negotiations in a re-established Ad Hoc Working Group on Radiological Weapons may be, the Netherlands delegation is not eager to lend a hand towards producing a convention just for the sake of making a Committee on Disarmament product available to the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. If there is going to be a radiological weapons convention, it will have to be one with real substance offering, inter alia, an effective prohibition against the dissemination of radioactive materials by attacks on civil nuclear energy installations with high radiation intensity.

We trust that the organizational arrangements required for the implementation of the work programme for this year's Committee on Disarmament session along the lines I have just set out will encounter no procedural difficulty. After all, the Committee on Disarmament can draw on experience gained in the past few years in the establishment of ad hoc working groups as well as in the selection of chairmen for them. The observations I made earlier on as regards the best work structure for the Committee on Disarmament are not meant to bear upon the tasks that lie immediately before us. The best procedure would seem to be to follow the course of action we took last year, while making a parallel endeavour to agree upon a better work structure for the future.

One of the agenda items of the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament will be the comprehensive programme of disarmament. The Committee on Disarmament has set up an Ad Hoc Working Group which is engaged in preparing this comprehensive programme. The Netherlands delegation supports the approach contained in the working document (CD/205) introduced last year by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany on behalf of a group of Western delegations.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

Perhaps I may make a few more personal remarks on this matter. To be frank, I am not entirely convinced that a comprehensive programme of disarmament can make a decisive contribution to disarmament. Of course, the world community can set priorities and goals and establish principles as was done in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, a text which we continue to endorse and uphold. Conceding that stages in the process of arms control and disarmament do exist, I am of the opinion, however, that one should not conceive of the relevance of these stages in their relation to time but rather in their relation to the prevailing degree of confidence, or the lack of it, in existing security arrangements. I still fail to see what over-all criterion could be applied to select a certain set of arms control measures to fit into a certain phase -- however important they may be as such -- if abstraction is made of the relevance of the arms concerned to a given particular security environment. In view of this, the introduction of necessarily vague deadlines seems somewhat useless and perhaps even harmful for the credibility of the whole enterprise. Arms control and disarmament is a painstaking job, requiring much devotion, where only a step-by-step approach, building on what has been achieved, will bring results. Obviously, the one important criterion that should be applied when embarking on negotiations on certain arms control measures is the verifiability of compliance with the provisions of the agreement that is sought. Such a realistic approach is conducive to creating confidence and without the constant nurturing of confidence there can be no progress in the pursuit of an arms control and disarmament programme which is meant to be taken seriously in both political and military terms.

In other words, for the Netherlands, the programme of action contained in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which was adopted by consensus, remains the guide for future actions. If a comprehensive programme of disarmament is to be meaningful, it should follow as closely as possible the programme of action contained in the Final Document. We are not prepared, however, to apply the degree of agreement reached on a comprehensive programme of disarmament as a yardstick for the success of arms control endeavours in general and of the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in particular. Arms control is a matter of here and now, a task to be pursued, inter alia, in the Committee on Disarmament in detailed, often difficult negotiations.

Whatever may become of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, the success of the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament will depend on the degree to which we all avoid superficial and unrealistic proposals and concentrate on the serious negotiation of effective and verifiable arms control measures that enhance security and stability.

In conclusion I wish to make a few remarks of a personal nature. It is now four years since I joined what was then called the CCD. During these four years I have had the privilege of serving my country in our efforts to promote arms control and disarmament, both here in Geneva and in New York. Soon I shall be leaving Geneva, perhaps not for good, but at least for the time being, and I shall relinquish my responsibilities as leader of the Netherlands delegation. Mr. Wagenmakers will be in charge until the arrival of my successor, Ambassador Frans van Dongen, probably within two weeks. I wish to place on record my very deep appreciation for the friendship and co-operation that I have enjoyed during the past four years from all my colleagues in the Committee on Disarmament and from the secretariat. And when I refer to my colleagues I mean not only those who represent countries allied to mine, but also others who belong to a different alliance, or to none at all. The fact that personal respect, esteem and friendship can exist side by side with an official relationship which sometimes puts us at odds, is perhaps one of the most gratifying and encouraging phenomena of our work in the Committee. I wish you all success in your work and happiness in your private lives.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of the Netherlands for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden): First of all, Mr. Chairman, let me extend to you the congratulations and good wishes of the Swedish delegation on your taking up the high and important office of Chairman of this Committee for the month of February. I can assure you of the full co-operation of the Swedish delegation with you in the Chair. I would also like to thank you very much for your personal kind words of welcome to me. Furthermore, I would like to extend the thanks of the Swedish delegation to the head of the Indonesian delegation for functioning so effectively in the Chair during the last part of the Committee's 1981 session.

Allow me also, Mr. Chairman, to associate the Swedish delegation with your words of welcome to the new heads of delegations to the Committee on Disarmament as well as with your words of condolence on the death of the head of the Italian delegation. May I also join you in extending to Ambassador Fein of the Netherlands our great appreciation for having been able to co-operate with him as head of the Netherlands delegation for four years. We have had, in my view, an excellent co-operation between our two delegations, and I would like to extend my thanks to him for that and to wish him good luck in his new office.

When I addressed the CCD on 31 January 1978, four months before the start of the United Nations General Assembly's first special session on disarmament I said, inter alia, the following:

"During this session the CCD will face the greatest challenge in its 16-year history. What does the outside world, anxiously and impatiently awaiting decisive results of years of disarmament efforts, think of us as a negotiating body? Is our image one of a group of idle talkers achieving glaringly insufficient concrete progress? Or have we managed to get the world outside this body to see the complexities of the problems that we have been asked to solve, the many serious and various obstacles that we come upon in our search for solutions? Does this outside world doubt or does it believe in a sincere and sufficiently strong political will among the governments in the CCD negotiations to reach these solutions at long last?

"I do not know the answers to such questions as I said four years ago. What I do know is that the efficiency and effectiveness of the CCD will be put under scrutiny in a few months from now by the most authoritative organ of the world community. It is up to us now, representatives of the two military blocs as well as of non-aligned and neutral States, to face this challenge and to work in such a way during this spring session that our special report to the United Nations will reflect lasting progress in the most important areas of our work."

When I reread these words I felt as if the past four years had disappeared, as in a dream, from the history of the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body. No results have been reached since then. The Committee on Disarmament has worked hard, but in vain. Significantly, the situation is the same as -- and in some cases worse than -- in early 1978.

True, some small progress can be registered in some of the negotiating working groups. But this is due not to contributions from the major military powers, but to the steady and persistent efforts of delegations from other States, more aware of the

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

tremendously dangerous situation in which the world finds itself today, more anxious to relieve this world of ours of the threats to its future than, obviously, is the case with the major powers.

Quite frankly, I have some doubts about the sincerity of these powers in their attitudes towards multilateral disarmament negotiations. My impression, founded not least on my experience of the past three years of the history of the Committee on Disarmament, is that the Superpowers weaken and undermine these negotiations. They prefer secret and limited talks, shut off from the views of others. They expect the Committee to play the role of a mail-box for their draft treaties to the United Nations, rare as those may be. They deny the Committee the right and the possibility to negotiate the highest priority items on its agenda, e.g. and foremost the CTB. They limit the mandates of the negotiating working groups in accordance with their own interests. They disregard legally not binding but politically committing resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on which they themselves have voted in favour.

Recently, reports have reached us which seem once again to confirm what I have just said. It is indeed shocking to learn from official sources, through the press, that the United States is planning to propose additional treaty negotiations on chemical weapons -- beside those conducted in this Committee at the request of the United Nations General Assembly -- in an attempt to head off criticism from the international community and to legitimize their preparations for the production of a new generation of exactly these weapons, should those negotiations fail. The talks proposed would be among the signatories of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. There is indeed a need to improve the Geneva protocol, which lacks a verification mechanism. But it is not acceptable that such negotiations be used as a smokescreen for the production of new chemical weapons.

According to the same information, it is planned to use the Committee on Disarmament for "discussing the issue", focusing on the contention that the USSR has been using a toxin against, inter alia, Afghan guerillas. Are we to understand that this multilateral negotiating body -- the Committee on Disarmament, will be degraded to a forum for exchanges of allegations and that the considerable progress made in the Committee's ad hoc negotiating working group will be discarded? I should appreciate an explanation from the United States delegation on its current plan.

All this has had a devastating effect on the standing of the Committee in the eyes of world public opinion, so newly aroused to activities of protest against an abominable situation. While there were earlier expectations and hopes, there is now disappointment. While there were earlier interest and involvement, there are now shrugged shoulders. I spoke in 1978 about "the outside world", at a time when all our meetings were closed to world public opinion. Since January 1979 the Committee on Disarmament has opened its plenary meetings to the public. In the following early stages the plenaries were well attended. For a long time now, the public gallery is most of the time almost empty. Particularly at a time when world public opinion is awake and marching, all members of the Committee should be seriously concerned about this state of its affairs. Do the citizens of the world, whom these affairs ultimately concern, still have any confidence in what we may be able to achieve or do they shrug their shoulders at our work?

These serious questions are indeed before us, when we start to consider our possible achievements during the spring session of 1982. Not least when we look back on the year 1981, just passed. Let us be frank.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

The year 1981 was another lost year for disarmament. Is there any reason to presume that the year which has just started will be more rewarding? The picture is, indeed, contradictory. In the political field, a sense of deep distrust, suspicion and fear permeates relations between the Superpowers and their military alliances. The occupation of Afghanistan continues on its third year with no nationally or internationally acceptable solution in sight. Regional war and tension, unilateral use of force and annexation characterize the situation in the Gulf area and in the Middle East, both areas of vital economic importance and the focus of competition and interference from the Superpowers.

In Europe, efforts at increasing confidence and co-operation, inter alia, at the Madrid follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, have received a rude reminder of the volatility of stability through the tragic suppression of freedom and democratic aspirations in Poland. Once again, the world has been reminded that the true face of Communism imposed on Eastern Europe is force, that it is fit for subjugating the lives and minds of people, but unable to survive in a society where free and unthreatened choice is possible.

At a time when an impressively increasing number of people are becoming aware of the threat involved in the militarization of society and in the accumulation and possible spread of nuclear weapons in particular, and would like to do something about it, the underlying causes of tension and conflict are thus intensifying and making solutions even more intractable.

Still, remedies of these tensions and conflicts must be sought and found. Sweden will continue to advocate the adoption of widened confidence-building measures aimed at reducing distrust, suspicions and fears among nations and increasing openness in international relations and the freedom of peoples.

Not only because of the disastrous effects of the present state of things politically. But also because of the subsequent effects of these tensions and conflicts on the arms race, itself a factor in increasing tensions and conflicts.

One, and perhaps the most important manifestation of these effects is the present trend in military research and technology. This is currently moving in directions which may well, unless they are checked, within a decade have rendered arms control, not to talk about disarmament, virtually impossible. Although this may possibly be the not so secret desire of armament protagonists, it is a course which can only lead to an alarming destabilization and decrease in security. The history of arms control is replete with lost opportunities and so-called bargaining chips, which turned out to be irresistibly tempting pieces of military equipment once developed. IIRVs were once one such negotiable commodity. They have now become a central feature of ballistic missiles technology. SALT II put a lid on their numbers but the sad failure to ratify the treaty may now lead to a further fractionation of warheads, which will frustrate not only defensive efforts but arms control as well.

The new cruise missile technology is even more ominous in this regard. Not only may the cruise missile, through its small size and its capacity for carrying nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional weapons, ultimately become an utterly destabilizing weapon, particularly if, as plans indicate, these missiles are deployed in large numbers on mobile launch platforms and moving at supersonic speeds. Further, their flight characteristics and

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possible deployment areas may also negatively affect the security and sovereignty of neutral and non-aligned States. And finally, from the arms control point of view, they may well completely defy adequate verification. For all these reasons, cruise missile technology represents a quantum jump which, because of its dire consequences, had better not be taken. It would, indeed, be ironic if the same people who are, mostly for good reasons, the staunch supporters of stringent verification measures in the disarmament field, were, by betting on non-verifiable cruise missiles, very likely to dig the grave of, or, at least, to render nearly insoluble, international disarmament and arms control efforts. Incidentally, the military advantage of such missiles would, of course, be only temporary and soon be turned into a clear disadvantage, once the adversary has mastered the same technology. There is little reason to believe that he would not do so. The upward spiral of military technology, and consequently the arms race, will just continue.

Individual nations and the international community must make a decisive effort to find ways -- verifiable, of course -- to come to grips with military R & D. Not only does it devour enormous resources -- in 1981 at least \$40,000 million in Government spending only -- but it is currently on the verge of taking us beyond the point of no return, where arms control will have been rendered futile and the insecurity and mutual suspicion of States even more intense and dangerous than today. The quest for technological superiority in the military field, as well as military superiority generally, is a dead end, in the literal sense of the word.

I should like, here, once again, as I did two years ago in this body, to point to the fact that, because of the rapid and tremendous advances in military R & D, time is a crucial factor. Owing to increased difficulties in reaching agreement on sufficiently acceptable verification measures because of these advances, the longer negotiations and agreements are delayed, the more difficult results tend to become. There is a momentum here that we should all be aware of with legitimate horror.

And a word of urgent warning must be issued to the Superpowers: these two countries should seriously consider the grave responsibility that they carry, responsible as they are for 85 per cent of world expenses for military R & D.

Ways must indeed be sought in international co-operation to curtail R & D for offensive military purposes. It is well documented that many systems may be the subject of successful negotiations up to the testing but not beyond. Curtailing of such military R & D could be done through measures aimed at the early identification of new and dangerous trends in arms research and development with a view to precluding the testing and deployment of such weapons. There are precedents for this in the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, the biological weapons Convention, the ENMOD Convention, the talks on anti-satellite technology and some of the limits agreed on in the SALT II Treaty. Another complementary approach is to preclude the military or hostile use of certain geographical areas, as has been done, wholly or partially -- I should like to emphasize partially -- for the Antarctic, outer space and the seabed.

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Cruise missiles are one important part of the recently started theatre nuclear forces negotiations. It must, of course, be welcomed that those have got under way, although the climate of distrust which I have just referred to, and the complex substance, cannot make us confident about early results. On the other hand, talks on nuclear arms control and disarmament are of decisive importance to all nations. These talks, carried out between the Superpowers, should not be allowed to be contingent on changes in relations between any group of countries, and should, hence, be pursued vigorously.

The political and symbolic value of the TNF negotiations is enormous. And the reaching of a comprehensive agreement on the weapons in question is of paramount importance. The negotiations testify to an encouraging new sign in disarmament, the stronger involvement of many groups of free public opinion. This is certain in the West and perhaps some repercussion could follow even in the East. The madness of the nuclear arms race and the incalculable and disastrous consequences for all nations, including the Superpowers, of a possible future nuclear war is at last being brought home to everybody. It is, indeed, perplexing that this insight has not dawned earlier, since the nuclear threat has existed for decades, but it is all the more welcome.

The fact of the present situation seems to be, simply, that for both sides rough nuclear parity means that they cannot have complete confidence in the deterrent force of their nuclear weapons. A first strike attempt, however suicidal, cannot be completely ruled out. This leads to new attempts to increase survivability and even a quest for superiority, i.e. an assured first strike capability, which will be destabilizing. Furthermore, the pure deterrent function of the weapons is being eroded. This is caused by a flexible response doctrine which by stressing various theoretically possible selective or counterforce uses of nuclear weapons makes nuclear war appear more likely. This could, in theory, lead to strengthening pure deterrence, thus raising the threshold of use of nuclear weapons and of war itself.

In this field, however, using theory only is one of the most dangerous ways to approach the problem of peace or nuclear war. Without imaginative perceptions of the concrete realities of nuclear war, theories based on computers and war games will in fact tend to become factors lowering the war threshold. Loose references to the possibilities of actually using nuclear weapons in war have been made. And it is probably correct to argue that the alarmingly increased tendencies to stress the military usability of nuclear weapons -- as different from their political deterrent function -- will in themselves in practice lead to a lowering of the nuclear threshold. This tendency may be further encouraged by the false belief that nuclear war, even if purportedly selective, can be "won" in any meaningful sense of the word. Again developing technology, to which I referred earlier, is making this perverted thinking more "credible" though, in fact, its basis is very shaky and unrealistic.

Since it has become obvious to everybody that even limited nuclear strikes will in most cases have widespread consequences and are unlikely to remain limited, the whole doctrine of flexible response is encountering increasing public resistance. Ironically, recent attempts on both sides to further develop this doctrine by the deployment of new types of intermediate-range weapons is having the unexpected result of exposing the contradictory and impossible consequences of the whole doctrine -- perhaps of nuclear weapons themselves.

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The terrible dilemma of our present situation is, however, that it cannot be excluded that in certain situations nuclear weapons would actually be put to their cataclysmic use, but the reply would, of course, be instant and equally cataclysmic. To ensure one's own defence, one would also ensure one's own utter and final destruction.

The need to rid Europe of this insane situation is obvious, but very difficult to achieve. What has almost light-heartedly been implanted in and around Europe during the last three decades, cannot be removed without upsetting an established balance of terror, however precarious and nefarious it may be. TNF negotiations will, of necessity, start with a limited number of issues. However, in the nuclear field all weapons are interlinked, and increasingly so, by virtue of developing technology, which tends to blur distinctions between tactical, intermediate-range and central, strategic nuclear weapons. If eventual results of TNF talks are to have any real significance, they must, therefore, subsequently be broadened to cover further categories of theatre nuclear weapons and their carriers. The complexity of this matter is evident but cannot be avoided.

In this context, a particular effort should be made, without too much delay, to approach the issue of lowering the number of tactical nuclear weapons, with the aim of their ultimate abolition. Their mission is unclear, as testified by many, their usefulness on a swiftly moving battlefield against a mobile adversary doubtful, if their use is not to be delegated to lower levels of command in contradiction to what is thought to be a matter of highest-level and, therefore, time-consuming decision-making. If, on the other hand, the use of tactical weapons were to be a matter of decision by local commanders, such weapons become a dangerous trip wire, which could far too easily lower the nuclear threshold and trigger an escalation to major nuclear war.

Tactical nuclear weapons, be they neutron or other, thus lack credible military usefulness and represent clear dangers of escalation. They should, therefore, gradually become prime targets of negotiations. No doubt, the question of verification would be particularly daunting. It would probably be difficult to imagine that satisfactory solutions could be found which would not foresee the abolition of these weapons. To ensure military balance, nuclear disarmament should be accompanied by appropriately balanced reductions in conventional weaponry.

Finally, TNF negotiations might be fairly meaningless unless seen in the wider context of strategic nuclear weapons. It is, therefore, our very earnest hope that the talks on strategic nuclear weapons will soon resume with the aim of preserving what can be saved from the wreckage of SALT II, but also of working towards sizeable reductions in the enormous overkill strategic arsenals of the Superpowers. It follows from what I said earlier that Sweden considers it urgently necessary to find ways to put a lid on further technological improvements and innovations in the technology of nuclear weapons and their carriers.

To sum up these lines of thought:

On the whole, considering the recent rapid developments in weapon technology, the role of nuclear weapons as usable military and, consequently, political instruments in a crisis situation seems to be put in question, not least due to the far-reaching waves of protests against these weapons as such. The whole doctrine

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of "flexible response" seems to be in doubt, considering the generally admitted risk of large-scale escalation. The credibility of "first use" would thereby be seriously endangered. Simultaneously the importance of the role of conventional weapons would seem to be enlarged. Thereby, the concomitant importance of wide confidence-building measures would be enhanced.

It seems necessary to remind everybody of the decisive role entrusted to the Committee on Disarmament in all aspects of disarmament negotiations. Nuclear disarmament in all its aspects -- which in the past was exclusively handled by nuclear-weapon States -- is a high priority item on the Committee's agenda in accordance with paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. It is therefore of the utmost importance to establish a link between the work of the CD and the ongoing or pending negotiations between the Superpowers or the military blocs on all aspects of nuclear disarmament.

I revert now to a perennial on the Committee's agenda, the CTB. The question of a CTBT has been before the multilateral negotiating body in Geneva since its beginning. Owing to the stubborn resistance of some of the nuclear-weapon States, the Committee on Disarmament has, as we all know, been prevented from even starting concrete CTBT negotiations. Like several of my colleagues around this table, I have on numerous occasions stated that it is a quite unacceptable practice to use the consensus rule in order to prevent the establishment of subsidiary organs for the effective conduct of negotiations of an item on the Committee's own agenda agreed upon by all delegations. As members may recall, the Swedish delegation has supported proposals to the effect that the consensus rule should not apply to decisions relating to procedural matters.

It fills me with despair and frustration to note that in spite of all our efforts the CTB issue seems to be in worse shape than ever. The trilateral CTB talks, which at times were used as a pretext for preventing the Committee from fulfilling its duty to negotiate a CTBT, have been suspended for more than a year and a half. There is still no information available as to the future -- if any -- of these negotiations.

Continuing developments in the nuclear field underline the fact that the achievement of a CTBT is as urgent as ever, despite indications that some nuclear-weapon State is inclined to consider it a "non-issue". This view will never be accepted. The CTB is important in order to prevent, or at least render more difficult, the further improvement of existing capabilities as well as the attainment of nuclear explosive capability. This argument has been advanced repeatedly over the years and it remains as valid as ever. Sweden expects, therefore, that all sides will now accept the early establishment during this session of a working group on a CTBT with full powers to negotiate all relevant aspects of such a treaty.

As to the question of verification of such a treaty, the seismic expert group is well on the way to developing an international system for the seismic monitoring of a CTBT. This work has clearly demonstrated that from the technical point of view the question of control of a CTBT can be solved.

In this context, I should like to mention the possibility of identifying certain nuclear explosions by analysing samples of airborne radioactivity. There exist, in fact, already today a number of stations around the world where airborne

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radioactivity is collected and analysed. It seems to be worth considering the possibility of organizing these stations and future ones in a system for the international surveillance of airborne radioactivity. This system would, no doubt, constitute an effective and inexpensive additional method of obtaining information regarding nuclear tests and other forms of clandestine nuclear activities. We are furthermore convinced that such a system would have made it possible to obtain much clearer information about certain suspected events, like the one that occurred south of Africa on 22 September 1979. In the view of the Swedish delegation, this question should be considered by the Committee on Disarmament in an appropriate context. We are therefore planning to submit a working paper on this subject.

Nuclear weapons constitute a threat to mankind that can only be removed by the elimination of these weapons. Nuclear disarmament is, therefore, the most urgent concern of our time. As there are hardly any prospects for rapid progress in nuclear disarmament, it might be useful to consider certain other arrangements in order to reduce the risk of the outbreak of a nuclear war. I wish, however, to make it quite clear that no such arrangement can replace nuclear disarmament.

The very complex and technologically sensitive nature of nuclear weapons systems is in itself a source of constant anxiety. There is always a possibility that sheer technical malfunction of the systems or human failure could precipitate a nuclear war. The need to take measures in order to reduce such risks is obvious. A great many incidents have happened already.

In the past some efforts have been made to reduce the risks of nuclear war by mistake or miscalculation. Suffice it to mention the agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union regarding the "hot line", "Accident Measures", "Prevention of Nuclear War" and certain provisions of the SALT agreements relating in particular to national means of verification. One basic element of all these agreements is that a reliable and credible line of communication must be maintained between States possessing nuclear arms.

Over the years several proposals have been made with a view to reducing the risk of nuclear war by prohibiting or restricting the use of nuclear weapons. The best known concepts proposed in this context are the ban on first use and the complete ban on the use of nuclear weapons. The problem with these interesting proposals is, as is well known, that owing to the different military doctrines of the nuclear-weapon States and a deep-seated lack of confidence between them it has not been possible to reach agreements on the fundamentals of these ideas.

At its thirty-sixth session the General Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution requesting all nuclear-weapon States to submit their views and proposals for ensuring the prevention of nuclear war. In the absence of any tangible result in nuclear disarmament, I believe that peoples in non-nuclear-weapon States and in the nuclear-weapon States themselves have a right to know what further steps the nuclear-weapon States are prepared to take in order to alleviate the risk of nuclear war. This is in Sweden's view an urgent matter and we consider it very important that all nuclear-weapon States comply with the request of the General Assembly to submit their views on the matter.

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A number of the issues I have referred to in this statement are obviously relevant in this context. The suppression of nations and of the right of peoples and individuals must stop, for all kinds of reasons, inter alia, because it leads to increased tension and Superpower confrontation. Strategic arms reduction talks, theatre nuclear forces negotiations and the proposal for a conference on disarmament in Europe must be vigorously pursued with a view towards a strong reduction in weaponry and a strengthening of confidence. Limitations, where possible, on new, destabilizing, arms technology must be sought by controlling and restraining military R & D. And strong efforts to halt the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear arms must be made. While all those goals are being sought, collateral measures to reduce the dangers of accidental nuclear war should be taken, both nationally and internationally. A concerted effort in this direction to create a web of strong and mutually interdependent relations could go a long way towards enhancing stability in the nuclear age.

In March this year, multilateral disarmament negotiations will have been pursued for twenty years. What kind of jubilee celebrations should we plan? What can we do during this 1982 session of the Committee on Disarmament in order to meet the requests of a rapidly increasing and increasingly important world public opinion, what George Kennan recently called the most striking phenomenon of the beginning of the 1980s? How can we, irrespective of political doctrines and economic and social systems, co-operate in efforts to save the peoples of this only earth of ours from the danger of a new general war leading, in the nuclear age, to devastation?

We shall, all of us, have to answer these questions, in all sincerity, by effective action if we are to face our constituents straightforwardly and in good conscience. So let it be.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Sweden for her statement and for the kind words she addressed to the Chair.

We have practically exhausted the time available to us for the morning. If the Committee agrees, I would suggest that we suspend the plenary meeting now and resume it this afternoon at 3 p.m. If there are no objections, we will proceed accordingly.

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: The one hundred and fiftieth plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament is resumed. As agreed this morning, the Committee will now listen to the remaining speakers inscribed to take the floor today.

Mr. ISSRAELIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, I should like first of all to congratulate you, the representative of a neighbouring country with which we are linked by long years of good-neighbourliness, upon your coming here and occupying the important post of Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament for the month of February. I hope that this month will be fruitful and that it will be marked by progress on the various questions on our agenda. At the same time I should like to welcome our new colleagues in the Committee on Disarmament on the start of their work in this the only multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

I should also like to wish Ambassador Fein of the Netherlands success in the new and important functions he is to take up in his country's capital.

Lastly, allow me to express profound condolences on the death of Ambassador Cordero di Montezemolo of Italy.

The annual session of the Committee on Disarmament which has started today is taking place at a time that is very critical for the future development of international relations, for all mankind. It is with regret that we have to note a further deterioration of the international climate, an increase in the danger of war and mounting threats to the freedom and independence of peoples as a result of the intensified imperialist power policy. A policy that runs counter to détente and is aimed at the attainment of military superiority and the disruption of the established balance in favour of the West is the main cause of the aggravation of international tension in recent years. Special concern is caused by the mounting arms race, particularly in the nuclear sphere, the elaboration and introduction into the arsenals of States of new types and systems of weapons and the further increase in military expenditures.

Arguments based on the ideas of a so-called "limited nuclear war" and of "preventive", "demonstrative" and other types of nuclear strike have been put forward to justify the policy of increasing nuclear armaments. The purpose of such arguments is to erase the distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons, to remove the obstacles of a moral and political nature to the use of nuclear weapons and to establish the permissibility of their use for a first strike.

The thought is being implanted in world public opinion that a "limited" nuclear war in which, allegedly, only military targets of the opponents would be destroyed, will be humane and acceptable under modern conditions, and that it will make it possible to avert a general nuclear catastrophe. It is not necessary to be a military strategist to understand the artificial character of such scholastic exercises. By proposing to conduct a nuclear war according to certain preconceived "rules" which provide that nuclear missiles should explode in "gentlemanly" fashion, that is, not over cities, but over the targets which it would be deemed expedient somewhere to declare military objects, these so-called military theoreticians put themselves in a position of irreconcilable contradiction with reality.

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As for the socialist States, they are convinced that "a nuclear war cannot be limited". This was stated in the communiqué of the session of the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Treaty member-States held on 2 December 1981.

The Soviet Union considers that to try to defeat each other in an arms race and to count on victory in a nuclear war is dangerous insanity. The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, L.I. Brezhnev, stressed in October 1981: "To start a nuclear war in the hope of emerging from it victorious is only possible for someone who has decided to commit suicide. No matter how much power the aggressor possesses, no matter in what fashion he chooses to start a nuclear war, he will not achieve his goals. Retaliation will inevitably follow."

Everywhere in the world an understanding of the necessity for intensive actions to eliminate the threat of a nuclear catastrophe is increasing. The mass anti-war and anti-missile demonstrations and rallies for peace and disarmament in countries of Europe and other regions of the world have become a sign of the times.

The question of how to save the world from sliding further towards a nuclear war was also the centre of attention at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly which took place recently. Various doctrines and conceptions of the use of nuclear weapons, first among them being the doctrines of a "limited or partial use of nuclear weapons", were condemned at the session as leading, as was indicated in one of the General Assembly's decisions, towards a renewed spiralling of the arms race.

The imperialist policy of further escalating the arms race, which has seriously complicated the relations among States, was subjected to criticisms of principle by a substantial majority of delegations. Participants in the session stressed that this policy was pushing East and West to a confrontation and thus creating a great danger, including the possibility of the outbreak of a nuclear war. The last session was characterized also by the intensity of the discussion on the burning problems of war and peace. Virtually no delegation abstained from this central discussion pertaining to the future destiny of mankind. It is no chance that the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session adopted a number of resolutions on the questions of arms race limitation and disarmament that was a record for the whole history of the United Nations. A substantial proportion of these were proposed by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

We see this rather differently from the representative of the Netherlands, not as a matter of a mere itch to adopt resolutions, but rather as an expression of the alarm of all States, both large and small, members of alliances and non-aligned countries alike -- countries of all the continents -- at the deplorable situation in the matter of disarmament, an expression of their desire to make their contribution to the strengthening of peace and international security.

The General Assembly approved the Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe, the draft of which was submitted by the Soviet Union. In this document the United Nations authoritatively and resolutely proclaimed the first use of nuclear weapons to be the gravest crime against humanity. It also condemned as incompatible with human moral standards and the lofty ideals of the United Nations any doctrines allowing such use of nuclear weapons, and called

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upon the leaders of nuclear-weapon States to act in such a way as to eliminate the risk of nuclear conflict. The Declaration is justly considered to be an important step towards the removal of the threat of nuclear war, a measure directed towards improving the international climate.

This decision supports and acts in concert with the aspirations of the significant majority of States, in particular non-aligned States, which seek to prohibit the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons as a violation of the United Nations Charter and a crime against humanity, before nuclear disarmament is achieved.

Some other important decisions were adopted at the session. They clearly demonstrated that a considerable majority of the States Members of the United Nations wish to prevent the further escalation of armaments in the world at large.

The Soviet Union's policy, which is directed towards the resumption of the arms limitation negotiations that were suspended by the United States, the intensification of ongoing negotiations and the commencement of a dialogue on questions which have not yet formed the subject of negotiations, has received the widest support in the United Nations. It is significant that practically all delegations which spoke at the session were in favour of the continuation of the SALT process and welcomed the Soviet-American talks on the limitation of nuclear armaments in Europe which started on 30 November 1981. About a score of resolutions on disarmament matters that were adopted at the session provide for the conducting of negotiations (either within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament or through other channels) aimed at the elaboration of agreements, conventions and treaties limiting the arms race.

We have already stated more than once, including occasions at the highest level, that we are ready to resume the suspended dialogue on the entire spectrum of questions relating to the limitation of the arms race. We think that its speediest possible resumption is in the interests not only of the direct participants in the talks, the USSR and the United States of America, but of all States. Experience of the work of the Committee on Disarmament has shown more than once that a bilateral dialogue on the most urgent problems of disarmament contributes to progress in their solution within the framework of multilateral negotiations also.

We fully share the view of Ambassador García Robles of Mexico as to the untenability of the thesis that there should be a "linkage" or "linking" of arms limitation questions with other international issues. At the same time, however, we think that under present conditions it is necessary to intensify considerably the negotiations now being carried out within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament. We have frequently reaffirmed in words and in deeds our interest in the intensification of the Committee's activity, and our desire that the Committee should seriously and in a business-like manner deal with the most urgent questions of disarmament. We have always wanted the Committee at last to become a real negotiating body instead of a discussion club, and to work efficiently and with complete devotion -- in fact in the way expected of it by the international community.

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As for Mrs. Thorsson's charge that certain powers "weaken and undermine" multilateral negotiations, as far as the Soviet Union is concerned, the truth is exactly the opposite. The Soviet delegation has not come to this session with empty hands. In this statement we would like to express briefly our position on the major items of the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament.

In the present situation the task of curbing the nuclear arms race and eliminating the threat of nuclear war is particularly urgent. The position of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries on this question is reflected in document CD/4, which was submitted to the Committee on Disarmament in 1979. The document proposes the starting without delay of negotiations to halt the production of nuclear weapons and gradually reduce stockpiles of them until they are completely eliminated. Regrettably, owing to the obstructionist policy of some States, the recommendation of the United Nations General Assembly for the establishment of an ad hoc working group of the Committee on the subject of nuclear disarmament has not yet been implemented, and the negotiations on this matter have not been started. We are in favour of the creation of an ad hoc subsidiary organ of the Committee and the starting of appropriate negotiations in accordance with resolution 36/92 E of the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled, "Nuclear weapons in all aspects". In view of the priority character and the importance of the question of curbing the nuclear arms race, the Committee should consider the possibility of setting up an ad hoc sub-committee on questions of nuclear disarmament.

Among the complex of nuclear disarmament issues, the question of a complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapons tests is extremely urgent. The banning of all nuclear weapons tests would make it virtually impossible to improve such weapons or to develop new types of nuclear weapons such as the neutron weapon. Such a measure could favourably influence the creation of an international climate which would facilitate the solution of many problems of nuclear disarmament.

As you know, the group of non-aligned and neutral countries has put forward a proposal for the establishment within the Committee on Disarmament of an ad hoc working group to negotiate an appropriate treaty. The representatives of Mexico, Sweden and the Netherlands have spoken about this matter today. We do not object to this proposal. We believe that the Committee should actively study this priority question.

As for the tripartite negotiations between the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom on the question of a complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapons tests, the Soviet Union is in favour of the immediate resumption of these talks, and is ready to do everything in its power for their successful completion. Unfortunately, however, the resumption of these talks is blocked by the Western participants.

The peoples of the world are particularly concerned about the United States decision to produce and deploy nuclear neutron weapons, and this concern was reaffirmed at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

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The implementation of this decision poses an increasing danger to mankind; it leads to the emergence of a new means of mass destruction in the military arsenals of States and opens up new avenues for a further arms race.

We would like to stress once again that this is a matter of exceptional importance and urgency directly related to international security and disarmament. Resolution 36/92 K of the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly requests the Committee on Disarmament to "start without delay negotiations in an appropriate organizational framework with a view to concluding a convention on the prohibition of the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear neutron weapons". We urge the establishment of a working group of the Committee on Disarmament for the conduct of the above-mentioned negotiations. A basis for these negotiations already exists; it is the draft of an appropriate international convention which was submitted by the socialist countries in 1978. This is precisely what is called for in the relevant resolution of the United Nations General Assembly.

This year mankind will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the start of the exploration of outer space -- one of the greatest achievements of science and technology in our century. Unfortunately it has to be noted that outer space is becoming not only a sphere for the peaceful efforts of States in exploring and utilizing it but also the arena of an ever increasing military confrontation.

Since the very beginning of the space era the Soviet Union has consistently urged and it continues to urge that outer space should remain for ever clear and free from any weapons, that it should not become a new arena for the arms race and a source of aggravation of the relations among States. In the opinion of our country the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space would promote the achievement of these goals. We suggest the starting in the Committee on Disarmament of negotiations on this issue, as is recommended in resolution 36/99 of the United Nations General Assembly. The draft of such a treaty submitted by the Soviet Union at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly could serve as a basis for the negotiations.

We would not object if the mandate of the working group were to include also the recommendations in General Assembly resolution 36/97 C concerning the negotiation of an agreement on the prohibition of anti-satellite systems. At the same time it must be clear that the main task facing the Committee is to solve the whole problem of the cessation of the arms race in outer space and therefore the question of anti-satellite systems must be examined in the context of other measures directed towards the achievement of this goal.

At the present time, when the world is being pushed towards a new and dangerous spiralling of the chemical arms race, very great importance attaches to the problem of the prohibition of chemical weapons. Last year the Committee accomplished a considerable amount of work in this direction. We are for the intensification of the Committee's efforts in this matter and for the implementation of resolutions 36/96 A and B adopted by the General Assembly. In our opinion the Committee should adopt urgent measures to prevent the production and deployment of new generations of chemical weapons, and in particular binary weapons, as well as the deployment of chemical weapons in countries where there are no such weapons

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at present. As regards the mandate of the relevant working group, the socialist countries last year recommended that it should be broadened. The new mandate of the working group should, we believe, provide for the possibility of beginning, at last, the drafting of the actual provisions of a convention.

Already for the third year the joint Soviet-American proposal concerning the prohibition of radiological weapons is on the negotiating table of the Committee on Disarmament. An agreed text of such a treaty has been expected from us for quite a long time. These expectations have been reaffirmed in resolution 36/97 B of the United Nations General Assembly containing an appeal to the Committee on Disarmament to continue the negotiations in order to complete the elaboration of an appropriate treaty with a view to its submission to the United Nations General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament. The completion of the elaboration of a treaty on the prohibition of radiological weapons would not only be a real contribution to the accomplishment of the tasks before the Committee, but also have great importance as a step in a positive direction in the present greatly deteriorated international situation.

The principal obstacle in the way of agreement on the treaty is the question of an undertaking not to attack civilian nuclear facilities. We have stated time and again that we do not object to the elaboration of international measures to prevent attacks on civilian nuclear facilities. But the solution should be found outside the framework of the treaty on radiological weapons. We are ready to look for a mutually acceptable solution of this question together with the countries concerned.

Finally, I should also like to touch upon the question of the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. It is a special task in view of the forthcoming second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The discussion and adoption of the CPD at the special session would give an impetus to the negotiations on specific issues of arms limitation and disarmament, and contribute to the improvement of the political atmosphere.

In its approach to the CPD the Soviet Union proceeds from the conviction that the arms race can and must be stopped. To fulfil this task it is necessary to work out and implement a programme of urgent and radical steps, which would not only halt the arms race in specific directions but also pave the way towards the main objective of general and complete disarmament. In our view the comprehensive programme of disarmament should consist of an agreed complex of measures, directed towards the cessation of the arms race and the stage-by-stage achievement of actual disarmament within a fixed time-frame. Its implementation must be conducive to maintaining and deepening the process of international détente, strengthening the basis of peaceful co-existence between States with different social systems and developing confidence and co-operation among them.

Attaching the greatest importance to the elaboration of concrete measures in the field of disarmament, we proceed also from the premise that the comprehensive programme of disarmament is directed towards the future. The present generation

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must not only ensure a peaceful life during the remaining decades of our century but also guarantee man's entry upon the third millenium in conditions of peace and general security.

The success of the deliberations of the Committee on Disarmament and in particular of its present session will in many ways depend upon the efficient and rational organization of its work. Last year the socialist countries set forth in detail their views on the question of how to increase the effectiveness and improve the organization of the Committee's work and they submitted a document on this subject (CD/200). The observations contained in that document to a large extent identify our approach to the organization of the work of the present session. The Soviet delegation listened with interest to the statement of the Ambassador of the Netherlands in this connection and notes with satisfaction the closeness of our views in many respects.

It seems to us that the question of the renewal of the mandates of the working groups which have existed in the past should be examined in the light of the effectiveness of the work they have done and their prospects for achieving agreements. At the same time we are in favour of the establishment of subsidiary organs of the Committee on such urgent problems as a nuclear weapons test ban, the cessation of the nuclear arms race, the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, the prohibition of the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear neutron weapons and the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present, as well as of an ad hoc group of experts on the question of new types of weapons of mass destruction.

With regard to the time of the termination of the spring part of the Committee's session, we think that it is necessary to make full use of the time at our disposal. We should not forget that the current part of the Committee's session is the last one before the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament, where we shall have, so to say, to give an accounting of the Committee's four years of work. Frankly speaking, the results will clearly be more than modest. It is probably true to say that during the entire twenty years of its existence the Committee has not had so empty a portfolio as now. But we would still like to hope that during the remaining two and a half months the Committee will take important steps in the right direction, will start negotiations on the most important aspects of disarmament -- the limitation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. We hope that the Committee will succeed in elaborating a draft comprehensive programme of disarmament. We are sure that there is an adequate basis for completing the work on the draft treaty on the prohibition of radiological weapons. At least some important provisions of the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons could also be drafted, and the talks on the limitation of the arms race in outer space could start. To be brief, ladies and gentlemen, time is short and there is more than enough of work to do.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

For our part we would like to assure you that the Soviet delegation will make every effort to help achieve fruitful results at the present session of the Committee.

It is often said that in matters of disarmament a great deal depends upon the political will of States, and that is correct. The Soviet Union has such political will in abundance. It has more than once stated that it is ready to agree on the prohibition or limitation of any type of weapon, provided, of course, that the principle of equality and equal security is observed. We are convinced that even in the present difficult international situation it is possible, through a dialogue based on mutual respect and equality and through business-like and constructive negotiations, to achieve a relaxation of tension, to increase confidence in the relations among States and to develop mutual understanding and co-operation between them. However difficult may be the international problems confronting the world today, there is not one of them which cannot be resolved by peaceful means and with the interests of all States in mind.

The Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community propose exactly this peaceful alternative to the policy of confrontation and the increase in the arms race that dangers peace. As L.I. Brezhnev stated in his answers to the American television network, NBC: "It is important that Governments and statesmen should fully realize that the main thing for the peoples of the planet is peace and confidence in the future. And of course it is of even greater importance that this should be embodied in the practical policies of States. It is necessary to restrain the dangerous eagerness to escalate the arms race. It is necessary to reduce the heat of tension, to extinguish the dangerous hotbeds of crisis situations, to renounce the policy of a senseless arms race, to return to the path of normal relations between States, of mutual respect, understanding and consideration for the lawful interests of each other. It is necessary seriously, in a business-like manner, to study the questions of the limitation and reduction of armaments. All these measures taken together will facilitate the elimination of the threat of nuclear war".

The Soviet delegation believes that the Committee on Disarmament can and must make a weighty contribution to the accomplishment of this historic task, can and must justify the hopes placed in it.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. ONKELINX (Belgium) (translated from French): Before embarking on my statement I have certain duties to perform, some of them agreeable and others either nostalgic or sad and painful. I shall begin with the more agreeable ones. I should like first of all, Mr. Chairman, to offer you my good wishes in your present office and to assure you of the full co-operation of the Belgian delegation during this month. I should like next to thank Ambassador Sani for the way he guided our work during the final period of the 1981 session and again during the consultations which took place here in January, before the opening of this session. And lastly, I should like to welcome here all our new colleagues who are so numerous that I shall refrain from mentioning them by name, and to assure them, too, of our full co-operation.

The sad duty relates to a matter that was referred to this morning and has been mentioned again this afternoon by Ambassador Issraelyan. We learned this morning of the death of Ambassador di Montezemolo: I confess that I was very distressed to hear this sad news, and like other colleagues who have already spoken I, too, wish to offer my condolences to the Italian delegation, asking it to convey the expression of our sympathy to Mrs. di Montezemolo, the Permanent Mission of Italy and the Italian Government. Finally, the nostalgic duty relates to the departure of Ambassador Fein. Ever since my arrival here, I have had the great pleasure of maintaining with him very friendly and very close working contacts and I, too, should like to offer him my best wishes for the very important tasks which await him at The Hague.

The session of the Committee on Disarmament which has just opened cannot but be affected by the prospect of the forthcoming special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That will be an event of exceptional importance. Belgium, which is presiding over the European Community during the present semester, made a solemn statement to that effect when, addressing the European Parliament on 21 January last, Mr. Leo Tindemans, the current President of the Council of Ministers of the Community, said that "the results of the special session will be largely decisive for the international situation".

Unhappily, this last session of the Committee before the special session is not opening under more promising auspices than those of 1980 and 1981. Once again, we must express before this forum our disappointment and our anxiety over the lack of moderation in the behaviour of certain States. The persistence of this attitude has a profoundly disturbing effect on the political climate, for it fails to create the confidence essential to the achievement of progress in the field of disarmament and arms control.

"Only consistent adherence to ... principles [of international conduct in relations among States] would provide a solid basis for lasting détente, far-reaching disarmament and sustained international security." The sentence I have just quoted is taken from the study on the relationship between disarmament and international security which formed the subject of General Assembly resolution 36/97 L, adopted by consensus.

(Mr. Onkolinx, Belgium)

How, in these circumstances, can we remain silent in the face of the continuing foreign occupation of Afghanistan and, more recently, the sudden deterioration of the situation in Poland, where the attitude of the country's leaders constitutes, in more than one respect, a grave breach of the principles of the Final Act of Helsinki.

I should like to recall here the appeals made by various sectors of the international community for an early end to these situations, which may affect, in particular, the efforts being made in the disarmament field.

Yet the steady deterioration of the international climate justifies those efforts more than ever.

We have had occasion more than once to express the hopes we place in those efforts. My country regards the negotiations on medium-range nuclear forces now in progress in Geneva as offering a particularly important possibility for progress, jointly with the opening of new negotiations on strategic nuclear arms. We view those endeavours as the best method of ensuring, through negotiation, a balance of forces at the lowest possible level. We also earnestly appeal for the resumption of negotiations in the other fields which have up to now formed the subject of separate talks. But we fear that if the unfavourable political conditions I have just referred to continue to prevail, the progress we so greatly hope for will not be achieved.

We continue to believe that in the global process that disarmament represents, the elimination of nuclear weapons must be accompanied by a balanced reduction of conventional forces, a sphere in which we hope for progress, both within the framework of the United Nations, in particular through the implementation of General Assembly resolution 36/97 A, and in more restricted forums, such as the Vienna talks on mutual and balanced force reductions.

We also place our hopes in the Committee on Disarmament. Since becoming a member, my country has always endeavoured to increase the value of this outstanding instrument which has been created by the international community.

At the end of the Committee's 1981 session I suggested, without reference to the political developments of the moment, that we ought also to look into the reasons for the stagnation of our efforts in the Committee. On that occasion I mentioned some ways whereby our work might be made more efficient. I should like briefly to recapitulate the points I made:

We should concentrate to a greater extent on our programme of work and avoid politico-procedural arguments unrelated to the Committee's negotiating purpose.

In that respect, the 1981 session of the Committee represented a positive development which will, I hope, continue this year;

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

We should interpret our negotiating mandate more strictly than we have done in the past, that is to say, we ought also to avoid discussions that fall more within the competence of international deliberative bodies;

We should, to a greater extent than we have done over the past years, give preference in our negotiations to whatever offers the smallest chance of progress, however slight it may be, that is to say, we should give proof of our common will to succeed.

The imminence of the special session of the General Assembly confers a special character upon this session of the Committee. We ought more than ever, I believe, try to bring about all the conditions that might make the Committee more effective. That would surely be the best way of reaffirming the validity of the Final Document of the first special session, especially its paragraph 120 which refers to the "continuing requirement for a single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum".

We therefore think that the special nature of the Committee's present session calls for an effort of innovation on our part. The session's work should be contingent upon the special session. With that in mind, it seems to us that in the coming weeks we should concentrate on the elaboration of the comprehensive programme of disarmament which we are required to submit to the General Assembly at its second special session.

The early convening, at the beginning of this year, of the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament was a useful measure that clearly demonstrated the value of our adopting a flexible approach in our procedural decisions. As a result of the intensification of our work on this question, certain positions have already been clarified, more particularly as regards the concept of phases and that of the mechanism which is to govern this programme. It seems to me that this has created a climate of better understanding of the various views held. But as yet not all the groups composing the Committee have expressed their views on these issues. At the present stage, we have specific proposals from the sponsors of document CD/205, which include Belgium, and from the sponsors of document CD/223, namely, the Group of 21. It is imperative that the delegations which have not yet explained their views should do so rapidly if our work is not to suffer undue delay.

There is still a great deal of work to be done on this matter before the special session. We would find it difficult to accept the idea that the Committee could not complete its work on this question successfully and in good time.

We therefore hope that the Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament will receive the requisite attention from all delegations and will enjoy the priority needed for the successful completion of its work.

There are other fields, too, in which the Committee has already achieved substantial progress and must advance further with an eye to the special session. I have in mind the other questions on which working groups were set up during the 1980 and 1981 sessions.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

We hope that those working groups will be quickly re-established, bearing in mind once again the shortness of this winter session.

I should like first to refer to the question of radiological weapons. Belgium has repeatedly stated its views on the subject, both here in Geneva and more particularly at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. This is a field in which we think more efforts could be made to reach the necessary compromises and find a solution other than those which have been repeatedly put forward, without success, for nearly two years and which are transforming our negotiations into a dialogue of the deaf. Belgium has already -- some time ago -- suggested a new approach, particularly as regards the delicate and important matter of the prohibition of deliberate attacks on nuclear installations.

I can only repeat here our desire to reconcile the position of those who want existing prohibitions of such attacks to be expanded forthwith with the views of those who prefer problems arising under humanitarian law to be kept separate from those relating to disarmament.

With regard to the prohibition of chemical weapons, Belgium greatly hopes that the recommendations made by the Working Group itself at the end of the 1981 session as well as those contained in General Assembly resolution 36/96 A will be rapidly implemented.

First of all, we shall have to agree on a suitably revised mandate for that Working Group so that the Committee can reach agreement as quickly as possible on the subject of a convention on chemical weapons.

The elements of a possible agreement, as identified by the Working Group last year and stated in the Committee's report to the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, ought in any event to serve as the starting point for our work this year.

With regard to security assurances, we are aware of the importance attaching to the continuation of negotiations on this question. The vote on resolution 36/95 submitted by Pakistan at the last session of the General Assembly represents progress as compared with previous years.

Belgium recognizes the importance of seeking a common approach with a view to the conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Here again, however, we believe that the Committee should seize upon every possibility for an agreement, even of an interim nature, that would help to achieve progress and to create a favourable climate with a view, in particular, to the gradual satisfaction of the demands of the non-nuclear-weapon States which have chosen the path of non-alignment.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

It was with that in mind that Belgium and more recently Sweden, at the last session of the General Assembly, suggested that the Security Council should incorporate the guarantees given by the nuclear-weapon States in a resolution, which would thus confer upon them international legal status.

Among the important items on the agenda which have not so far been entrusted to a working group is that of a complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

At the last session of the General Assembly, Belgium had occasion to say how much importance it attached to the principle of such a prohibition. We also made the point that it was for the Committee on Disarmament to determine, on a consensus basis, the most appropriate manner of dealing with that matter. Belgium is ready to agree to any procedural decision that would enable us to deal with this question more effectively than in the past. In our search for a working method we ought not to overlook the possibilities offered by a review of the terms of reference of the group of seismological experts.

The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space formed the subject of a useful debate at the last session of the General Assembly. Belgium, which was a co-sponsor of resolution 36/97 C, therefore hopes that the Committee on Disarmament will take up that question at the present session, bearing in mind its current priorities. At this stage we feel that the holding of informal meetings of the Committee attended by experts might facilitate a first examination of the problem as a whole, subject to the eventual setting up of an ad hoc group of experts similar to the one set up for the detection and identification of seismic events.

This brief enumeration of the principal tasks which the Committee ought to complete before the convening of the special session clearly indicates the extent of the work lying ahead of us, and its political importance. If our contribution to the special session is to be effective, we ought therefore to try to avoid a dispersal of our efforts.

I earnestly hope that we shall, without delay, establish our priorities with this goal in mind and at once reveal the conciliatory spirit and the will to make progress which we expect to prevail at the meeting in New York next June.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Belgium for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. STRUCKA (Czechoslovakia) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all sincerely to congratulate you on your accession to the responsible office of Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament for this month and at the same time to assure you that the Czechoslovak delegation will fully support you in your efforts to bring about constructive and business-like negotiations on disarmament questions.

I should also like to associate myself with the condolences offered to the Italian delegation.

The Czechoslovak delegation would like in its statement today to deal with an important question, the significance of which is increasing especially in the light of the approaching special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. I refer to that of the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. The socialist countries support the initiative of the non-aligned countries for the elaboration of such a programme, which was approved by the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. They take an active part in the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Committee dealing with this question. As is well known, the group of socialist countries has submitted more than a dozen working papers in the Working Group.

Today the Czechoslovak delegation, as the co-ordinator of the group of socialist countries on the question of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, would like to state the agreed position of the delegations of Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Czechoslovakia on the question of the contents of the CPD.

The delegations of these countries are convinced that the solution of the problem of disarmament is of universal and historical significance: disarmament should play a crucial role in the prevention of war and in ensuring genuine security for the peoples of the world.

Disarmament, being the material guarantee of international security, should in present conditions represent the principal direction for the common efforts of all the countries of the world towards the elimination of international tension and the building of universal and lasting peace. The limitation of armaments and disarmament will open the way to the solution of the global problems of humanity.

Certain positive results in the field of arms limitation were achieved in the course of the 1960s and the 1970s. International agreements were concluded on the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, on the prohibition of the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof, on the prohibition of bacteriological weapons and on the prohibition of the military use of environmental modification techniques. Agreements were also concluded on strategic arms limitation, and certain measures were initiated for the purpose of strengthening confidence in Europe. A definite procedure was established for disarmament negotiations on both a multilateral and a bilateral basis. All this shows that real measures in the field of arms limitations are possible and practicable. What has been done has created a definite basis for further steps in the direction of arms limitation and disarmament.

At the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, a complex of concrete tasks and measures aimed at the limitation of the arms race and disarmament was adopted with the agreement of all States Members of the United Nations, and these fully retain their relevance today.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

However, as the 1970s gave way to the 1980s, a new impetus was given to the arms build-up. The exacerbation of the arms race is accompanied by the propagation of doctrines proclaiming the "permissibility" and "acceptability" of nuclear war and justifying the effort to achieve military superiority. War hysteria is being spread, and animosity and hatred between States and peoples are being instigated. These actions have brought about the interruption of negotiations on the most important aspects of arms limitation.

The arms build-up represents a mortal danger for civilization and threatens to bring to an impasse the efforts aimed at the solution of vitally important international problems in the spheres of economics, social development, culture, health care and the preservation of the environment.

The task of reducing the scale of the arms race and curbing it has now become especially urgent because the instruments of war are undergoing profound changes. Qualitatively new types and systems of weapons are being developed, and especially weapons of mass destruction, which can render the control, and consequently also the agreed limitation and prohibition of such weapons more difficult and even impossible. The development of military technology has a constantly destabilizing effect on the world situation and increases the danger of war.

The arms race can and must be stopped.

To this end, it is necessary to elaborate and to implement a programme of urgent and radical measures that would not only halt the arms race in its various aspects but also pave the way for the achievement of the main goal, namely, general and complete disarmament.

The comprehensive programme of disarmament should be an agreed complex of measures aimed at the cessation of the arms race and the implementation, by stages, of genuine disarmament within the framework of established time-limits. The decision to elaborate such a programme, which was adopted at the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, is an expression of the yearning of the world's peoples to put a stop to the arms race.

As to the objectives of the CPD, the socialist countries consider that the programme's immediate aims should be the prevention of nuclear catastrophe and the implementation of urgent measures which would bring about the cessation of the arms race and pave the way to a stable peace. The ultimate goal is the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The implementation of the measures envisaged in the programme should promote the strengthening of international security as well as the security of each individual State. Real security can only be ensured through the limitation, reduction and destruction of armaments, through disarmament.

One of the basic goals of the programme must be the consolidation and further development of everything positive which has so far been achieved in the field of the curbing of the arms race.

The implementation of the CPD should promote the maintenance and deepening of the process of the relaxation of international tension and the strengthening of the bases for the peaceful coexistence of States with different social systems and the development of mutual trust and co-operation among them.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

The CPD must undoubtedly contain a section on principles. All States Members of the United Nations must reaffirm their adherence to the objectives of the United Nations Charter and their commitment strictly to observe the principles enshrined in the Charter in the process of the elaboration and implementation of measures aimed at the limitation of armaments and disarmament, and also to take into consideration the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The negotiations should be aimed first of all at the limitation and the cessation of the quantitative increase and qualitative improvement of armaments, especially weapons of mass destruction, and of the creation of new means of waging war, so that ultimately scientific and technical achievements can be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. There is no type of weapon which could not be prohibited or liquidated on a mutually agreed basis.

All States are obliged to promote efforts in the sphere of disarmament. This applies first and foremost to the States possessing nuclear weapons and to other militarily significant States. At all stages the existing balance in the sphere of nuclear power should remain intact with a constant lowering of its level.

Side by side with the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons, there should be a reduction in the sphere of conventional weapons. The States with the largest military arsenals bear a special responsibility in this process.

The adoption of disarmament measures must be carried out on a just and balanced basis so as to guarantee each State's right to security and so that no State or group of States can at any stage of the implementation of the programme obtain an advantage to the detriment of other States. The aim at each stage should be undiminished security with possibly lower levels of armaments and armed forces.

The principle of equality and equal security must be strictly observed.

The process of the limitation of armaments and of disarmament must be carried out without interruptions.

States must refrain from acts which might adversely affect disarmament efforts and display a constructive approach in the interests of achieving agreements.

The CPD must undoubtedly envisage measures in the field of arms limitation and disarmament the implementation of which would lead towards the ultimate goal -- general and complete disarmament. These measures should include the following:

1. Nuclear weapons.

(a) The renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States.

(b) The cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and the gradual reduction of stockpiles of such weapons up to and including their complete elimination, and the immediate initiation, to that end, of appropriate negotiations with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States. As follows from earlier proposals advanced by the socialist countries, the cessation of the production of nuclear weapons must include the cessation of the production of means for their delivery and of fissionable materials for weapons purposes; as a first step, the possible stages of nuclear disarmament with their approximate contents could be

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

discussed, and in particular the content of the first stage; the measures in this stage must include the cessation of the development and production of new types of nuclear weapons and new systems of such weapons; at the same time measures should be adopted for the strengthening of the political and international legal guarantees of the security of States.

(c) The further qualitative and quantitative limitation and reduction of strategic armaments.

(d) The conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

(e) The conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear neutron weapons.

(f) The adoption of further measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and, to that end, the achievement of the universal accession of States to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, with the development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

(g) The conclusion of a convention on strengthening the guarantees of security of non-nuclear-weapon States and, as a first step, declarations by the nuclear powers, identical in substance, on the renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons against those States that have renounced the production and acquisition of nuclear weapons and do not have them on their territories, with the approval of such declarations by the United Nations Security Council.

(h) The conclusion of an agreement on the non-emplacement of nuclear weapons on the territory of States in which none are now located; the renunciation by States possessing nuclear weapons of further steps aimed at the emplacement of nuclear weapons on the territory of other States.

(i) The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world.

2. Chemical and other types of weapons of mass destruction

(a) The renunciation of the production and deployment of binary and other new types of chemical weapons as well as the emplacement of chemical weapons in those countries in which none are now located.

(b) The conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the destruction of stockpiles of such weapons.

(c) The conclusion of a comprehensive agreement prohibiting the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, as well as of agreements on the prohibition of specific new types or systems of such weapons. As a first step towards the conclusion of the comprehensive agreement, as has already been proposed by the socialist countries, the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and other militarily significant States should make declarations, identical in substance, on the renunciation of the production of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, with the approval of such declarations by decision of the Security Council.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

(d) The conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of radiological weapons.

3. The prevention of the proliferation of the arms race in new spaces explored by man

(a) The conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

(b) Further measures to prevent the conversion of outer space into a sphere of military confrontation.

(c) Further measures to prevent an arms race on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof.

(d) Further measures on the inadmissibility of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques.

4. Armed forces and conventional weapons

(a) The renunciation of the expansion of armed forces and conventional weapons by the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and by the countries associated with them under military agreements, as a first step towards the subsequent reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons.

(b) The reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons.

(c) The limitation of the sale and supply of conventional weapons.

(d) Further measures on the limitation or the prohibition of the use of specific types of conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects.

5. Regional measures

(a) The further extension of the confidence-building measures in the military sphere contained in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the achievement of agreement on new confidence-building measures and disarmament. To these ends, the convening of a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe.

(b) The mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe as well as in other regions of the world on a regional basis.

(c) The renunciation of the expansion of the existing military and political groupings and of the creation of new ones.

(d) The ending of the division of Europe into military and political alliances and, as a first step, the elimination of the military organizations of the two groupings, starting with a mutual reduction of military activity..

(e) The conclusion, among all States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, of a treaty on the non-first use against each other of both nuclear and conventional weapons.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

(f) The limitation and lowering of the level of military presence and military activity in the relevant regions -- in the Atlantic Ocean, in the Pacific, in the Mediterranean Sea and in the region of the Persian Gulf.

(g) The transformation of the region of the Mediterranean Sea into a zone of stable peace and co-operation: the extension to this area of confidence-building measures in the military sphere, an agreed reduction of armed forces, the withdrawal of warships carrying nuclear weapons, the renunciation of the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of Mediterranean non-nuclear-weapon States, a commitment by the nuclear-weapon powers not to use nuclear weapons against any Mediterranean country not permitting the deployment of such weapons on its territory.

(h) The limitation and subsequent reduction of military activity in the Indian Ocean and the creation of a zone of peace in that region.

(i) The elaboration of confidence-building measures in the Far East and, to this end, the conducting of negotiations between all interested countries.

(j) The conclusion of a convention on mutual non-aggression and non-use of force in the relations between the States of Asia and the Pacific Ocean.

(k) The creation of a zone of peace and stability in South-East Asia.

(l) The withdrawal of armed forces from the territories of other countries and the liquidation of foreign military bases.

6. Collateral and other measures

(a) The conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

(b) Further measures for the prevention of the unauthorized or accidental use of nuclear weapons.

(c) Measures for the prevention of the possibility of a surprise attack.

(d) The accession, by all States which have not yet done so, to the existing agreements on the limitation of the arms race and disarmament.

7. The reduction of military expenditures

(a) The reduction of the military budgets of the States permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and of other militarily important States, in absolute or percentage terms.

(b) As a first step towards the implementation of this measure -- a freeze on military budgets.

The implementation of the measures listed above would facilitate the solution of the global problems of humanity. First of all we should like to note that the limitation of armaments and disarmament in themselves represent a global problem of primary importance. The implementation of measures in this field is the key condition for the ensuring of international security, an important condition for the economic and social development of all States and an indispensable precondition for the solution of the problem of the protection and the preservation of the environment and other global problems.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

A close interrelationship exists between disarmament and development. Disarmament can and must make an effective contribution to the restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis and to the establishment of a new international economic order through the reallocation of resources from military ends to the goals of development, particularly in the developing countries.

The resources released as a result of the cessation of the production of nuclear weapons and the reduction of nuclear weapons and the reduction of stockpiles of such weapons must not be used under other items of the military budgets of the nuclear-weapon States.

The distribution of resources for the benefit of the developing countries must be carried out on a just basis, taking into account the most urgent needs and requirements of the countries receiving the aid, without any discrimination. To these ends, a special committee on the distribution of these resources could be created.

As to the time-frame and the procedure for the implementation of the programme, the socialist countries consider that the CPD must be implemented so far as possible in the very shortest periods of time, in view of the urgency of the tasks contained in it. It is the duty of every Government to display the indispensable political will for the fulfilment of this historic task.

The CPD must be implemented in stages so as to ensure most effectively the earliest possible reduction and the ultimate elimination of the danger of war, a constant lowering of the level of confrontation and the subsequent limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons, conventional weapons and all other armaments up to and including their complete elimination.

Parallel actions are possible within the framework of each stage with respect to various aspects of the limitation of armaments and disarmament such as those involved in the specific and comprehensive measures in various spheres of armaments, the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of armaments and armed forces, global as well as regional levels, confidence-building measures in the military sphere and steps aimed at the strengthening of the political and international legal guarantees of the security of States.

Primary attention must be paid to measures for the prevention of the threat of nuclear war and the curbing of the nuclear arms race. To this end it is indispensable to resume the interrupted negotiations as early as possible and intensify the ongoing negotiations on the limitation of armaments so as to conclude them by reaching appropriate agreements. At the same time it is necessary to embark on efforts towards the solution of other urgent questions so as to ensure a breakthrough in the matter of the cessation of the arms race and to lay the foundations for a real process of disarmament. The fact that the ongoing negotiations on certain questions have for various reasons not been completed cannot be used to justify the postponement of negotiations on other questions.

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(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

In the process of the elaboration of the CPD, attention must be paid to the need to provide for verification of arms limitations and disarmament. Concerning this question we maintain that the agreements on arms limitation and disarmament must provide for an adequate and reliable verification of their implementation so as to ensure compliance with the agreements by all parties. The forms and conditions of the control will depend on the objectives, scope and character of a given agreement. The problems of control must be discussed and solved at the same time as and in organic connection with the negotiations on the concrete disarmament problems and not separately from them.

The experience gained so far shows that national technical means represent a reliable basis for the verification of compliance with the agreements. Various methods of verification and other control procedures should be combined where necessary, including international procedures on a voluntary basis. The strengthening of trust would create favourable conditions for the application of supplementary measures of control.

The primary precondition for the implementation of the various agreed steps in arms limitation and disarmament is the existence of political will on the part of Governments; references to the technical difficulties of verification must not be used as a pretext for avoiding the achievement of agreements on measures for the cessation of the arms race.

We are convinced that the CPD should serve as an impetus for the broad development of constructive collective efforts in this field on the basis of the Declaration on International Co-operation for Disarmament, and for the resumption and intensive continuation of the negotiations which were under way in recent years and have now been interrupted. It is essential to use more actively all existing channels of negotiations -- multilateral as well as bilateral. Efforts should be made to increase the effectiveness of the work of the only multilateral body for negotiations on disarmament -- the Committee on Disarmament, in particular through the improvement of the organization of its work.

The convening of a world conference on disarmament -- an international forum with the widest possible participation by States -- would be of exceptional significance for the adoption of effective measures on the cessation of the arms race.

The United Nations, which bears a primary responsibility and plays one of the central roles in the matter of disarmament, should encourage all measures in this sphere. It is important that the United Nations should be kept regularly informed of the results of negotiations and on the implementation of the CPD, including all disarmament efforts carried on outside its framework, without detriment to the progress of those negotiations.

A substantial role in the maintenance of the viability and effectiveness of the implementation of agreements on arms limitation and disarmament is played by the conferences for the review of the functioning of these agreements. Taking this useful experience into account, it might be useful to provide for the possibility of a periodic review of the implementation of the CPD.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

Special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament could be convened when necessary.

The CPD must undoubtedly provide for the participation of the public in disarmament efforts.

The world community is called upon to play an important role in the implementation of the CPD.

The United Nations should promote public awareness of the danger of the arms race and all its consequences.

It is important to demonstrate the destructive consequences for humanity that would result from a nuclear war. To this end an authoritative international committee should be established to demonstrate the vital necessity of preventing a nuclear catastrophe. Of great significance in this connection also would be the conduct of a world disarmament campaign, the collection of signatures in support of measures for the prevention of nuclear war, the limitation of the arms race and disarmament and the implementation of the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace. All States should adopt measures prohibiting the propagandizing of war in any form.

The CPD, while meeting the urgent needs of the present is at the same time future-minded. The present generation must not only ensure a peaceful life through the remaining decades of our century but also guarantee humanity's entering the third millennium in conditions of peace and universal security.

Such is the position of the group of socialist States, on behalf of which I am speaking, on the question of the CPD. As has already been underlined above, we are in favour of the division of concrete disarmament measures into stages. In the consideration of this matter in the Ad Hoc Working Group, our delegations there base their approach on this concept of stages. What the tasks of each stage should be and what measures should be included in it form the subject of negotiations in the Working Group. In these negotiations our approach is based, firstly, on the need for the CPD to be implemented within the shortest possible time and, secondly, on the real possibilities for the implementation of the different measures.

The socialist States have already, during this year's proceedings of the Working Group put forward appropriate working papers based on the views expressed in this statement. In doing so we took into account the fact that since the proposals submitted by the Group of 21 largely coincide with the agreed positions of the socialist countries, there was no need for us to submit formulations repeating the proposals of the non-aligned countries. We therefore thought it possible in certain cases to limit ourselves to submitting certain additions to the Group of 21's working papers. The socialist countries intend to continue to take the same constructive part in the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, and will help speed up to the utmost the process of agreement on a draft CPD and its timely submission by the Committee on Disarmament to the United Nations General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Czechoslovakia for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. DE LA GORCE (France) (translated from French): The French delegation would like first of all, Mr. Chairman, to offer you our congratulations and good wishes. It is convinced that under your guidance the Committee will satisfactorily lay the foundations for its work during its fourth annual session. I should also like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Sani, the distinguished representative of Indonesia, for the great competence and courtesy he showed in conducting our discussions during the concluding phase of our last session. I should at the same time like to offer the Italian delegation my sincere condolences on the death of Ambassador Cordero di Montezemolo. We were deeply saddened when we learned the news. I should be grateful to the Italian delegation if it would kindly convey to Mrs. di Montezemolo the respectful sympathy of the French delegation. Lastly, I should like to say to our distinguished colleague from the Netherlands, Ambassador Fein, how much we shall regret his departure. Since the establishment of the Committee, Ambassador Fein has made a particularly valuable contribution to its work. I shall always remember the friendly and for me very valuable co-operation he afforded us. The French delegation offers him its very best wishes for his success in the important tasks he is now to undertake and for his personal happiness.

The session we are inaugurating today will be marked by an important event: the convening, in July next, of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That session will give the international community an opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved in the sphere of disarmament, four years after the recommendations adopted in 1978. This assessment will relate, in particular, to the work of our Committee, which must submit a general report on its activities for that purpose.

Only a few months remain before that event takes place. We can scarcely expect to make extensive progress in such a short time, but it is undoubtedly sufficient for those States that are committed to disarmament to give concrete evidence of their willingness to act and thereby achieve some results in the ongoing negotiations. A feeling of urgency and the pressure of time must play their part, and more particularly the concern, that is common to all of us, to improve the conditions under which the special session will be meeting: we must ensure that trust is re-established and the credibility of the institutional system established in 1978 safeguarded. In this respect, the outcome will be very important for the Committee on Disarmament, the negotiating body and therefore the centre-piece of the entire system.

However, the success of the second special session and the opening up of better prospects for disarmament do not depend solely on the efforts made here or elsewhere in negotiations.

For we are not among those who believe that negotiations on disarmament or arms limitation can be undertaken or make any progress in isolation from the international situation.

Last year and the year before, this situation affected our work. The same is true today. The use of force is continuing in various parts of the world: in the Near East, South-East Asia and Africa. Afghanistan is still occupied by Soviet forces despite repeated international condemnations; those forces have recently been increased. Attacks directed against the civilian population, which have led one Afghan in five to seek refuge abroad, continue.

(Mr. De La Gorce, France)

We are still receiving many reports from doctors and humanitarian organizations describing in particular the effects of the bombings on the civilian population, and the mutilations caused by the mines scattered from helicopters. The continued occupation of that traditionally neutral and non-aligned country by Soviet forces cannot but render unattainable the climate of minimum confidence necessary for the successful conclusion of the disarmament negotiations, because it violates the recognized principles of the international community without which no State can enjoy security.

Since our last session, the events in Poland have led to a further deterioration in the international situation. The meeting in Madrid, which is to resume in a few days, will give the Government of France an opportunity to repeat its unequivocal condemnation of the violation of the principles of the Final Act of Helsinki constituted by the repressive measures adopted in Poland following the events of 13 December, with the material and political support of the Soviet Union. Immediately after those events, the ten Ministers of the European Community noted "the serious external pressures and the campaign carried out by the USSR and other countries of Eastern Europe against Poland's struggle for renewal".

The reason why we attach so much importance to the events in Poland is that there again the very principles which form the basis of security and co-operation among States are being violated; confidence, which is the essential condition for disarmament, is profoundly shaken by these events.

Thus, we are forced to note with regret that our annual session is once again opening in unfavourable circumstances: a worsening international situation; continued imbalances which jeopardize security; and the acceleration of the arms race.

Taking these factors into account, France, through the words of the President of the Republic, has confirmed its determination to act to bring about, through negotiations, the restoration of balance, in Europe especially, at the lowest possible level.

As for the Committee on Disarmament, the Government of France hopes that the session now beginning will succeed in making real progress towards verifiable agreements, and the French delegation takes this opportunity to reaffirm the high priority it attaches to the negotiations on the subject of chemical weapons.

For whatever the circumstances the Committee on Disarmament must fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the international community. It now has considerable experience and appropriate methods of work. Admittedly, the results of the last session were limited, but substantial work of high quality was accomplished and it constitutes a valuable basis for the resumption of our discussions. In this connection, the French delegation would like to reiterate its appreciation of the work done by the working groups and to thank their chairmen.

Our first concern this year should be to re-establish the four groups which were at work during the two preceding sessions. The principle of such a decision and the choice of chairmen are not, in our view, controversial matters. As for

(Mr. De La Gorce, France)

the mandates of those groups, only that of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons need be reconsidered and, in our view, considerably broadened. It should be adapted to the stage already substantially reached in the negotiations; the principle of an appropriate revision of its mandate was in fact agreed upon last year in the Working Group.

As regards the substance of the questions on our agenda and our programme of work, we shall be required, during the current session, to make greater efforts and to work more quickly, owing to the timing of the special session.

The comprehensive programme of disarmament has a special place in our work this year. Indeed, I do not need to stress its importance for the successful outcome of the special session. The French delegation has expressed its view on this matter on many occasions, and in particular at the conclusion of the work of our last session. It will not repeat those views today, but merely express the hope that the work in progress, which has been proceeding very actively, will lead in due course to agreement on a balanced and credible text that takes full account of the many conditions involved in the disarmament process. In view of the urgency of this task, we should organize our work in such a way as to give the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament sufficient time.

The negotiation of a convention on chemical weapons is, in our view, one of the Committee's principal and priority tasks. Substantial difficulties remain, particularly with regard to the scope of application and verification. The solutions to these two problems are interdependent; we ought not, therefore, to wait for agreement to be reached on the scope of application before beginning negotiations on the provisions concerning verification. This is a vital aspect of the convention. We hope that the convention will be discussed in detail during this session, and that sufficient progress will be made in the forthcoming months to enable the Committee to submit tangible results to the General Assembly at its special session in the form of the elements of a future convention.

With regard to the question of radiological weapons, some members of the Committee do not consider this to be a matter of high priority, but it certainly falls within the Committee's mandate; furthermore, the subject may well take on greater importance in the light of possible technological developments. Lastly, this is an example of a case where a specific agreement could prevent the appearance of a new weapon of mass destruction. We therefore consider this the appropriate method for dealing with the problem posed by such weapons.

The difficulties which have hampered the negotiations are the result of the attempts, of which we are all aware, to include in them matters unrelated to their immediate object, for example, matters which involve prejudging the solution of other problems, such as the use of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament, or the solution of problems which fall within another field of international law, such as the prohibition of attacks against civilian nuclear installations. While it does not deny the importance of these matters, the French delegation would wish the Working Group to keep within the exact terms of its mandate and to reach a conclusion before the special session.

(Mr. De La Gorce, France)

With regard to negative security assurances, the French delegation intends to continue its participation in the search for ways of achieving a common approach. It maintains its interest in this question, and it particularly welcomed the adoption of the resolution proposed by Pakistan, which it supported, at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The first two items on our agenda, concerning nuclear questions, have not been discussed in working groups; but last year they were the subject of useful and serious discussions at informal meetings of our Committee. These discussions revealed the complexity of the problems involved and the diversity of views held as regards the prospects for and the organization of negotiations.

In view of the vital importance of the nuclear aspects of disarmament, the French delegation attaches great value to these discussions and feels that they should be continued on the substance of the matter in order to explore the possibilities for progress. It hopes that this session will bring a useful contribution in that direction.

There are two new items on our agenda for this session: the cessation of the arms race in outer space, and our report to the special session.

With regard to outer space, the General Assembly resolution which we co-sponsored calls for priority consideration of the question of anti-satellite systems. We hope that this can be done during the first part of the session.

As for the report we are to submit to the special session, the French delegation considers that it should be different, both in character and purpose, from our annual reports to the General Assembly. We believe that it should provide a picture of the Committee's work, subject by subject, since our first session in 1979.

It should concentrate on the results achieved and, in mentioning the difficulties encountered, should confine itself to a brief analysis without seeking to reflect every discussion and position. Lastly, the report could present whatever conclusions the Committee deems appropriate as regards its future tasks, methods and membership. All in all, we feel, the report should be a fairly simple and brief document. In any case, it would be neither possible nor desirable for us to spend too much time on its preparation.

In conclusion, the French delegation wishes to reaffirm its wholehearted commitment to the goals we are pursuing here; the French Government elected on 10 May attaches high priority to the cause of disarmament. It believes that disarmament is in the interests of the two major objectives of international co-operation -- security, and economic and social progress, particularly for the underprivileged.

We shall endeavour to make our full contribution to that cause.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of France for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

That completes my list of speakers for today. Before I speak briefly on some pending matters, I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Poland, Ambassador Sujka, in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. SUJKA (Poland): Mr. Chairman, I shall have an opportunity to congratulate you later on, when I shall be taking the floor during our debate. At the present moment, I feel I have to focus the attention of the Committee on the attempts made here to misinterpret the events and facts concerning life in my country and to mislead the members of the Committee as to the role of Poland in the deterioration of the international climate, allegedly causing complications and obstacles in constructive disarmament talks.

The purpose of my intervention is to place it on record that the references in this forum to the totally internal affairs of my country, as well as the false interpretation of the events in my country, serve only as a pretext for diverting attention from the essential and statutory tasks of the Committee and from the recently undertaken, and realized, new course of intensification of armaments.

The raising in this forum of subjects concerning my country's affairs will be regarded by my delegation as a flagrant interference in Poland's internal affairs and, as such, an unfriendly move. I wish to reserve to myself the right to take a position, at a later stage, regarding any interventions which my delegation may recognize as having such a character.

At this moment, and in connection with the contents of the statements made by two delegations, namely, by the distinguished representatives of the Netherlands and France, I should like to limit myself to a very short quotation from the statement made by my Prime Minister during the session of our Parliament on 25 January: "We reject the insinuation that allegedly the decision on instituting martial law was imposed upon us and inspired. Attempts are being made to spread the conviction that a socialist, sovereign country with a one-thousand-year-long history of statehood, a country having a strong army, is a child led by the hand."

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, in a number of statements today, and in particular that of the French delegation, slanderous attacks were made on the Polish People's Republic and the Soviet Union. The Soviet delegation cannot allow them to pass without comment. We firmly and categorically repudiate the allegations attributing to the Soviet Union responsibility for the introduction of martial law in Poland, as also the insinuations regarding the situation in Afghanistan.

The anti-Polish and anti-Soviet statements made in the Committee today confirm the correctness of the conclusion that the opponents of the détente are now openly trying to disrupt the mutually beneficial trade, scientific and technical, cultural and other relations between European countries which have been established for decades, and to poison the atmosphere wherever negotiations are going on on the most urgent problems of the day -- in Geneva, in Madrid and in Vienna. Imperialist circles are using the campaign they have unleashed against Poland and all the socialist countries as a means of distracting the attention of the peoples of the world from the solution of the most important problems of peace and war and the cessation of the arms race, and as a pretext for going ahead with their military programmes and their plans for the deployment of new American nuclear missiles in western Europe.

That, in our view, is what lies behind the attempts to drag even the Committee on Disarmament into the campaign of slander against socialist Poland. We should like to warn the instigators of confrontation in the Committee that the responsibility for the consequences of this will rest with them.

Mr. de SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil). Mr. Chairman, Ambassador Jaipal this morning read out the message addressed to the Committee on Disarmament by Mr. Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the United Nations, at the opening of the 1982 session of the Committee.

In view of the significance and timeliness of the Secretary-General's views, as expressed in his message, to the conduct of our business during this year's deliberations, I would formally request that the message by Mr. Perez de Cuellar be circulated as an official document of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I am sure that there are no objections to the issuance of the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations as an official document of the Committee.

Mr. LESSI (Italy) (translated from French): I shall have an opportunity later, Mr. Chairman, to offer my good wishes to you in your present office. For the moment, I should simply like to say how touched I have been by the expressions of sympathy and the condolences which you yourself, on behalf of the Committee, and the members of the Committee who have spoken today, have kindly extended to my delegation on the sad occasion of the death of Ambassador Vittorio Corbo di Montezemolo. I should like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, and all the members of the Committee that I shall faithfully transmit these sentiments and expressions of sympathy to my Government and to the di Montezemolo family.

The CHAIRMAN: As members are aware, the Committee decided at its last session that the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament should resume its work on 11 January. This it did, and it now remains for the Committee to confirm that it may continue its work during the first part of this year's session. It is my understanding that the Committee is in agreement that this Working Group should continue to meet. After consulting the Chairman of the Working Group, I wish to announce that, pending other organizational decisions, the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament will regularly meet on Mondays and Thursdays in the afternoon.

The secretariat has circulated today at my request an informal paper containing a time-table for meetings to be held during the present week. The informal paper, as usual, is merely indicative and subject to changes if the need arises. If there are no objections, I will consider that the Committee agrees to the time-table.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: As you know, according to rule 29 of the rules of procedure, "the provisional agenda and the programme of work shall be drawn up by the Chairman of the Committee with the assistance of the Secretary and presented to the Committee for consideration and adoption".

(The chairman)

In conformity with that rule, I have requested the secretariat to circulate Working Paper No. 47, which contains a draft provisional agenda and draft programme of work. At the informal meeting tomorrow at 5 p.m., we shall consider that working paper.

In that connection, may I note that the secretariat has circulated informally today a number of communications received from States non-members of the Committee who wish to participate in our meetings. I intend to submit the relevant draft decisions at our informal meetings, bearing in mind the practice followed by the Committee.

If there are no other comments, I intend to adjourn this plenary meeting.

The next plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 4 February, at 10.30 a.m. As agreed by the Committee, an informal meeting will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, at 5 p.m.

The meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.