



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas)

CONTENTS

DISARMAMENT ITEMS

AGENDA ITEMS 30 TO 45, 120 AND 121 (continued)

- General debate

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 30 TO 45, 120 and 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. HURD (United Kingdom): Mr. Chairman, it is a privilege for me to address States Members of the United Nations on this, my first visit to the General Assembly as a member of the British Government. As a former diplomat myself, I know the hard and dedicated work which goes into the preparations for the annual sessions of the First Committee. I certainly hope that under your wise and skilful leadership our discussions of arms control and disarmament will be constructive and that the fruits of our efforts will be a fitting reward for those who prepared the ground.

The new British Government will continue the task of trying to influence the world in the direction of greater peace and security. The scope for pursuing this aim is, of course, limited by certain constraints, not least the tensions that arise in a world of over 150 independent nations. But I think that the broad continuity of foreign policy which flows from Government to Government in Britain is part of our contribution to stability. The British political parties argue fiercely from time to time about particular issues of foreign policy, but there is wide agreement among us about our general aims.

Security is the necessary condition, of course, of all successful foreign policy, and security without war is our prime purpose. But security has never been a matter of simple military strength alone. In parallel with our defensive arrangements and our diplomacy, we seek measures of arms control and disarmament to maintain the balance of security at a lower level of risk and expense. But experience shows that such measures cannot be negotiated from weakness. Unless our defenses are convincing, there can be no true bargain to strike between the opposing forces. We cannot realistically hope to lower the level of military confrontation unless we start from a position of balance.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

The British Government believes that realistic and verifiable arms control and disarmament measures can enhance national security. They are compatible with preparedness for armed defence in the last resort. But we will not achieve practical agreements unless steps towards them are balanced and can be verified. Arms control agreements which are not carefully worked out in detail, and proposals which favour one side rather than another, in the end contribute nothing to the stability of the world as a whole. However superficially attractive they seem, we should therefore be cautious about sweeping proposals for disarmament, particularly in the nuclear field. My Government - and this is the heart of our approach - prefers to seek agreement on specific measures, to move step by step, each step making our world a somewhat safer and more civilized place.

Our common objective should be to reduce nuclear arsenals without diminishing the security of any State. This will be achieved only if, and at the same time, we make corresponding progress in the control of conventional arms. The British Government takes part in the talks on mutual and balanced force reduction in Central Europe, where the Warsaw Pact has a considerable superiority in conventional forces and armaments. We shall continue to maintain that measures to curb the nuclear arms race must go hand in hand with measures to reduce arsenals of conventional weapons.

In this context we have read with interest President Brezhnev's recent speech in Berlin, on 6 October. What he had to say will need careful analysis. I can welcome his decision to withdraw 20,000 troops and 1,000 tanks from East Germany. The Western Alliance will certainly wish to consider the Soviet statement carefully in the context of the negotiations on mutual and balanced force reduction. But it is worth pointing out that even with these reductions the Warsaw Pact troops in Eastern Europe would outnumber those of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) by some 140,000, and the tank withdrawals would do little to change the Warsaw Pact tank superiority of nearly three to one in Central Europe. We should not allow dust to be thrown into our eyes. The British Government will want to consider very carefully what Mr. Brezhnev said about medium-range nuclear weapons. But we cannot accept the claim he made that Western allegations about increases in Soviet military strength are without foundation. In particular it is misleading to suggest that there has been no increase in the number of medium-range nuclear weapons stationed in western Russia over the last 10 years. This claim is based on very selective statistics. What really matters is capability, and as

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

regards that there is no doubt that over this period Soviet capabilities have been greatly increased, in particular with the introduction of the SS-20 and the Backfire Bomber, both of which are sophisticated modern weapons.

For its part - and I think it is very important that this point should be understood - the NATO alliance has during this period taken no steps to modernize its theatre nuclear systems. Many of these are now obsolescent, and we simply cannot accept the present imbalance. With our allies we are planning steps towards correcting it. The British Government believes that such correction is necessary for the peace and stability of Europe, and we intend to persevere. For stability cannot exist where one side enjoys marked superiority over another. To attempt to freeze a situation of this kind by agreement is a recipe for trouble. Stability rests upon reasonable equality, and genuine arms control must be based squarely on the principle of reasonable parity.

This means that we will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that we can defend ourselves. At the same time we should seek to achieve through arms control negotiations lower levels of forces which provide neither side with a dangerous advantage over the other.

I believe that there is no contradiction in this double approach - modernization of forces coupled with arms control negotiations. On the contrary, this is in our view, after careful thought, the only approach which fits the logic of the present military and political situation in Europe.

There is no country whose people would not benefit from a relaxation of military, political and ideological tension, from the growth of trade, from the exchange of ideas and people, and from the transfer of resources from defence to civil purposes. But the obligation to work for a relaxation of tensions is mutual. It must apply to all parts of the world and to all countries - not just to the super-Powers, not just to Europe. Reductions in military forces and armaments will be a result of reductions in political tension, not a cause.

Last year the General Assembly held its first special session devoted to disarmament. The United Kingdom played a prominent part in that very important session, particularly in proposals for the reform of disarmament machinery. A British proposal that nuclear-weapons States should give assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States about their security against nuclear attack was also followed up during the special session.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

We should continue our efforts to translate what was agreed by the international community at the special session into concrete measures. The British Government has given much thought to the best ways of implementing the proposals endorsed in the plan of action outlined in the Final Document. We believe we should now concentrate on the following activities.

First, bringing to a successful conclusion those negotiations identified in the Final Document. These include a second strategic arms limitation agreement, a comprehensive test-ban treaty, an agreement on mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe, a convention prohibiting chemical weapons, a ban on radiological weapons, and a series of conventions prohibiting or restricting the use of certain conventional weapons liable to cause unnecessary suffering or to be indiscriminate in their effects.

Secondly, going beyond the existing negotiations into new areas where there is the prospect of agreement. There are many examples. I will just mention developing an international consensus on further measures to minimize the risk of nuclear-weapons proliferation; taking steps to extend the application of the arms control régime in outer space; encouraging the regional approach to disarmament, including the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in areas where security is not founded on nuclear deterrence; opening consultations between arms suppliers and recipients on conventional arms transfers, possibly on a regional basis; securing a better supply of information on military expenditure; encouraging efforts to establish whether a standardized United Nations reporting system could form an agreed basis for negotiating a multilateral, balanced and verifiable reduction of military budgets.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

Thirdly, we hope that more nations will adhere to the existing arms control and disarmament agreements; we should pay more attention to mechanisms for anticipating crisis, for peace-keeping and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Fourthly, we are in favour of broadening and deepening confidence-building measures, particularly in Europe. Confidence-building measures, designed to ensure that military activities are limited to what is normal in peacetime and do not give rise to dangerous misunderstandings, can make an important contribution to regional stability.

The major responsibility for nuclear disarmament obviously lies with the super-Powers. The British Government is glad that the SALT II negotiations were successfully concluded. We look forward to early ratification of that Agreement by both sides. By placing limits on the nuclear arsenals of the super-Powers and starting the process of actual reductions in delivery vehicles, SALT II can encourage progress in other areas of nuclear arms control, without diminishing the security of the alliance to which we belong.

Next, my Government believes that a comprehensive test-ban treaty could help to curb both the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. It would further the objectives endorsed by all States at the United Nations special session on disarmament. It would meet the objections of those who argue that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) discriminates in favour of nuclear-weapon States. The current negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty between the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom are therefore of great importance. Much progress has been made, but there are still difficult problems, particularly over verification. We believe that verification measures are needed to provide the necessary confidence in compliance. But they must also have some foundation in common sense. My Government will make every effort to bring to a successful and early conclusion a viable and fair treaty which will attract the adherence of as many States as possible, both nuclear and non-nuclear.

The non-nuclear weapon States have been given assurances by the nuclear-weapon States, in various forms, that nuclear weapons will not be used against them. These assurances should have gone some way towards strengthening the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. The knowledge that they are not under a nuclear threat may remove one of the motives for acquiring nuclear weapons. Again, this has been a useful contribution to non-proliferation efforts.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

We all face the crucial question of how to avoid the spread of nuclear weapons. The Final Document of the United Nations special session declared that the goal of nuclear non-proliferation is, on the one hand, to prevent the emergence of any additional nuclear-weapon States, and, on the other hand, progressively to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons altogether. In 1968, after years of painstaking negotiation, we achieved the Non-Proliferation Treaty reflecting a balance of obligations under both headings. That Treaty has now been accepted by 108 non-nuclear-weapon States, including nearly all the most advanced industrial States in the world. They have thereby renounced nuclear weapons. I very much regret that it has not won universal adherence, because the Treaty represents an international goal which the United Nations has endorsed on many occasions.

The second review conference of the NPT is scheduled for August 1980, when we shall be looking at developments since 1975. The growth of civil nuclear industries in the world has continued under the aegis of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). But we recognize that more remains to be done. Of course we should enable nations to reap the benefits of nuclear power, which is becoming, as we know in the United Kingdom, an increasingly vital source of energy for many countries. At the same time we must find a way of wedding this legitimate desire for increased access to peaceful nuclear energy with the universal aim of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The non-proliferation régime based on the NPT has given the world relative stability for a number of years. I believe that we may have come to take that stability too much for granted. There are disquieting signs that this situation, this stability, is coming under increasing pressure, with the attendant risks of a nuclear arms race. New political efforts, we would urge, are needed to prevent such a disaster from happening. For we should be in no doubt that the collapse of the non-proliferation régime would be a disaster indeed.

We see a pressing need for nuclear supplier and customer countries to come together to forge a new and reinforced consensus on nuclear trade for the 1980s. The International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation (INFCE) study, in which Britain is working in concert with many other States, has set an example in co-operation which augurs well for further discussion. We now need collectively to build on the foundations provided by INFCE to carry forward and bring to a successful conclusion the consideration of individual issues which have a bearing on nuclear trade. We believe the IAEA can play a key role in carrying forward the post-INFCE debate.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

The matters for discussion include improved supply assurances, improved safeguards to detect and prevent the diversion of nuclear materials, the management of plutonium under international control, and arrangements for spent fuel storage.

The emphasis on nuclear disarmament at the special session perhaps tended to distract attention from the fact that four-fifths of the world's military expenditure - totalling around \$400 billion - goes on conventional armaments and forces. Moreover, millions of people have been killed and maimed in the world since 1945 by conventional, not nuclear, arms. Together with other Western countries, Britain pressed for multilateral discussions on ways to curb the world-wide accumulation of conventional weapons. But even a modest proposal for a United Nations study of the problem was not agreed. However, the Final Document did include our proposal for consultations among major arms suppliers and recipient countries on the limitation of all types of international transfers of conventional weapons. We believe the international community, through the United Nations, must give greater attention to these problems. The regional approach appears to offer the most hopeful prospects for success in this difficult area.

When the question of reducing military expenditure was raised at the General Assembly in 1973, the non-aligned and Western States pointed out that a reduction of military budgets would need to be tackled by international agreement, and that before negotiations could begin there would have to be a standardized method for measuring and reporting military budgets. A group of experts set up by the Secretary-General has designed such a system which will now be put to a practical test. We hope that this will lead to the adoption of the reporting instrument by the United Nations for general use.

The United Nations weaponry conference, which has just ended in Geneva, was an imaginative attempt to place prohibitions or restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons deemed to cause unnecessary suffering or to be indiscriminate in their effects. It was disappointing to us that the conference closed without agreement on any of the principal proposals before it. My Government had hoped its initiative on a proposed convention on land mines and related devices would gain general acceptance, but we obviously still have some way to go. Fortunately, the conference resolved that material upon which agreement had been reached should not be the subject of further negotiation. The prospects are therefore favourable for the conclusion of this and other conventions when the conference resumes next year.



(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

In Geneva, the Committee on Disarmament has held a series of meetings, one of which I attended in July. At that time the British Government called for nuclear disarmament to be tackled in an equitable and balanced manner, particularly in Europe, where the equilibrium is based on a blend of conventional and nuclear capabilities. Failure to maintain that equilibrium, as I have already explained, could, in our view, seriously increase the risk of miscalculations and conflict. The first year of the Committee's work in the nuclear field has been useful. It has served to demonstrate the difficulties in and possibilities for nuclear disarmament. Above all, it has become abundantly clear that measures of nuclear disarmament, such as the cessation of production of fissionable materials, for weapons purposes and halting the production of nuclear weapons, would require far-reaching measures of verification.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

On the non-nuclear side, the principal subject before the Committee has been the prohibition of chemical weapons. The United States and the Soviet Union, being the only States which are technically advanced in this field, have been engaged for four years in bilateral negotiations on the elements of a treaty to ban chemical warfare. These negotiations cover complex issues, especially concerning verification. We welcome the statement of the two parties on 31 July on the progress they have achieved. My Government believes that a multilateral convention on this difficult subject cannot be prepared until the two States most closely involved have established a basis for agreement. Meanwhile, the two chemical weapons workshops for international experts, arranged by the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom in March this year, have made an important contribution to understanding of the requirements and problems relating to the verification of a chemical warfare ban. We believe such visits could be a valuable confidence-building measure.

As for other weapons of mass destruction, the British Government is pleased that the United States and the Soviet Union have presented a joint text containing the elements of a draft treaty to ban radiological weapons, that is to say, weapons which would rely for their effect on the release of radioactive materials into the environment without nuclear explosion. They are the last category of weapons in the 1948 definition of the Commission of Conventional Armaments to be tackled in the disarmament negotiations. We believe their prohibition would be a useful, if modest, step in the arms control and disarmament process. We shall work for the negotiation of a multilateral treaty when the Committee on Disarmament reconvenes early next year.

On the more general question, the Eastern European countries have continued to call for a treaty to prevent the emergence of so-called "new weapons of mass destruction" not covered by the 1948 definition. But they have failed to convince many people outside their own group that any such weapon exists, or that the various scientific principles which they have described could produce a weapon of military value. My Government continues to see merit in the idea of tackling the development of any such weapon once it has been identified. This was the approach preferred in the Final Document of the special session and it seems to me that,

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

since we all share the same objective, the best way to reach agreement is to draw up a composite resolution on the subject which can be adopted by consensus.

We have also followed with interest the work of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies. The Board has already drawn up a draft programme of United Nations studies, primarily designed to assist progress in the current arms control negotiations. It has also advised the Secretary-General on possible ways of establishing, operating and financing an international institute for disarmament research under the auspices of the United Nations. One possibility which deserves consideration is a small institute of experienced academics working out ideas for practical arms control and disarmament measures. In our view, such an institute would complement the background studies now done by the Centre for Disarmament and be of great value as a source of independent advice to the Secretary-General. But, of course, the financial implications would need to be carefully considered.

In eight days' time we shall celebrate the thirty-fourth anniversary of the United Nations. That week will also mark the start of Disarmament Week. Both governmental and non-governmental organizations are asked to pay particular attention to the dissemination of information on the arms race and disarmament. This year my Government has co-operated with the United Nations Association in producing a United Nations Day leaflet for mass circulation, with the emphasis on securing a better future for the world's children. We have also as a new initiative, launched a regular newsletter designed to increase public understanding of the urgent tasks in the field of disarmament.

It is fitting that Disarmament Week should fall in the period when the disarmament delegations of all Member States are gathered here in the First Committee. For my Government believes that this Committee can make an important contribution to the goals which I described at the beginning of my statement - the strengthening of international security at a lower level of risk and expense. It should debate practical proposals for realizing these goals and attempt to develop a consensus on taking further what we have already achieved during this past year. Our cause is not helped by sweeping proposals for instant and unverifiable disarmament, nor is the search for specific measures helped by multiplying empty declarations. We have to be practical and above all we have to be realistic. We all accept - everyone must accept - that a world in which armaments multiply

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

without check is a world which by any moral or intellectual standard is going backwards. But enthusiasm by itself is not enough. The search for arms control and disarmament requires solid application and patient resolve. For its part, the British Government is committed to that search.

Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic) (interpretation from Russian):

The 1970s are coming to an end. They have brought about great changes in favour of international peace and security. The struggle against the arms race was declared the principal task in international politics. Now, our thoughts are turning to the next decade and concern and uncertainty are often expressed. In this connexion, some people have in mind primarily the complex developments in the sphere of international economic relations. On the other hand, others think first of the difficulties involved in the stabilization of political relations between States.

One thing is certain: further developments on the international scene will depend decisively upon whether it will be possible to maintain détente as the governing trend and to achieve a turn towards disarmament. If we succeed along that course, international relations as a whole will develop stably and resources will be freed which are necessary for the solution of urgent economic, scientific, technical and social tasks. Mutually advantageous co-operation between States will grow to unprecedented levels and better prospects will appear for the elimination of existing conflicts and the prevention of the emergence of new ones.

We look towards the 1980s with optimism, because common sense has provided a firm foundation.

Since the holding of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament a year and a half has elapsed. The session has become a significant landmark in the history of the United Nations because the Member States of the United Nations were able, in the Final Document of the session, to come to agreement on the principles of disarmament and to adopt a programme of action. However, there is still a gap between these statements of good intentions and the visible results.

(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

The achievements indicated in the Final Document are not very satisfactory, and that is why the German Democratic Republic considers that the primary task for this Committee in this debate is to bring about a new impetus towards negotiations and towards the concluding of specific international agreements. The socialist countries are providing a good example. At the solemn gathering on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, Mr. Honecker, emphasized:

"In the first instance it is necessary to act even more energetically so as to strengthen détente, to contribute to the adoption of genuine measures of disarmament and on this basis to eliminate any threat of a world war. It is necessary to put an end to the arms race and so to establish a decisive set of conditions for further progress in the securing of peace. What is involved is the survival or the annihilation of peoples."

We note with great satisfaction the lively response to the statement made by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mr. Brezhnev, on 6 October of this year in Berlin. The Soviet Union confirmed its intention not in any circumstances to use nuclear weapons against States which have agreed not to acquire nuclear weapons and which do not possess such weapons upon their territory. The Soviet Union has declared that it is ready on a unilateral basis to reduce the number of medium-range nuclear weapons deployed in the western regions of the Soviet Union, provided that in Western Europe there would be no further emplacement of medium-range nuclear weapons either. The Soviet Union proposes that further effective measures be adopted to strengthen the trust between States participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Through agreement with the German Democratic Republic, and after consultations with other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, the Soviet Union will withdraw from the territory of the German Democratic Republic within the next 12 months 20,000 Soviet servicemen, 1,000 tanks and other military matériel. This goodwill gesture on the part of the Soviet Union and its allies differs in principle from the declared plans of well-known North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) circles. In a joint communiqué the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union on 9 October declared the following:

... Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

"In the present circumstances, the matter of such plans being made by the NATO countries to deploy in Western Europe new United States medium-range rocket nuclear weapons, which are intended to be directed at the territories of the socialist countries, acquires particular seriousness."

The communiqué draws attention to the fact that the attempt to upset the existing military balance in Europe is bound to produce corresponding action on the other side. Therefore there are two courses open, and a decision must be taken. One is the course of the harmonizing of steps towards disarmament, and the other course is one involving a further acceleration of the arms race. The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty have chosen the first course and have expressed their proposals in terms of specific actions. Their proposals illustrate the full responsibility which have to be borne by the other side. We expect a constructive response, which we hope will be quite different from the utterances we have heard so far from the representatives of the military-industrial complex.

The German Democratic Republic has never underestimated the forces that are acting against the easing of tensions and against disarmament, but at the same time we are firmly convinced that genuine possibilities indeed exist for overcoming step by step the insane arms race. This is illustrated by the signing of the treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation of strategic arms (SALT II). Thereby the two most important nuclear Powers are limiting the currently most dangerous systems of weapons both qualitatively and quantitatively. At the same time they are outlining further steps for the reduction of their arsenals. This is a highly important contribution to curbing the nuclear arms race and minimizing the threat of nuclear war. It is encouraging to all those who do more than merely pay lip service to disarmament. The wide international approval of that step has already been reflected in the debates at plenary meetings and in statements in this Committee. This should be taken into account by those who must now decide on the question of ratification. The entry into force of this treaty will unquestionably stimulate further negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as other negotiations directly bearing on disarmament.

To bring about the limitation and cessation of the arms race in all its aspects, it is necessary first of all, in our opinion, to stop the waging of psychological warfare and to develop co-operation on the basis of mutual trust, to participate constructively in negotiations and to contribute to the achievement of effective agreements. I have mentioned psychological warfare in the first instance

(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

because it is increasingly poisoning the international atmosphere and is hampering attempts at disarmament. One of the favourite subjects in the psychological war is the myth of the so-called threat from the East. Fabrications are woven around this, false information is put forward, and half truths and arithmetical manipulations are resorted to.

(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

Behind this smoke-screen, the military monopolies are making their huge and ever-increasing profits at the expense of the working peoples. They are pushing through the illusory desire to achieve military supremacy and thereby to destabilize equilibrium. Not only States, but the United Nations itself must counteract such attempts.

It is necessary to introduce a new spirit into international co-operation, one aimed at the limitation of arms and at disarmament. Goodwill and resolute action and unity between word and deed must replace lack of readiness, diversionary tactics and insincerity. That is why we welcome and support the initiative of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, which was so convincingly explained in this Committee by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Comrade Vejvoda. The proposed Declaration on international co-operation for the purpose of disarmament would be a significant instrument for eliminating the barriers and clearing the way towards further negotiations.

After the tenth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament there have been some changes in the machinery. Directions for action towards the concrete discussion of the problems of disarmament have been mapped out. Here in this Committee we have an opportunity to continue and to deepen our exchanges of views. What we need is a new impetus towards the conduct of negotiations in the most diversified forums. In this respect, we are in favour of addressing a new appeal to all States to include in their negotiations proposals whose purpose would be to achieve substantive progress in the attempt to limit armaments and to further disarmament, and, first of all, proposals which would limit atomic weapons. In the first place, we wish to refer in this connexion to the question of the beginning of negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear weapons and the limitation of stockpiles thereof.

The proposal presented in Geneva by the socialist countries contains the views and ideas of numerous States and is appropriate for use as a start for the process of disarmament in the sphere of nuclear weapons with full respect for the security interests of all States. The existing universal military balance would be maintained. The regulations must also cover equal and reliable control measures. We are convinced that what is proposed by the socialist countries would not do damage to any other bilateral or multilateral negotiations; quite the contrary, it would assist them. It is very clear that the participation of all States possessing nuclear weapons is a necessary premise for atomic disarmament.



(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

In the Geneva Committee, a useful exchange of views has begun. Unfortunately, it has not yet led to any palpable results. Instead of taking part in the elaboration of joint proposals certain States are confining themselves to general objections. The proposals allegedly are not sufficiently clearly stated and do not take sufficiently into account the security interests of States. Such arguments are not convincing, if one bears in mind that NATO, whence this resistance originates, has been elaborating and perfecting plans to achieve military supremacy in the sphere of nuclear weaponry, and that steps are being taken to implement these plans.

Time cannot be lost; it is necessary to start preparations for negotiations. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic is in favour of a clear indication of this by the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly in its recommendations for the work of the Geneva Committee on disarmament.

The German Democratic Republic welcomes the progress achieved with regard to the agreement on radiological weapons. However, we consider it urgently necessary to produce a universal prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons and to make that the subject of negotiations. We call on all States to act jointly in order to ensure that the achievements of science and technology do not lead to the elaboration of new and dangerous types of weapons of mass destruction. An understanding of this need must be duly reflected in the adoption of a corresponding resolution.

As has already been seen from experience, serious talks lead to results, even in such complex spheres as the limitation of arms and disarmament. However, what is necessary is single-mindedness and the will to achieve success. This applies, for instance, to the agreement on a comprehensive prohibition of nuclear weapons tests, which is desired by all. It has been on the agenda for virtually 20 years. The basic objections to it have been eliminated as a result of trilateral talks between the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the United Kingdom. We are convinced that next year the Committee on Disarmament will be presented with the appropriate results. An early ratification of the SALT II treaty will undoubtedly improve the conditions for such a development.

Definite progress is also to be noted in the bilateral negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Unfortunately, the unresolved problems are still great. This is only partly explained by the complexity of the subject matter

(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

itself. Information concerning the elaboration of new and dangerous forms of chemical weapons is cause for serious concern, and in the general interest the solution of this problem ought not to be complicated by means of artificial barriers, such as unrealistic demands for control.

The German Democratic Republic stands, alongside the majority of States, in favour of the acceleration of the elaboration of an international treaty on the renunciation of the use of force.

Of particular significance is the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Comrade Leonid Ilyitch Brezhnev, already emphasized, in the aforementioned speech in Berlin, that the Soviet Union would never use nuclear weapons against States which have refrained from acquiring such weapons and do not have them on their territories. Thanks to the initiative of the Soviet Union, the appropriate international regulation has been discussed. Two basic concepts have been put up for discussion: either this should be an international convention, or it should be a unilateral declaration on the part of nuclear States which, in some definite fashion, would be endorsed by the United Nations. In our opinion, the first of these is preferable. It is quite clear that a convention would heighten the reliability of the guarantee. It would produce a single, unified, legal basis for prevention of the use or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons in regard to all States which have refrained from acquiring nuclear weapons and have no such weapons on their territories.

(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

This would apply to a very large number of countries. All five nuclear Powers, by means of their accession, could show or could confirm that they are aware of their responsibility in regard to nuclear disarmament. The variant of the Western Powers does not have these advantages, or if it does, it has them to a far lesser degree.

A unilateral statement made on this question by an individual nuclear State would definitely contain significant limitations and it would also contain within itself various and unjustified conditions. We know examples from the recent past where fictitious attacks upon one's own troops were utilized as a justification for aggression. That is why it is necessary not to link the obligation not to use nuclear weapons with conditions where the nuclear weapon concerned might be used as an excuse for a unilateral decision.

We welcome the fact that the special working group has been entrusted with the task of harmonization. It would be desirable for it, at the very beginning of the forthcoming session of the Committee on Disarmament, to continue its work so as to prepare an international convention.

The preparation of the second Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is in full swing. The German Democratic Republic is taking a very active part in this, as it is in favour of the Review Conference being aimed at a businesslike discussion, in the interests of the common goals of the States Parties to the Treaty. The Non-Proliferation Treaty has been acceded to by more than 100 States. This alone shows how effective it is, and that effectiveness would have been increased if the participation were universal. Any weakening of the Non-Proliferation Treaty plays into the hands of those forces which wish to hold up or hinder nuclear disarmament.

The German Democratic Republic has, over a number of years, been using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. All States which do not possess nuclear weapons should, in accepting control of all their nuclear actions by the International Atomic Energy Agency, provide assurances that such activities are only designed for peaceful purposes.

Whenever one speaks of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, one has to have in mind the racist régime in South Africa. We feel the need for effective action by the United Nations so that this régime may be prevented from all access to nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

With the adoption of the Final Act of the tenth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, all States recognized that the cessation of the nuclear weapons race was the principal task of international politics, and I repeat that now the matter calls for concrete action in order to implement the specific tasks outlined. In this respect, my delegation will participate in the solution of the tasks entrusted to this Committee.

Mr. NAVA CARRILLO (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): Once again we are present at the debates of the First Committee, imbued with the conviction that despite the growing gravity and complexity of the subjects under discussion, we must face the problems derived from the arms race with a high degree of both perseverance and tenacity. In truth, to prepare a declaration on disarmament items is a rather urgent matter, since we have had repeated ad nauseam, both here and elsewhere, the irrefutable arguments about the absurd nature of the arms race and the imperative need to take concrete steps to put an end to it.

The basic solutions to the problems we are confronted with here have been forged over many years of intense consideration and are known to all of us; the difficulty however lies in their application, in giving them solidity and form, and apparently this aspiration is unable to be fulfilled unless we act with decision. We must, with irrevocable determination, reiterate the basic definitions and the profound considerations that have been made year after year in the disarmament bodies of the United Nations. We must do so not merely as a rhetorical exercise, but because we are convinced that to act otherwise would be to resign ourselves to strive no further to achieve a better world for all peoples, freed from the spectre of a nuclear catastrophe. Furthermore, it is perfectly legitimate to nurture the hope that perhaps with time the endless exhortations to disarmament will have a persuasive effect and may inspire tangible action.

Although we are far from achieving encouraging conclusions regarding measures for disarmament, we do believe that this and other similar debates can contribute to encouraging the growth of a definite awareness of the risks and implications of the many facets of the arms race. The better we know the scope and devastating effects of the arms race and its consequences on the economy and the social life of our peoples, the easier it will be for us to unite our efforts to put an end to

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

that race and to reverse its trends. Thus it is important to continue and encourage action aimed, through a systematic publicity campaign, at international condemnation and repudiation of the arms race, especially its nuclear aspect.

We live in an age which is characterized by grave conflicts, but most of us are aware of a general desire to unite our efforts and our will to seek common solutions to common problems. The General Assembly session devoted to disarmament was an unprecedented event, and highlighted the need to act immediately and with urgency and determination to face one of the most significant challenges confronting the international community. At this stage, which might be a crucial one, in the struggle against the arms race, we can take the impetus generated by the General Assembly at its tenth special session and make it into a growing process to benefit peace and international security, and we should not allow ourselves to let that impetus be diluted into sterile debates and endless confrontations in the desire to dominate or to condemn one side or the other on the grounds of hegemonism. Without absolving anyone of responsibility, it is obvious that the nuclear Powers are mainly responsible for achieving the stated objectives.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

In order better to channel our efforts and render more effective our endeavours to achieve disarmament, the special session of the General Assembly decided, inter alia, to restructure the negotiating organ and revive the Disarmament Commission. Since January of this year Venezuela has been participating in the work of the Committee on Disarmament, which is considering important questions.

The work of the Committee on Disarmament this year was intensive; yet, we are concerned at the fact that it was not able to undertake a thorough examination of the items on its agenda. The Committee must be able to act in keeping with its mandate as a negotiating organ and not become, in practice, merely another deliberative body. Negotiations on the limitation of armaments conducted outside the Committee should not in any way hamper the work done in it.

One of the items that was given particular attention in the deliberations of the Committee was that of the proposed convention on chemical weapons. We must repeat our belief that the control and total elimination of those weapons cannot indefinitely be predicated upon the results achieved by the two super-Powers in their negotiations. While the proposal submitted by the Group of 21 to establish a special working group was not successful, we continue to believe that its creation would be an important contribution towards the speeding up of negotiations on the drafting of a convention on chemical weapons.

A total prohibition on chemical weapons can be carried out on a realistic basis, gradually, through successive stages or phases, all part of a single indivisible process to be carried out within a previously established time-table.

Another subject that was examined by the Committee on Disarmament was that of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Although Venezuela does not underestimate the unilateral declarations made by the nuclear Powers, we nevertheless consider that it would be better to adopt a legally binding international instrument. It is precisely because the declarations of the nuclear Powers differ one from another in scope and content that a single, generally applicable formula must be found. Proof that this is possible is offered by Additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, under which the nuclear Powers assume towards the nuclear-free-zone countries of Latin America a commitment similar to that which they are asked to accept in respect of all non-nuclear-weapon States. In view of the importance of this matter it might perhaps be appropriate

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

for the Ad Hoc Working Group established by the Committee on Disarmament to continue the work assigned to it.

We believe that the true guarantee which the non-nuclear-weapon States might obtain to the effect that such weapons would not be used against them can be obtained only through nuclear disarmament, namely, by the total prohibition of nuclear weapons and the total elimination of nuclear stockpiles. Yet, until that goal has been reached, the so-called "negative guarantees" embodied in a binding international instrument can constitute the counterpart by the nuclear-weapon States in respect of those States which have voluntarily renounced the use of those weapons.

In the year 1980 the second Review Conference of the parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty is to be held. At the first Review Conference the non-nuclear-weapon States expressed the view that the security guarantees offered by the nuclear Powers were insufficient. Therefore, the conclusion of international agreements on safeguards and guarantees to States which do not have nuclear weapons would be an incentive to make the Non-Proliferation Treaty universal.

The Disarmament Commission started its substantive meetings by approving by consensus the recommendations concerning item 3 of its agenda on a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Generally speaking, the conduct of that deliberative body at that stage of its work was satisfactory and its recommendations to the General Assembly and the Committee on Disarmament constitute an important contribution for establishing priorities and defining the necessary framework for substantive disarmament negotiations at the bilateral, regional or multilateral level. Obviously, in that part which refers to measures the special responsibility of those countries which possess the greatest military arsenals is stressed, and the measures regarding nuclear arms are listed first.

The greatest danger confronting us is the threat of the destructive power of nuclear weapons. No one can be misled. The accumulation of other types of weapon in other parts of the world represents a grave danger too; but it cannot in any way lessen or divert the attention demanded by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their constant improvement which must be the vital problem of highest priority.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

The prompt conclusion of a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons in all areas, including nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, should be the subject of discussions receiving the highest priority in the forthcoming work of the Committee on Disarmament. This instrument is indispensable if we are to limit the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons and alleviate the profound concern regarding the harmful consequences of radioactive contamination. This anxiety concerning the possible risks of nuclear installations, has also been reflected in public demonstrations in some of the industrialized countries.

In the field of nuclear disarmament, the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) occupy pride of place. The fact that SALT II does not entail more substantive reduction of arsenals and qualitative restrictions should not lead us to pessimistic conclusions. In any event, the SALT talks could acquire substantive dimensions if they were able to achieve significant reductions in the strategic nuclear-weapon systems of the two super-Powers.

The creation of nuclear-free zones and zones of peace in various areas of the world also constitute one of the most appropriate means of putting an end to the horizontal proliferation of such weapons and contributing to international peace and security. It is for that reason that we are gratified to note the ratification by the Soviet Union of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

The existence of conditions in some parts of the world that seem particularly to hamper agreements on the establishment of additional nuclear-free zones and zones of peace should not serve as a pretext indefinitely to refuse through dialogue to try to solve many of the common problems that arise from the uncontrolled acquisition of weapons which, in turn, increase tension and mistrust. Basically, no region is free of serious complexities or difficulties; but while there is a willingness on the part of States to overcome such obstacles no initiative is doomed to failure.

The case of the denuclearization of Africa has become particularly complex owing to the grave threat that the nuclear capacity of the racist régime in South Africa may represent to world peace and especially to the African States.

The General Assembly has adopted a number of resolutions concerning the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. Only last year in a resolution the General Assembly once again condemned any attempt by South Africa to introduce nuclear weapons into the African continent and any nuclear



(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

collaboration with that country. In the report of the United Nations Seminar on Collaboration with South Africa in Nuclear Matters, stress is laid on the grave danger that the apartheid régime, armed with nuclear weapons, may, in a last-ditch stand, unleash a regional war that might precipitate a much broader confrontation. This situation calls for the adoption of urgent measures within the United Nations, particularly with the co-operation of those States which might help to ensure their effective implementation.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

In the age of growing interdependence and complexity in which we live, it is impossible to divorce or separate the common problems that we face. The research being carried out under United Nations auspices stresses the intimate tie that exists between the two objectives uppermost in the mind of the international community: disarmament, on the one hand, and development, on the other. Development at an acceptable pace is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with the continued arms race, which consumes innumerable human and material resources which otherwise could be devoted to the economic and social progress of peoples. At the present stage in the world's economic crisis, the need to put an end to the squandering of those resources becomes more and more pressing.

The achievement of significant progress in disarmament would in turn make a decisive contribution to the promotion of development efforts. When the atmosphere of fear, hostility and confrontation is reduced through progress in disarmament, favourable conditions will emerge for the removal of some of the obstacles to harmonious and just relations among States.

Finally, neither peace or security can be preserved in a world in which nations are separated by economic or social disparities that are so great and so growing as to become insurmountable. Thus it is that, among the elements for a comprehensive disarmament programme that the Committee on Disarmament recommends to the General Assembly, are precisely defined measures designed to ensure that disarmament will make an effective contribution to economic and social development, and particularly to the achievement of the New International Economic Order. Convinced as we are of the link between disarmament strategy and development strategy, we are participating in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on this subject, and are contributing to the Fund for the Disarmament Programme.

In the crusade against the arms race, and particularly against nuclear weaponry, we must muster all resources at our disposal. The participation of peoples from all parts of the world in this joint effort is of fundamental importance, but their contribution will be significant only to the extent that they duly understand the magnitude of the ethical and material crisis inherent in the arms race. As stated in the report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (A/34/147) regarding the need to encourage public opinion favourable to the discontinuation of the arms race and the transition to disarmament:

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

"The role of education and information ... was a decisive factor, but it had not yet been adequately employed in that process.

"...

"... 'Information is a prerequisite for education'". (A/34/147, paras. 10 and 18)

We must therefore endeavour to ensure that education and public information in general, through the mass communications media and the competent institutions, become an effective instrument to enhance the principles and values of disarmament.

Mr. SAMBA (Congo) (interpretation from French): It is my most pleasant duty, Mr. Chairman, to convey to you my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you presiding so skilfully and competently over this important Committee which, this year once again has the awesome responsibility of examining issues that will have a great bearing on the future of international relations. I should like, through you, to extend my warm congratulations to the other members of the Bureau and to reiterate here my delegation's sincere desire to contribute to the success of our work.

During the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, held in New York from 23 May to 1 July 1978, the first session of its kind to be devoted exclusively to disarmament ever since the creation of the Organization, the developing countries, on the whole, came out in favour, as a matter of principle, of a reduction in the arms race. But while there is wide consensus on the proclaimed hope for eventual general and complete disarmament, it is an entirely different matter when the debate centres upon the details of specific actions to be undertaken on the various aspects of disarmament.

In any event, there is one point on which the developing world is agreed: the first stage of disarmament concerns, more than any others, the most heavily armed industrial nations, in particular those which possess nuclear weapons. Thus the following proclamation contained in the Final Document of that special session is addressed above all to those most heavily armed States of the world:

"... the accumulation of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, today constitutes much more a threat than a protection for the future of mankind."  
(General Assembly resolution S-10/2, para. 1)

Indeed, does Hiroshima no longer pose a moral issue to those States?

The right to security is today a concept that is indissoluble from peace. The introduction to the Final Document of the tenth special session, as a matter of fact, begins with the following words:

"... security, which is an inseparable element of peace, has always been one of the most profound aspirations of humanity. States have for a long time sought to maintain their security through the possession of arms. Admittedly, their survival has, in certain cases, effectively depended on whether they could count on appropriate means of defence." (Ibid.)

Even though, in proportion to the developed world, the developing countries do have a considerable number of military régimes, they are neither the motive forces nor the sustainers of the international arms race. The States which make up that group still have no nuclear weapons, nor do they sell practically any conventional weapons. Their international disarmament obligations appear minimal today, compared to those of the industrialized nations.

Progress in disarmament is bound up with and governed by development of relations of force within the international system; it is limited by the interests of the most powerful nations. Within the developing world, it is held back by the aspirations for power on the part of some of its members.

To what extent is this world specifically concerned with and interested in the major issues of the day and the important negotiations currently taking place on the various aspects of disarmament?

The SALT negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union - negotiations which could be expanded in one way or another to include certain European States, have been characterized by some as the means devised by the great Powers for managing and rationalizing the arms race.

That opinion is based upon the observation that in the period between the signing of SALT I and SALT II the nuclear capacity of the major Powers grew, both qualitatively and quantitatively. For our part, we do not wish to be unduly pessimistic, because peace, as was stated by the President of the People's Republic of the Congo, Comrade Denis Sassou-Nguesso, at the Summit Session of the Non-Aligned Countries, recently held at Havana:

(Mr. Samba, Congo)

"... is a major preoccupation of the international community - the great Powers as well as the other nations. International peace is today bound up with disarmament."

That is why we rejoice at the felicitous results of the SALT II negotiations. The agreement recently concluded in Vienna between the Soviet Union and the United States is, in my delegation's view, an important step, provided that it is implemented honestly and that it paves the way for further positive steps towards general and complete disarmament. With respect to chemical weapons, certain weapons of mass destruction, radioactive weapons, napalm and other incendiary weapons, negotiations are numerous and open because the approaches are most often humanitarian and moral.

But each time these negotiations place in jeopardy the strategic and scientific interests involved, one finds exactly the same kind of blockage, chiefly on the part of the great military Powers that are most advanced in research on and development of such weapons.

Also, in regard to the international transfer of conventional weapons there is no forum, no international expanded negotiation. The only forms of limitation that now exist and are applied are embargoes. When measures are decided upon sovereignly, and frequently arbitrarily, by States, depending upon the circumstances, they do not generate disarmament and are endured by the States of the third world. Even when they are broadly supported by a large consensus, as in the case of the embargo against South Africa decided upon by the United Nations, they appear to be vain. Even if they accept them, numerous States do not respect them, or they respect them too late for them to be effective.

In brief, what is the result of the first special session on disarmament? Dealing first with traditional proclamations of principle, the Final Document is in this respect a model of diplomatic prudence, a document anxious to reconcile irreconcilable views. The Programme of Action, which follows the introductory declaration of principle, is a veritable charter of continuity. One finds there always the same wishes formulated in the conditional. It states that it would be necessary to achieve the cessation of nuclear-weapons tests; it would be necessary to promote nuclear-free zones on the basis of regional agreements; it would be necessary to develop consultations between producers and purchasers of conventional weapons.

The only specific result of the special session is a purely formal one. It is the reform of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which has been transformed into the Committee on Disarmament. That transformation has involved the expansion of the new body, which now has 40 members instead of the 31 that comprised the former Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. In fact, the elimination of the co-chairmanship and the expansion of membership are entirely symbolic measures.

The unequal world-wide distribution of power appears to be an obstacle to realization of egalitarian disarmament. Worldwide, the industrialized countries face the third world, and within the third world the most powerful face the most weak. And those are the two principal levels on which these obstacles are to be found.

On the world-side scale, these obstacles are centred upon this nuclear fact: among the strategies for maintenance of the status quo there are some that involve a radical change in the distribution of military power. The values of domination and the spread of hierarchy are being opposed by those of sovereignty and independence. On the economic plane, the sale of arms is to be found in the same context. As long as those two types of values remain within the international system of values, effective disarmament - limitation, reduction on a basis of equality - will be difficult to achieve. We shall have to be content with the development of the mastery of armaments - in other words, with discriminatory and unequal control of the arms race. That would be merely a rationalization of the present distribution of military power; it would in no way restrain the process of militarization.

Certain considerations must necessarily be taken into account if we wish to confer upon the process of disarmament both more credibility in international public opinion and more efficacy. It should, for instance, be clearly established that at least part of the \$400 billion that is annually spent on armaments and war - a figure that in absolute and relative value goes well beyond the amount of public or private aid devoted to development - should be assigned to economic and social activities that are more profitable to the peoples of this century.

This obviously implies a genuine effort to change the very *raison d'être* of the military and industrial oligarchies for which disarmament means merely the loss of material advantages and selfish political pursuits. All the countries of the world would have to participate in such an effort. We must all actively contribute to the universal process of disarmament. The threat of a conflagration is indeed general, and therefore we would wish respect for demilitarized zones in Africa, the Indian Ocean, Latin America and Asia to be considered an absolute imperative.

That imperative would of course imply the dismantling of existing military bases in those continents. It would also involve prohibition of the establishment of further bases there, and no deployment of air forces or submarines, sea or land forces should take place there. Finally, it is to be ardently hoped that all these measures might be controlled all the better because the majority of peoples and States would have in the meantime received, through special fellowships or by other means, the training and information necessary to make it possible for them to ensure mastery of questions pertaining to disarmament.

Nevertheless it remains true - and we wish to emphasize this here - that general and complete disarmament is an essential goal that must be reached. It is a goal concerning which principal responsibility falls to the nuclear Powers and to those that manufacture and trade in weapons. In my delegation's view, there are no clean weapons or sacred wars as such.

I should like once again to reaffirm, because it is necessary at this time of uncertainty, the unqualified attachment of the People's Republic of the Congo, a peace-loving country, to the goal of general and complete disarmament as well as its unshakable will to place its modest resources at the service of the sacred cause of the promotion of peace, international security and co-operation.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I adjourn this meeting, I should like to say that, as members are aware, in accordance with a decision taken by the General Assembly at its tenth special session, the week beginning 24 October has been proclaimed a week devoted to fostering the objectives of disarmament. This year, the First Committee will inaugurate Disarmament Week on the morning of Wednesday, 24 October. In the afternoon of that day, the Committee will of course proceed with its general debate on the disarmament items.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.