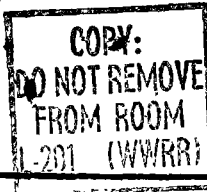


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**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION

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FIRST COMMITTEE  
11th meeting  
held on  
Tuesday, 26 October 1982  
at 10.30 a.m.  
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 11TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GBEHO (Ghana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

OBSERVANCE OF DISARMAMENT WEEK

The CHAIRMAN: Today marks the beginning of Disarmament Week and this Committee, more than any other body of the General Assembly, has decided to hold a special meeting to mark the occasion. Disarmament Week is of significance to us not only because of the complex issues that are involved and which are being negotiated, but more especially because of the universal concern expressed.

I am pleased and honoured therefore to welcome to the Committee this morning the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General. I now call on the President of the General Assembly.

The PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: May I begin by stating how much I welcome the opportunity to appear before the First Committee on this occasion. It is my firm conviction that among the manifold responsibilities of the President of the General Assembly is that of associating himself and the authority of his office with the strengthening of international security through, inter alia, disarmament.

As we are all aware, we are observing Disarmament Week in pursuance of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The central notion of institutionalizing Disarmament Week is to use it as a special opportunity to draw the attention of the public at large to the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, to its incessant and growing dangers and its consequences. It was hoped that the extensive and objective information activities, the serious discussions that could take place during Disarmament Week throughout the world and other methods of raising public consciousness would make an important contribution to the creation of the appropriate climate required for meaningful progress in disarmament through negotiations and agreements between Governments.

(The President of the General Assembly)

Today, as we look back over the past four years that have elapsed since the unanimous adoption of the Final Document, the balance of our activities in this field for which the United Nations bears a special responsibility remains, unfortunately, unsatisfactory. Needless to say it is not the absence of an informed and supportive public opinion which is to be blamed for the lack of results. We all witnessed earlier this year how millions and millions of people on different continents gave unequivocal expression to their ardent desire for disarmament and peace, as the process of preparing for the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament went on. The special session, however, had to face the hitherto unprecedented level of the arms race, particularly and most menacingly the nuclear arms race, and consequently an exacerbated international situation. At the second special session, as indeed recently in other multilateral forums, the efforts of the great majority of States, undoubtedly supported by the overwhelming majority of the public the world over, to halt and reverse the arms race, continued to be resisted.

While it is generally recognized that in the present critical situation the paramount task of the international community is to assure meaningful measures to prevent a nuclear war, even previous commitments to negotiate a comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon tests were, regrettably, suspended. The international community cannot but be worried that instead of helping to find solutions we had to conclude the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament without agreement on substantive arms limitation and disarmament issues.

In these circumstances the one major positive initiative of the second special session, the launching of the World Disarmament Campaign under the auspices of the United Nations, deserves particular attention. This Campaign, of which Disarmament Week will become an increasingly important annual event, obviously cannot and should not replace either the political will or the action of Governments, without which there can hardly be progress in the field of disarmament. But it can make an important contribution if it serves effectively its primary purposes: informing, educating and generating public understanding and support for the objectives of the United Nations in the field of arms limitation and disarmament.

(The President of the General Assembly)

I feel it is particularly fitting that on this occasion, and here in the First Committee where great efforts are made within the United Nations machinery, I should make an appeal to rededicate ourselves to new efforts for international security, disarmament and peace. We all know that without such efforts Disarmament Week will remain devoid of real meaning.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The year that has passed since the United Nations last commemorated Disarmament Week has been a difficult one both for the United Nations and for disarmament. The number and scale of the regional conflicts with which the world has been afflicted during the past year have provided evidence of an erosion of the security system embodied in the United Nations Charter, which includes as a central principle the renunciation by Member States of the use or threat of use of force in the settlement of international disputes.

There are three aspects of current international relations which are particularly threatening. First, there is the fact that there exist enough nuclear weapons to destroy life on our planet. Secondly, there exist vast quantities of sophisticated so-called conventional weapons with an immense destructive potential. At the same time we are confronted by the continuing poverty of a vast proportion of the world's population. This situation is completely unjustifiable in terms both of our technological advances and of the resources which are already available. However, we apparently prefer to devote the wealth that we possess, and our considerable ingenuity, to the development of armaments rather than to the needs of the overwhelming majority of humankind.

(The Secretary-General)

It was in an attempt to deal with these chilling and deadly contradictions that the General Assembly met last summer in a second special session devoted to disarmament. Certainly it must be recognized that the session fell far short of fulfilling the hopes and aspirations invested in it. Some of the reasons for this are clear. The session met at a particularly disturbed juncture in international relations. Moreover, as the debate during the session made clear, fundamental conceptual differences exist regarding the nature of the problem and the means by which it can be resolved.

If we are to meet the threat to the very future of our species created by the existence of nuclear weapons and the frenetic pace of technological innovation in the creation of new weapons of destruction, Governments must give due weight in their actions to the relationship between the general level of international security and the real possibilities of disarmament.

In spite of its inability to fulfil the hopes invested in it, the special session on disarmament did have some positive aspects. The discussion on the issues was conducted at a high level of representation and with the full seriousness they deserved. It is to be hoped that this discussion will help to clarify and perhaps even to narrow down some of the differences in approach on crucial issues, particularly the issue of the prevention of nuclear war.

The second positive factor was the fact that the session became the occasion for an unprecedented degree of public support throughout the world for the goal of disarmament, and particularly nuclear disarmament. If it maintains its strength and clarity of purpose, this groundswell of public opinion must surely help to bring Governments to look at their arms policies from a fresh perspective.

(The Secretary-General)

Another accomplishment of the special session was the inauguration of a World Disarmament Campaign under United Nations auspices. According to the guidelines laid down by the General Assembly, the purposes of the Campaign will be to inform, to educate and to generate public understanding and support for the objectives of the United Nations in the field of disarmament in a balanced, factual and objective manner. By helping to create an informed world public opinion the United Nations can, I think, make a real contribution to the task of finding the means by which the level of danger created by the continuing arms race, particularly in nuclear weapons, can be reduced.

Both the debate at the Assembly's special session on disarmament and the outcome of the session served to highlight once again a central fact: if progress is to be made at the present juncture in restoring some measure of restraint and indeed of sanity to the situation, it must be initiated by the nuclear-weapon States. From this point of view, the resumption during the past year of bilateral negotiations on intermediate-range strategic missile systems between the United States and the Soviet Union is to be greatly welcomed. It is to be hoped that these discussions will be pursued with the sense of urgency and the will to achieve agreement called for by the present situation.

Beyond that, however, insofar as the future progress of disarmament is concerned, what we must hope and work for is a return to the common perception of danger and the spirit of co-operation that characterized the General Assembly's first special session on disarmament. Only then will the world community be able to continue the constructive work begun in 1978.

There is no doubt that disarmament, intimately linked as it is with international peace and security, is at the same time one of the most urgent and one of the most intractable issues on our agenda. It has no history of easy solution, as we saw in the second special session. But the quest to find the means of halting and reversing the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race, is too important to be allowed to falter. I must therefore appeal to the Committee most earnestly to make full use of the renewed opportunity presented by the current session of the General Assembly to make determined and concerted efforts towards disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Mr. de Medina, the Permanent Representative of Portugal and Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. BARBOSA de MEDINA (Portugal) (interpretation from French):

Mr. Chairman, I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States at this special meeting of the First Committee, devoted to the observance of Disarmament Week. I should first like to extend my congratulations to you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee, and also my congratulations to the other officers of the Committee.

Since the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in 1978 decided that the week beginning 24 October, the day of the founding of the United Nations, was to be proclaimed the week of promoting the objectives of disarmament, we have seen a whole series of initiatives aimed at arousing public opinion about the need to make progress in the reduction of military arsenals.

It is primarily the responsibility of Governments to continue efforts to find ways of bringing about perceptible progress towards real disarmament. However, public opinion can and must play an important role in such efforts, in order to avert the dangers threatening the whole of mankind. Accordingly this week is marked by events designed to achieve those objectives. The countries on behalf of which I have the honour of speaking welcome the observance, for the fifth year in succession, of Disarmament Week.

The evolution of international relations has not been favourable to pursuance of this objective. Indeed, the past year has demonstrated that there has been no appreciable improvement in the situation.

The outcome of the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament was awaited with hope. It must be recognized that although the results were far from satisfying the hopes raised, the special session did nevertheless constitute a step in the disarmament process, which we must continue.

This adverse climate makes the objectives of Disarmament Week all the more meaningful. We believe that the activities carried out within the framework of this Week will help to involve the international community as a whole in the task of obtaining tangible results and real progress in disarmament.

(Mr. Barbosa de Medina, Portugal)

I should like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the support of the members of the Group of Western European and Other States for all efforts to bring about the adoption of measures leading to true disarmament, in the quest for a world order of security, independence and peace.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Mr. Vladimir Alekseyevich Kravets, the Permanent Representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, I should like to thank you for having given me this opportunity to speak, as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States, at this special meeting of the First Committee devoted to the observance of Disarmament Week.

The statements of the overwhelming majority of participants in the recently concluded general debate of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly were marked by undisguised alarm at the continuing deterioration of the international situation and at mankind's slide towards the abyss of nuclear catastrophe that would lead to the end of life on our planet. We wholeheartedly share this feeling of alarm. The increased military threat is caused by the tendency to prefer force to common sense. There is endless repetition of very dangerous statements to the effect that security can be ensured only by military supremacy through the stock-piling and perfecting of weapons of mass destruction, primarily nuclear weapons, and statements about the acceptability of nuclear war. As a result we have a further acceleration of the arms race, the unproductive wastage of vast quantities of human and material resources.

This is no way to remove the threat to peace; this is no way to create normal conditions for international relations; this is no way to halt the arms race. We most vigorously reject the grim and gloomy view according to which mankind has no alternative but the accumulation of weapons and war preparations. Recently there has been no dearth of statements about commitments to the cause of peace. However, true intentions can be judged only by deeds, and not by words. Such deeds include, in the first place, the adoption by the Soviet Union of a unilateral undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. If the other nuclear Powers were to follow this example a major practical step would have been taken towards averting nuclear war.



(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

A reliable means of excluding the use of any weapons for purposes of aggression would be the earliest possible consideration and implementation in the United Nations of the proposal for the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. The reduction of the threat of nuclear war has been the object of the proposals submitted at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly with regard to an immediate, full and universal cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing, the multiplying of efforts to eliminate the threat of nuclear war, and ensurance of the secure development of nuclear energy. The constructive proposals of socialist countries with regard to the development and progressive implementation of a programme of nuclear disarmament, the elimination of chemical weapons, the prohibition of the emplacement in outer space of any kind of weapon, the reduction of military budgets and many other proposals are all awaiting implementation.

The will of the overwhelming majority of States for peace and disarmament was clearly expressed at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

One thing is vital - to make a start on concrete and practical deeds in the realm of limiting the arms race and bringing about disarmament. The socialist countries are ready to work for agreement on the limitation, reduction or total prohibition of any type of weapon, whether nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons - accompanied, of course, by unswerving observance of the principles of reciprocity, equality and equal security.

For the fifth time we are this year observing Disarmament Week, proclaimed by the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. In the years that have gone by since that time, unfortunately very little has been accomplished towards disarmament and too much has been done to produce in many cases qualitatively new spirals in the arms race. The peoples of the world cannot view with indifference the way in which militaristic circles are edging mankind towards the dangerous brink of nuclear catastrophe. Throughout the world wave after wave of demonstrations of peace partisans

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

have been filling the streets. International public opinion has been repeatedly expressing itself against war and the unbridled arms race and for peaceful development and co-operation. Such an expression is the will of the peoples of the earth. We must justify their hopes. We must make every effort to bring about real progress in eliminating the danger of destroying life on earth in the conflagration of an atomic war.

We are firmly convinced that we can and must defend peace - the greatest common human value and accomplishment. We must call a halt to the senseless accumulation of weapons and make a real breakthrough in the problem of limiting arms and bringing about disarmament. We call upon all States to devote their efforts to the attainment of that noble goal.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Aboubacar Kaba of Guinea, who will speak on behalf of the Chairman of the African Group of States.

Mr. KABA (Guinea)(interpretation from French): In extending to you, Sir, my warmest and fraternal congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee I should like, on behalf of the Group of African States, to say a few words at this solemn meeting which marks the opening of Disarmament Week.

It is not by chance that Disarmament Week coincides with the anniversary of this world Organization. Indeed, 37 years ago, on behalf of an enlightened humanity, the United Nations Charter was adopted at San Francisco with the commitment:

"to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind,

"...

"to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

"to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

(Mr. Kaba, Guinea)

Those three fundamental principles of our Charter that I have just listed - the principle of the defence of peace, the principle of the defence of justice and respect for the right of others, and the principle of promoting progress in freedom - cannot be dissociated in their implementation if we are to avoid war and promote peace.

A cursory review of the situation prevailing in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East yields a bleak picture. The flames of war are being fanned everywhere. Territories of independent States are attacked or occupied. The exercise of the right to self-determination is denied to peoples.

The resolutions and recommendations of two special sessions devoted to disarmament have not persuaded the military Powers to curb their unbridled arms race. Quite to the contrary, we witness attempts at militarization of outer space, with all the dangers that such a militarization entails for the environment and for man himself.

Africa has for a long time been expressing its commitment to peace. Africa has spoken on what should be done to protect non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, on the prohibition of nuclear tests, and on the stockpiling of chemical weapons on their destruction. Above all, Africa has proclaimed its will to remain a nuclear-free zone. The sole obstacle to the realization of that wish is constituted by the attempt of the apartheid régime to develop that weapon of mass destruction - of course, with the assistance of its allies.

While enormous sums of money are allocated for the manufacture of new types of weapons, in the third world yaws, malaria, trachoma and leprosy kill or render the life of their victims an unbearable burden. Studies carried out by the specialized agencies and international bodies associated with the United Nations system wax eloquent on illiteracy, disease, hunger and malnutrition. All specialists, be they from the East, the West, the North or the South are categorical in their conclusion: the impact of the arms race is reflected in daily life in the squandering of resources, tension in relations between States; the multiplication, de jure or de facto, of alliances leading at times to preparation for conflicts between the existing political systems.

(Mr. Kaba, Guinea)

Poverty and destabilization are the price of an industry of death, an industry the products of which become each day increasingly costly because they are ever more sophisticated and, therefore, more lethal. While there is still time, let us endeavour with the assistance of all men of goodwill to break out of this vicious circle. There is no other alternative.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Zenon Rossides, Ambassador of Cyprus and Chairman of the Asian Group of States.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): As the representative of Cyprus on the First Committee I have the privilege of speaking on behalf of the Asian Group on this occasion.

It is most fitting that the observance of Disarmament Week should follow upon United Nations Day considering that the main purpose for the establishment of the United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security. The word "disarmament" has become a symbolic term. It does not mean merely the reduction of armaments by agreement or otherwise. It is meant to include, aside from collateral measures, the cessation of the arms race, and to this end the promotion of the establishment of collective security through the United Nations system, in accordance with its Charter.

Both the first and second special sessions on disarmament were meant to cover all these aspects and, indeed, the main directive of the declaration in the Final Document of the first special session emphasizes the need for implementing the security system provided for in the Charter so as to proceed to the speedy and substantial reduction of armaments. Therefore, for the reduction of armaments - which is the end result - there are certain preconditions that are necessary and cannot be ignored. I am afraid that the way we have so far been conducting disarmament over the years has been to focus on agreement towards the reduction of armaments without regard to the necessary precondition of a climate of peace and security through the United Nations becoming an effective instrument for such security and peace. Indeed, it would be abnormal to expect nations to disarm in a vacuum of international insecurity. Therefore the work of this Committee has been restricted to dealing with disarmament, but the Final Document specially mentions "and related international security matters". These have been - I am afraid I have to say - ignored to a great extent by most, if not all, those who are concerned with the problem of disarmament.

If we look at the work of the Committee on Disarmament we find hardly any mention there of international security over the years. But what has been the result? Hardly any. Of course the Final Document of the first special session designated the Committee on Disarmament to deal with negotiations, but we must of

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

Therefore, I say that when we speak about the special session on disarmament we should include all the other aspects contained in the symbolic term and that Disarmament Week, particularly at this time of unprecedented crisis, should therefore be a time to reassess the whole function of the United Nations, which has admittedly proved ineffective in maintaining international peace.

As is spelled out in the Preamble to the Charter, the purpose of the United Nations is "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and to this end - this part of the Preamble is the most important - "to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles ... that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest". The Preamble to the Charter does not speak about throwing away our armaments. It speaks clearly about creating collective security, and this concept is pursued consistently throughout the text of the Charter culminating in Chapter VII. These matters cannot continue to be ignored in our world of today.

Consistent with the Preamble is the whole concept of international security. The operation of that system, however - it should be noted and emphasized - was aborted from the very beginning of the United Nations as a result of the failure of the United Nations to render available to the Council the necessary means to give effect to its decisions so that the United Nations would be meaningful and the Security Council effective. This requirement is mandatory under the Charter. In consequence of that original error, which with some licence we might call "original sin", there has developed a situation of increasing insecurity and anarchy which has brought us to the present stage when not only the Charter is violated but resolutions and decisions of the Security Council on matters of aggression and invasion remain completely unimplemented and contemptuously disregarded by those concerned. This has been unprecedented in the annals of the United Nations and this is why the Secretary-General felt it imperative that there should be action on his behalf and under his authority, in accordance with Article 99, to bring to the attention of the Security Council the inadmissibility of its decisions being completely disregarded and ignored.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

With regard to the question of disarmament, it is universally agreed that the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility for disarmament. With that role to play, how could the United Nations be left a lame duck unable to carry out the decisions of the Security Council for a system of international security? How could it bear the primary responsibility when it is deprived of the means to discharge that responsibility? Therefore, I would say that of great significance in this respect is the wisdom and forthrightness of the Secretary-General reflected in his report to the General Assembly. In that report the Secretary-General boldly points out what is actually wrong with the United Nations and thus he emphasizes that:

"our most urgent goal is to reconstruct the Charter concept of collective action for peace and security so as to render the United Nations more capable of carrying out its primary function". (A/37/1, p. 5)

The Secretary-General then pointed out that:

"It was the lack of an effective system of collective security through the League of Nations that ... led to the Second World War". (ibid)

During the deliberations in this Disarmament Week our purpose should be urgently to seek effective means to halt the arms race, which is the scourge of our times. This can only be achieved by providing alternative security to reliance solely on armaments, namely by promoting the Charter system of collective security which would make it possible for all nations, and in particular for the small nations, to reduce their expenditures on armaments and devote more on their own development.

The Asian Group for which I have the honour to speak today is particularly concerned over the unrelenting intensification of the arms race and its grave consequences not only with regard to the aspects of the threat to the continuance of life on this planet in a nuclear age, but also as an unbearable economic burden on the meagre resources of the developing countries. How could the developing countries not join in the arms race when they cannot do otherwise? The Asian countries cannot avoid becoming involved in increased armaments because they find themselves in a world of insecurity and ever exposed to the risk of unrestrained aggression by another country. As long as there is insecurity through failure of the United Nations to carry out its responsibility because - as I said before - of certain conditions, every nation has to turn to armaments for its security. This is the situation in which we find ourselves today.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

Therefore, Disarmament Week should be devoted to consideration of the means for remedying that situation. And it can very well be remedied if we really decide to take the necessary steps in that direction. There is still time. The Charter is still not being complied with. We have to ensure compliance with it if we are to have the necessary system of collective security so as to render possible the cessation of the arms race and thereby achieve a reduction of armaments towards the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament.

But these pre-conditions cannot be left aside. If we think that we can proceed directly to disarmament without the system of collective security, we shall be operating not under the Charter but under the Covenant of the League of Nations, which, lamentably, failed because of the attempt to proceed directly to disarmament without any international security, as the Secretary-General mentioned in his report so wisely and so forthrightly.

Therefore, we believe our duty is to reassess the situation, based on the report of the Secretary-General, we should follow its basic directives, and we should encourage him to proceed as provided for in Article 99 of the Charter.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Mr. Lloydstone Jacobs, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda, to make a statement on behalf of the Latin American Group of States.

Mr. JACOBS (Antigua and Barbuda): Disarmament Week assumes a greater importance this year, for it occurs at a time when increased resources are being expended on arms, when nation is set upon nation in bitter struggle, when hundreds of thousands of lives are being lost in protracted conflict.

And, while this spectre of death and destruction looms large over the international community, the nations represented here have made no progress on disarmament. The second special session, held earlier this year, was an unmitigated failure. We have been unable to adopt a comprehensive programme of disarmament which establishes specific disarmament-related measures and fixes time-frames for their accomplishment. We have also failed to strengthen the role of the United Nations in disarmament matters. Indeed, what we have witnessed is much talk on disarmament and little action towards its achievement.



(Mr. Jacobs, Antigua and Barbuda)

We in Latin America do not claim to be greater champions of the cause of disarmament than other regions or nations of the world. But by our actions we have demonstrated less culpability for the escalation of the nuclear arms race and the increasing threat to mankind's survival.

In 1967 most of our Member States signed the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. It is the only instrument thus far concluded which establishes a nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area. It is also the first agreement on arms limitation, disarmament and collateral disarmament measures to establish an effective system of control under a permanent supervisory organ. The efforts of Latin America in establishing a nuclear-free zone and in pursuing the goal of disarmament were acknowledged this month by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to a man who symbolizes the best of Latin American intentions in this regard, Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles of Mexico.

The small attempt by Latin America to safeguard our part of the world from nuclear confrontation pales into insignificance in the light of the global picture of arms development. We recognize the feebleness of our effort, when the super-Powers escalate the problem of militarization from the already difficult terrain of international relations to outer space. There is now speculation that in future it may be possible to deploy weapons in space, making use of directed energy beams as anti-ballistic missile systems. There is no doubt that such further militarization of space would constitute a dangerous expansion of military competition. It is almost as if, in the offices of national policy formulation in major capitals, bureaucrats are determined to make a reality of science fiction regardless of the cost to mankind.

Already incapable of defining and abiding by peaceful solutions to conflict on earth, we are now hell-bent on further complicating the problem of war by escalating it to outer space. In this regard, Latin American countries fully support the proposal submitted to the Committee on Disarmament by the Group of 21 that negotiations should begin on an agreement preventing an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. In our view, the establishment of a

(Mr. Jacobs, Antigua and Barbuda)

group to begin negotiations on the text of such a treaty would be of immense benefit to mankind. For in the words of the draft mandate prepared by the Group of 21:

"... outer space - the common heritage of mankind - should be preserved exclusively for peaceful purposes". (CD/329)

We note that in the Committee on Disarmament consensus has not been achieved even on the proposal to establish the working group. This is a sad "amen" for the activities of the working group and it is also a sad "amen" for the future effectiveness of the United Nations. For if we cannot agree on the establishment of a working group to negotiate terms for the prevention of an arms race, how will we agree on the actual terms?

We are deeply conscious that while some amongst us talk peace, their actions belie their words. Yet these are the very governments which express consternation at the prospect that developing countries may acquire nuclear weapons and the means of delivery. In their view, developing countries are so unstable that the presence of nuclear weapons could prove a terminal disaster. But those Governments should equally appreciate that the rest of mankind, including their own people, is not satisfied that instability is a disease from which decision-makers in developed countries are immune. We in the developing countries and, I suspect, many developed countries as well, are very concerned that more and more sophisticated nuclear weapons are at the disposal of the super-Powers. We feel no great sense of security that these nations possess such a capability, particularly as we are certain that their competition in the stockpiling of weapons does not strengthen their sense of security, but makes them even more insecure and therefore more unstable.

I shall not repeat the staggering statistics which we all know, statistics which bear witness to the worst kind of disregard that some men have shown for mankind in terms of the proportion of arms spending to aid, or arms spending to food production, or arms spending to medical research.

I prefer to recall the demonstrations of millions of people this past summer in support of disarmament. This issue is no longer simply a matter for sterile debate by faceless civil servants in international conferences.

(Mr. Jacobs, Antigua and Barbuda)

It is an issue of survival for Governments all over the world, for the banner of disarmament is being raised in the streets of our cities and in the back roads of rural areas by the people themselves. Disarmament has assumed a political dimension, and Governments will rise or fall by their positions on it. Emotionally and intellectually, the world is crying out for peace and stability, a precondition of which must be disarmament and an enhanced role for the United Nations in global security.

On behalf of the Latin American Group in the United Nations, I call on all to demonstrate the political will to make disarmament meaningful and to give our children a sense of hope and a feeling of optimism for the world which we leave as their inheritance.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.