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THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION

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FIRST COMMITTEE 3rd meeting held on Monday, 17 October 1983 at 3 p.m. New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 3RD MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway)

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS ~~43 to 48, 50,~~ 51, 54, 56, 58 to 63, 139, 141, 143 and 144

GENERAL DEBATE

The CHAIRMAN: Today we are embarking on the substantive work of the First Committee during the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. During the coming two months we will spend many hours together in this Committee.

The issues we are facing in the First Committee - the issues of disarmament, arms control and international security - are perhaps the most crucial issues facing mankind today. As is so aptly stated in the Introduction to the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, in 1978,

"The attainment of the objective of 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. Yet the accumulation of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, today constitutes much more a threat than a protection for the future of mankind. The time has therefore come to put an end to this situation, to abandon the use of force in international relations and to seek security in disarmament, that is to say, through a gradual but effective process beginning with a reduction in the present level of armaments. The ending of the arms race and the achievement of real disarmament are tasks of primary importance and urgency. To meet this historic challenge is in the political and economic interests of all the nations and peoples of the world as well as in the interests of ensuring their genuine security and peaceful future.

(The Chairman)

"Unless its avenues are closed, the continued arms race means a growing threat to international peace and security and even to the very survival of mankind. The nuclear and conventional arms build-up threatens to stall the efforts aimed at reaching the goals of development, to become an obstacle on the road of achieving the new international economic order and to hinder the solution of other vital problems facing mankind."

(General Assembly resolution S-10-2, paras. 1-2)

Unfortunately, since 1978 the situation has not improved. The arsenals of nuclear weapons have continued to grow. We have still not succeeded in negotiating balanced and verifiable international agreements which could curb the development of other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons. We may be on the threshold of an arms race in outer space. The development of a new generation of space weapons with potentially destabilizing effects may be imminent. Conventional weapons are becoming ever more sophisticated and destructive. The costs involved in the arms race, in terms of human, technological and financial resources are growing every year and much faster than the resources allocated to international development.

There is no need for me to spend more time in repeating the sad facts, as members all know them only too well. We have just heard over 140 statements in the general debate in the plenary meeting of the Assembly by our Heads of State or Government or by our Foreign Ministers. Many of those statements have included important proposals, observations or comments on disarmament and international security. Practically all of them have regretted the lack of progress in international negotiations on arms control, disarmament and security issues. Many of them bear eloquent testimony to the frustration and disappointment felt by peoples all over the world about the present situation.

The question we are facing today is how we, the Member States of the United Nations, can make better use of the United Nations system to promote disarmament and strengthen international security. The United Nations has, according to the Charter, a central role and a primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament and international security. Our task is, through deliberative action, to facilitate and encourage all disarmament and security measures. This is our duty, and this is what is expected of us by the international

(The Chairman)

community. We must now ask ourselves how we can use the next eight weeks to contribute in a positive way to promoting disarmament and international security.

Members of the First Committee are fully aware of the limitations and constraints we are facing. This Committee has no mandate to conduct negotiations on arms control or disarmament. Negotiations on the nuclear issues, which are of overriding importance, obviously have to be conducted on a bilateral and multilateral basis between the major nuclear Powers themselves. Important negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union are currently under way within the framework of the strategic arms reduction talks (START) and the negotiations on intermediate range nuclear forces (INF) in Geneva. Developments in these negotiations will have a direct bearing on the general climate in international politics and are likely to affect other arms control and disarmament negotiations being conducted at present in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva or other multilateral forums.

The First Committee is a deliberative body. It nevertheless has a very important role to play as part of a chain of multilateral or bilateral institutions working in the field of disarmament. The Committee is without doubt the most representative forum of them all, including all 158 Members of the United Nations. The substantive range of the items on our agenda covers practically every question at present discussed in the context of disarmament and related international security questions. We will have a free and full debate where all members are encouraged to articulate their views and present their policy positions on all these issues that are before us. Important initiatives are launched, discussed and tested in this Committee to see whether they should be transmitted to negotiating bodies for further consideration.

The number of resolutions adopted in the First Committee has in recent years shown a sharp increase. At the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly in 1969, 12 resolutions on disarmament were adopted. In 1975, at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, 25 disarmament resolutions were adopted. Last year the number was 57. Parallel to this quantitative development, however, we find a proportionate decrease in the number of resolutions adopted by consensus.

(The Chairman)

This development is perhaps inevitable in a period of worsening international relations and with increased public attention to disarmament and security issues. In such times it is tempting to use the forum of the General Assembly and the First Committee for political purposes, to submit and seek support for one's own ideas and proposals and to give vent to frustration. The United Nations in such situations functions as a useful safety valve for emotions and policies.

Nevertheless we should fail to live up to the fundamental ideas expressed in the United Nations Charter if we limited our ambitions to damage control or to seeking political propaganda victories for one-sided proposals. The issues before the Committee are too important to allow such a course of action. We have a duty towards the Charter, and towards the peoples of the world who are deeply concerned about the present situation, to act together in a sense of common purpose and common destiny. On such a basis we stand a better hope of contributing towards real progress in international disarmament and arms control and towards the strengthening of international security.

There are three different areas where I think progress can be achieved at this session of the General Assembly and which I should like briefly to mention.

First, I feel that it might be useful if delegations would give thought to how the efforts to improve the working methods of the First Committee could be continued in order to make the Committee a more effective instrument for promoting disarmament and international security. We have made a modest beginning this year through a minor restructuring of the programme of work of the Committee. If this effort proves to be successful, I venture to suggest that at a future stage the Committee may wish to consider moving further towards a more structured work programme, perhaps by clustering items which organically belong together, and organizing the debates and voting accordingly. The time may also come to have a closer look at the way the agenda on disarmament items is organized, without prejudice to any country's right to seek the inclusion of items that it deems important. At present the agenda of our Committee represents a rather random, repetitious and arbitrary listing of the issues we are actually discussing, and new items tend to be added on top of existing items even if they deal with basically the same issues. I have no ready-made solution to these problems.

(The Chairman)

However, I would encourage delegations to give thought to these questions and thus prepare themselves for a discussion on the subject at an appropriate time in the future. Sponsors of draft resolutions could perhaps also have these problems in mind when they draft the relevant paragraphs in the draft resolutions asking for inscription of the respective items on the agenda of future sessions of the General Assembly.

Secondly, I feel we can make a tangible and positive contribution to improving the international climate if we do our best to avoid polemics and recrimination. Atmospherics is a very important element in international relations and a better political atmosphere between the main Powers, between East and West and between the non-aligned and the aligned would make it easier to achieve the results that we are wanting in ongoing negotiations on arms control, disarmament and international security. I do not in any way mean that we should avoid an open, frank and free discussion on questions where opinion, positions and policies differ. On the contrary. What we should seek, however, is to conduct these discussions in a manner which bears testimony to the seriousness and importance of the subjects before us. Our objective must be through our deliberations to contribute to easing existing tensions instead of further exacerbating them.

Thirdly, I think the impact of the decisions of the First Committee will be greater if we seek consensus solutions wherever possible. Presentation of competing draft resolutions on similar subjects without making any attempt to consult with one another to see whether compromises could be made and consensus achieved seems to me to be rather unproductive. There will certainly be cases where positions differ so much that a meaningful consensus cannot be achieved. Nevertheless, I think we should try to encourage and improve contacts, consultations and negotiations between sponsors of different draft resolutions in order to make a genuine effort to find common solutions to problems which are basically common. If we succeed in such attempts, the First Committee will have made an important contribution towards progress on issues which are vital for all of us.

Before I call upon the first speaker for this afternoon's meeting, I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Committee to document A/C.1/38/2/Add.1, dated 13 October 1983, containing the letter dated 11 October 1983, addressed to me by the President of the General Assembly and informing me

(The Chairman)

that the General Assembly, at its 28th meeting, decided to allocate agenda items 143 and 144 to the First Committee for its consideration. In this connection, I propose to the Committee that these items should be considered by the Committee under phase II of the Committee's programme of work and timetable. If there is no objection, may I take it that the proposal is approved by the Committee?

It was so decided.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, my delegation is pleased that you have been chosen to conduct the work of the First Committee at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Those of us who have had an opportunity to work with you for some time are familiar with your keen interest in all matters relating to disarmament. That interest has been demonstrated once again in the informal consultations that you have been holding here and in Geneva ever since you were entrusted with this very special responsibility. This year that responsibility has become greater because of the deplorable international situation. In so many ways the present situation is reminiscent of the cold-war period, of which we have such gloomy memories. During your work as Chairman of the First Committee, in the course of which you will have the co-operation of the delegation of Mexico, we wish you positive results and we hope that procedures will be generally accepted which will enhance the effectiveness of our work.

At its thirty-seventh session the General Assembly adopted no less than 58 resolutions on disarmament, the largest number ever adopted in the history of our Organization.

The increased number of items assigned by the General Assembly to the First Committee, even greater than the number that appeared on our agenda last year, prompts us to believe that work on disarmament, both in the General Assembly and in the only multilateral negotiating body linked to it, the Committee on Disarmament, is moving with the wind in its sails, so to speak, and constitutes an example of the greatest effectiveness.

Unfortunately, the real situation is very different. The total lack of substantive tangible results can be described not only as discouraging but also as despairing. Both in the report of the Committee and the agenda of the Assembly we find, with a few additions and very few modifications, the same

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

series of questions that we have been considering year after year, in some cases for more than a quarter of a century, as is true of the banning of nuclear-weapon tests.

In these circumstances it is difficult to remain level-headed and hard not to lose patience. The only thing that can save us is the maxim that reminds us that the steady dropping of water can wear away stone, even when we have to wonder whether the resistance of certain States, especially some nuclear-weapon States, to the repeated appeals of the General Assembly on the basis of recommendations of this Committee, is not really comparable to the resistance of iron or steel. However, in the initial statement by the delegation of Mexico, we wish to mention, in the order in which they appear on the agenda of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, certain resolutions adopted by the Assembly during its previous session, the thirty-seventh, the implementation of which we feel should be given serious consideration as soon as possible by those States for which they were intended.



(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

The resolutions are the following.

First, resolution 37/71, urges France not to delay any further the ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco which has been requested so many times".

Second, resolution 37/72 stresses the need for the Committee on Disarmament to proceed immediately to

"the multilateral negotiation of a treaty for the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests"

and calls upon the three depositary States of what is known as the Moscow Treaty, because it was signed in that city in 1963, and of the Non-Proliferation Treaty

"by virtue of their special responsibilities under those two Treaties and as a provisional measure, to bring to a halt without delay all nuclear-test explosions, either through a trilaterally agreed moratorium or through three unilateral moratoriums".

Third, resolution 37/78 A calls upon the Governments of the United States and the Soviet Union to transmit to the Secretary-General

"not later than 1 September 1983, a joint report or two separate reports on the stage reached in their bilateral negotiations"

on nuclear weapons for consideration by the General Assembly at its present session. It also calls upon both negotiating parties

"to bear constantly in mind that not only their national interests but also the vital interests of all the peoples of the world are at stake in this question".

Fourth, resolution 37/78 C calls on the Committee on Disarmament

"to elaborate a nuclear-disarmament programme, and to establish for this purpose an ad hoc working group on the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and on nuclear disarmament".

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Fifth, resolution 37/78 I calls on the Committee on Disarmament "to undertake, as a matter of the highest priority, negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on appropriate and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war".

Sixth, resolution 37/83 calls on the Committee on Disarmament "to establish an ad hoc working group ... with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

Seventh, resolution 37/95 A calls upon "all States, in particular the most heavily armed States, pending the conclusion of agreements on the reduction of military expenditures to exercise self-restraint in their military expenditures with a view to reallocating the funds thus saved to economic and social development, especially for the benefit of developing countries".

Eighth, resolution 37/98 A calls on all States "to facilitate in every possible way the conclusion of a convention "on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction".

Ninth, resolution 37/100 B calls on the United States and the Soviet Union, as the two major nuclear-weapon States,

"to proclaim, either through simultaneous unilateral declarations or through a joint declaration, an immediate nuclear-arms freeze" which, while not an end in itself, would be "a first step towards the comprehensive programme of disarmament". Furthermore, its structure and scope and the procedures for its submission to an effective verification system are also described in the resolution.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Tenth, resolution 37/100 E calls upon

"the Security Council - and more significantly its permanent members - to proceed with a sense of urgency to the necessary measures for the effective implementation of the decisions of the Council, in accordance with the Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security".

Those 10 resolutions have been chosen from among the 58 adopted last year on the basis of a very narrow criterion. They were chosen because of their importance, because there is an obvious need for them to be implemented, and because one of them was adopted by consensus and the other nine were adopted by an overwhelming majority, with an average of 124 votes in favour. There were very few opposing votes. In the votes on three of them there was no negative vote; in the votes on three others only one delegation voted against; and in the vote on another resolution only two delegations voted against. That is why we are inclined to believe that the consideration of these items by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session should encourage the small number of States with responsibility for the implementation of those resolutions finally to modify their policies.

I should like now to dwell on two questions which certainly deserve careful consideration: the so-called bilateral negotiations on nuclear weapons and the renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons. My delegation believes that a few modest suggestions are in order in connection with both questions.

Regarding the first question, the ideas that I shall set forth now, which have been taken from the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, provide, I believe, an excellent introduction.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

"The current bilateral negotiations on the reduction of strategic and intermediate-range nuclear forces are of vital importance ...

"The failure so far to achieve real progress in these negotiations can only cause us all profound alarm ... The situation could well become virtually irreversible if the establishment of viable methods of arms limitation is jeopardized by the development of new weapons systems, and if either side, in search of military advantage, deploys strategic weapons that suggest an attempt to reach out for first-strike capability. ... In this connection, I might venture the observation that in this field there are no bargaining chips. Each side seems determined to respond to any advance achieved by the other side by matching it rather than by making concessions." (A/38/1, p. 5)

As is well known, one of the main difficulties encountered by these bilateral negotiations concerns the treatment that should be given to the nuclear weapons of France and Great Britain. In connection with this increasingly urgent problem, the thirty-third Pugwash Conference which met in Venice from 26 to 31 August last, stated its view, as indicated in the declaration of that council, that

"if no agreement is reached by the month of December, NATO could and should postpone the deployment [of new nuclear missiles] in order to allow more time both for negotiations and for national initiatives".

With a view to contributing to the solution of the problem, I should like to repeat the suggestion we made at the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Committee on Disarmament on 16 August last that the two series of bilateral negotiations that have been taking place between the United States and the Soviet Union, in November 1981, in Geneva - presumably in consultation with their respective allies - the first dealing with so-called intermediate-range nuclear weapons and the second, in June 1982, dealing with strategic nuclear weapons, should be merged into one.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

We feel it is appropriate to add two more suggestions to this institutional one. The first is to expand the scope of negotiations to include, in addition to strategic and intermediate-range weapons, so-called tactical nuclear weapons, of which there are several thousand in forward positions in Europe, as is well known. In this respect it should be mentioned that the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Questions - also known as the Palme Commission, after its Chairman, the present Prime Minister of Sweden, Olaf Palme - in a report entitled, "Common Security: A Programme for Disarmament", made the following observations:

"Battlefield nuclear weapons, as well as nuclear air defence systems and atomic demolition munitions, raise important problems of stability. Air defence systems would likely create pressures for delegation of authority to use them before combat actually was initiated. Battlefield weapons also would create pressures for early use in any armed conflict. Their location near the front lines of any war would mean that political leaders may face a choice early in a conflict of either authorizing the use of battlefield weapons or watching them be overrun. Each side's fears that the other side might resort to 'first use' could intensify crises and multiply the dangers of the initiation of nuclear conflict and its escalation." (A/CN.10/38, pp. 111, 112)

The Palme Commission concludes this section of the report by saying:

"Security for both sides would improve if these weapons were mutually reduced and withdrawn. These weapons are currently not the subject of East-West negotiations. They should be, and urgently." (ibid., p. 112)

Our second additional suggestion has to do with the "vital interests" of all the peoples of the world in the disarmament negotiations, which was emphasized strongly more than once in the Final Document. This has been dealt with by the negotiating super-Powers, however, as if it were some fantasy, or some kind of invention, of the collective imagination of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

To correct this and to give the expression of this interest reality, even if only symbolically, it would be appropriate for the negotiations between the two super-Powers - which should encompass the three nuclear questions to which I have just referred: that is to say strategic weapons, intermediate-range weapons and battlefield weapons - to be expanded by participants including among them a personal representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. His function should be twofold: he would be there to safeguard the legitimate interests of non-nuclear-weapon States or States that do not belong to either alliance, and where appropriate he could act as a friendly-go-between in order to help the two negotiating Powers to break the deadlock which their talks seem so often to reach - and which, unfortunately, they seem to have reached at the present time.

We believe that these suggestions, which, as can be seen from paragraph 29, section III B of the report of the Committee on Disarmament, were shared by 'many member States' in the Committee, should be seriously considered by the two super-Powers. We also believe that a General Assembly resolution inviting the two super-Powers to support these suggestions could prove effective. As has been frequently stressed, and as we have already mentioned today and would like to repeat, it is not just the national interests of the two Powers that possess the largest nuclear arsenals that are at issue, but, in the final analysis, the vital interests of all the peoples of the world and the very survival of mankind.

We also wish to put forward a few considerations which might contribute to the adoption of another important measure. This would be a step, albeit a modest one, towards the final goal set at the first special session devoted to disarmament and unanimously and categorically reaffirmed in 1982 during the second special session on that subject - namely, the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

This measure would be the adoption by the nuclear-weapon States of a commitment not to be the first to use these terrible instruments of mass destruction.

There could be two stages for this. In the first, the United States, France and the United Kingdom could solemnly pledge, through unilateral declarations - as China did in 1964 and the Soviet Union did in 1982 - not to take the initiative in the use of nuclear weapons. If that could be done, the result, from the moral, psychological and pragmatic points of view, would be almost the same as if the five nuclear-weapon States became parties to a treaty or convention formally prohibiting the first use of these weapons. It would seem desirable, however, for an additional effort to be made to strengthen this obligation from the strictly legal point of view - that is, an attempt to incorporate this obligation in one of the instruments whose fully binding nature under international law is recognized.

Since thus far it has only been in the United States and in the European countries members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) that the first use of nuclear weapons has been seriously considered as a desirable proposal, it is encouraging to note that over the past few months prominent individuals and institutions in that region have either given favourable consideration to or openly proposed the renunciation of this strategy by the United States and the other members of the Atlantic Alliance. I should like to mention the following few enlightening examples of this trend: the article, published in the spring 1982 issue of the magazine "Foreign Affairs", by four United States internationalists with prestige in their respective fields - McGeorge Bundy, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara and Gerard Smith; an article, published in The New York Times on 10 May 1982, by Egon Bahr - a prominent member of the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany; a speech made to the National Press Club in Washington on 14 April 1982 by Paul C. Warnke, a former Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; an interview given by George Ball, a former Under-Secretary of State of the United States, and published in the 7 June 1982 issue of "The New Yorker";

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

a memorandum submitted to the General Assembly in June 1982 by a group known as "General's for Peace and Disarmament", including a Marshal, an ex-President of Portugal, 10 retired generals and a retired admiral - all nationals of NATO countries, where they held a variety of important military posts; the declaration adopted by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in September 1982, after two meetings held successively in London and Rome in March and June 1982, with the participation of representatives of 35 Academies of Science from the entire world, a declaration containing, among others, the following significant words: "We appeal to all nations never to be the first to use nuclear weapons"; the report adopted in February 1983 by the "Union of Concerned Scientists", with headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the preparation of which a number of generals and admirals had a hand - Lord Carver, General Karl Christian Krause and General Jochen Loser - as well as a number of specialists such as Lord Zuckerman, and in which the following is stated: "The present first-use strategy would very probably result in the catastrophe of a nuclear war; it is intellectually and morally unacceptable, and internally it is a divisive factor for the nations of the Alliance"; the declaration which was adopted by the Synod of Bishops of the Church of England as a result of a debate that took place on 10 February 1983 and which contained these words: "We believe that it is a moral obligation of all countries, including the NATO countries, to renounce solemnly and publicly the first use of nuclear weapons, in any form whatsoever; and, to conclude this list - the result of a very selective choice among the large amount of material that exists in this area - the Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of the United States on war and peace, adopted on 3 May this year, which includes the following key concepts: "We cannot imagine any situation in which the deliberate initiation of a nuclear war, even on the most limited scale, could be morally justified. Non-nuclear attacks that another State might make must be resisted with means that are also non-nuclear".



(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

I do not wish to conclude this statement without referring, albeit briefly, to two items that also appear on our agenda and that, without any doubt, are of particular significance: the comprehensive programme on disarmament and the World Disarmament Campaign.

With regard to the programme - and, as will be recalled, I had the honour of presiding in 1981 over the Working Group that the Committee on Disarmament established to prepare a draft - the General Assembly has before it this year, in accordance with the request of the second special session devoted to disarmament, a revised draft that has been drawn up bearing in mind paragraph 63 of the Concluding Document of the second special session on disarmament and in keeping with the provisions of paragraph 109 of the Final Document of the first special session, in 1978, in which, it will be recalled, the General Assembly stated that the programme should encompass

"all measures thought to be advisable in order to ensure that the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control becomes a reality in a world in which international peace and security prevail and in which the new international economic order is strengthened and consolidated". (resolution S-10/2, para. 109)

Since the text of the draft, appearing as an annex to the report of the Working Group incorporated in section III F of the report submitted to the General Assembly by the Committee on Disarmament, is relatively brief and self-explanatory, I shall merely offer a few general considerations, like those I put forward in Geneva, to help us better evaluate the draft.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

I should like to stress at the beginning that the programme proposed is much less ambitious than the one that in 1982 was submitted to the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. That should be obvious to anyone who compares the two documents. In addition, as indicated in the report, the text of some paragraphs is still outstanding, as is the location of others. There remain differences of opinion regarding the desirability of including certain paragraphs since there is a need to avoid duplication.

No agreement has as yet been reached on the important question of the stages of implementation, nor was there enough time to consider the draft introduction which, as Chairman of Working Group I of the special session of the General Assembly in 1982, I prepared at the time. Thus, obviously, if it is decided to use it for the revised programme that has been submitted to the Assembly, a number of substantial modifications need to be made to bring it into line with the contents of the new document. Finally, it can be said that all delegations have, expressly or tacitly, reserved the final positions of their Governments until the Governments have had occasion to study the programme as a whole and state their views on it.

In spite of all the limitations that we have mentioned, we believe that the draft programme, which is the fruit of the hard work of the member States of the Working Group, could serve a great practical purpose. It could allow Governments, with a text completely free of square brackets, to get a clear idea of how much they can strive for at the present time, if it is felt that, as obviously appears desirable, the comprehensive programme of disarmament on which we have worked for the past three years, should be adopted by a consensus of all the States Members of the United Nations.

The procedure followed in the Working Group is now clear beyond any doubt. In those cases where generally acceptable formulations could not be agreed upon using as a basis the draft programme sent back by the second special session of the Assembly, together with the additional material provided by it and the new proposals put forward in the course of the deliberations of the Working Group, it was necessary, in order to reach agreement, to incorporate the relevant paragraphs of the Final Document of 1978 without making any modifications.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Consequently, it seems to me that the General Assembly should take this situation into account when, after considering the content of the new texts in the draft programme - in the preparation of which the Group bore in mind that the draft programme should not represent any step backward, no matter how small, from the Final Document - it decides what its general policy must be.

It seems to me that the General Assembly will have to make a choice between two possible courses of action. One course is to adopt the draft programme in spite of its modest nature at this thirty-eighth session, after, of course, resolving the outstanding problems. This it could do in accordance with whatever procedure it deemed most appropriate. For example, it could create an open-ended working group that would work simultaneously with the First Committee of the General Assembly, whose work would be supplemented by these meetings for informal consultations. On the other hand, the matter could be returned to the Committee on Disarmament, but in this case it should be fully realized that it would be an illusion to believe that the multilateral negotiating body could consider this matter once again with any chance of success at all before at least three years had elapsed.

I think it would be difficult for me to find a more appropriate subject with which to conclude my statement than that of the World Disarmament Campaign. This is true because Mexico had the honour of submitting this initiative three years ago at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, and because, having been solemnly initiated at the second special session, last year, it will, it now seems, play a prominent role as regards disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament.

I should like to add here, parenthetically, that we welcome the fact that the present session's agenda includes the holding of a Pledging Conference for the Campaign. That Conference will take place next Thursday, 27 October. In this connection, I venture to hope that all Members of the United Nations will realize that it is necessary to participate in that Pledging Conference. The amount of the contributions, in my opinion, is of secondary importance. It is of primary importance, however, that every single Member expresses its interest in the Campaign.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

A comparison of the objectives solemnly set forth in the Final Document and the conditions that exist in the international order at the present time gives rise not only to understandable alarm, but also to justified indignation. The modest arsenals of 1945, which included a small number of bombs of a very few kilotons, are now replaced by arsenals with a total of about 50,000 nuclear warheads, whose destructive power is conservatively estimated to be considerably greater than that of a million bombs like the one that destroyed Hiroshima. This means that nuclear arsenals today are more than capable of destroying the total population of the world 60 times over.

As was so rightly said two weeks ago by the Foreign Minister of Mexico, Bernardo Sepulveda Amor:

"The supremacy of the concept of military superiority is leading us to increase uncertainty, in which total annihilation seems probable." (A/38/PV.13, p. 81)

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

It should be recalled that it was also in the Final Document of 1978 that the General Assembly stressed:

"the decisive factor for achieving real measures of disarmament is the 'political will' of States, especially of those possessing nuclear weapons ..." (resolution S-10/2, para. 10)

and it stressed the need - and these are the words from the Document - to:

"mobilize world public opinion on behalf of disarmament ..." (ibid., para 99)

I am convinced that, thanks to the World Disarmament Campaign, whose objective fundamentally is to inform, to educate and to generate understanding and public support throughout the world for the objectives of the United Nations in the field of limiting weapons and disarmament, the voices of hundreds of millions of human beings everywhere, in the north and south, in the east and west, will gain greater persuasive power than have had, unfortunately, statements made in the General Assembly and in the Committee on Disarmament; and we are sure they will contribute, as a result of healthy moral pressure in all countries, to give concrete expression to this political will which the General Assembly quite rightly called a decisive element in disarmament.

Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas): During preparations for this statement, I happened on a copy of a doctoral dissertation on disarmament written by Mr. Jack Brainard. Three aspects caught my attention:

First, the entire work was based on deliberations of States Members of the United Nations on the subject of disarmament.

Secondly, the dissertation, although completed in 1960, shows certain parallels to the status of the arms race today. For example, rapid developing technical changes in disarmament have continued since the 1950s; balance of power situations are created by technical developments, domestic, political and social conditions; shifting relations between the countries of the world indicate the tenor of the arms race; and the underlying assumptions of the Powers concerning the nature of international relations are very significant.

Thirdly, the author felt that the definition of the term disarmament must be re-examined. My delegation has long expressed this view, particularly since the United Nations definition of disarmament differs appreciably from that stated in dictionaries and encyclopedias. For Mr. Brainard's purpose, he referred to disarmament as "any plan or system for the limitation, reduction or abolition of armed forces, including their arms or budgets".

Certainly, given the information just cited, it is clear that we have not advanced very far in reducing the threat to total annihilation of the human race.

Personally, I am embarrassed to make another statement in the general debate on the question of disarmament because I have nothing new to say, except to point out that once again delegates have gathered to discuss the perennial question of disarmament and international security. One can almost feel the disinterest and lack of commitment to the cause.

Once again we are going to hear platitudes about the evils of the arms race and suggestions as to what must be done to prevent a nuclear holocaust.

Once again we are going to rehash the issues and adopt numerous consensus resolutions on the many items allotted to the First Committee.

Once again we are going to hear rhetorical excuses as to why concrete measures cannot be implemented and how the super-Power struggle or rivalry places stumbling blocks to effective solutions.

Once again we are going to listen to appeals for the implementation of political will and respect for interdependence.

Once again we are going to hear accusations and rights of reply combined with calls for co-operation without confrontation.

The more I reflect on the above, the more convinced I become that we are mocking ourselves with these tiresome charades. I am afraid that despite our keen awareness of the physical destruction and human tragedy that have resulted from wars or conflicts - whether by primitive, conventional or atomic weapons - mankind is still opposed to adopting a more appropriate

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

programme of action. Despite the fact that Governments are aware that the arms race has resulted in the wastage of valuable resources that could be put to more productive use, there is a great unwillingness to desist from acquiring and - even more disconcerting - developing newer and more sophisticated weapons of destruction.

From 1959 to the present, several conventions and treaties have been ratified on test bans, non-proliferation of arms and nuclear weapon-free zones. They have all been violated. Instead of limitation and control of armaments, global expenditures have continued to mount, consuming human and material resources, thereby jeopardizing the peace, security and stability of regions, and the environment.

Perhaps I am too serious about the arms race and the urgent need for us to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Perhaps it is necessary for us to go on talking and not acting. Perhaps this call for peace is merely an illusion and peace can be achieved only through war. Perhaps the expression of a comedian - "They can't blow up the world. Where would people live?" - is more believable than documentaries and simulated dramatic films on the danger of the escalated arms race. If this is so, what then of the aspirations of every child to become an adult, to succeed at a career or to have a family, or both? What then of the desire of every parent to see their child or children grow, discover life, have a family of their own and provide for them an old age of contentment through their offspring?

If these then are still real, genuine goals of human beings, and not merely philosophic, melodramatic posturings, then the Charter provisions and Assembly directives we are mandated to implement and bring to fruition are to be given a different fate from that to which we have hitherto consigned them.

The questions therefore arise:

Why do we continue to pour resources into acquisition of guns instead of butter?

Why do we allow conflicts still to threaten our peace of mind, dreams of the future?

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

Why do we permit situations which deprive human beings of the joys of their procreation?

Why do we continue to waste our energies in rhetoric?

Why do we not forestall and eliminate the obviously detrimental?



(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

The answer is a simple one. We believe we would be heard for our much gainsaying. Strangely enough, silence would be more effective; for only what comes out of a man defiles him. What is evident is that nations must be convinced that there is an urgent need for the strengthening of the United Nations as a peacemaker. They must believe that it is not an oversimplification to say that the Charter provides ample mechanisms and procedures to ensure that the lowest possible level of armaments will characterize not only defence systems but regions as well.

Let me reiterate that, while the role of the super-Powers and militarily significant States cannot be overlooked, action by non-militarily significant States is no longer an option but an imperative: for it is only through such complementary action and commitment by non-militarily significant States that militarily significant States, blinkered and bound by their individual and collective vested interests, will think twice about maintaining the political doctrines which inflate their security needs and, in turn, lead to arms escalation, transferrals and the use and threat of use of force, which increase international tensions and in many instances influence decisions to engage in and exacerbate international conflicts.

In addition, it seems to my delegation that the real challenge of disarmament rests with the non-militarily significant States, which at present, by and large, have less to lose from renunciation of arms and all to gain for themselves and for militarily significant States by so doing.

Mr. Chairman, I feel that the organization of work you have presented to the Committee has great merit. The grouping of similar items is particularly appealing, and if Member States could agree to one single resolution for each item we should be able to boast of significant progress, on paper at least, in curbing the arms race. Let me assure you that my delegation welcomes the opportunity to assist you and the other officers of the Committee in bringing your onerous task to a successful conclusion.

I am realistic enough to know that when we begin to deal with texts of draft resolutions the frustrations, disagreements and disappointments will be ever present. However, as someone said regarding the implementation of a very innovative and controversial plan to ease the economic crisis in developing countries, "This is an extraordinary challenge that we cannot refuse to take and a responsibility we cannot afford to avoid."

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all to congratulate you on your election to preside over this Committee.

The priority items on the Committee's agenda are the elimination of the threat of nuclear war and the limitation and halting of the nuclear arms race. In the true sense of the expression, that is global problem number one, crucial not only in solving other problems of mankind but also to the very survival of life on our planet. The Soviet delegation fully shares the concern over the increasingly ominous shape of the risk of nuclear war voiced during this session's general debate in plenary meetings. This risk is primarily the result of the unbridled nuclear arms race unleashed by those who are seeking to acquire military superiority in a bid to impose their will on other countries and peoples and to halt and reverse the objective processes of world development.

It would appear that the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization were already packed to capacity, and yet, the weapon assembly lines run on ever faster, at a frantic pace. It is impossible to think of any type of armament that is not either being stockpiled or being replaced by some new and even more deadly weapon. The development and improvement of strategic offensive weapons is proceeding apace: weapons are being developed on the basis of the latest scientific and technological advances in an obvious endeavour to acquire a nuclear first-strike capability. In order to bring nuclear weapons right up to their targets, plans to deploy new medium-range missiles in Western Europe, which promote illusions about the possibility of remaining outside a nuclear exchange.

There can be no doubt that Europe is now the nerve centre of international relations. The deployment of new United States missiles in Europe would greatly complicate the whole world situation, dramatically escalate the nuclear confrontation, increase the threat of nuclear war. If the United States missiles are actually deployed in Europe, the Soviet Union will have no alternative but to take appropriate countermeasures.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The arms race, which is being speeded up by the United States, is not confined to one continent alone. New attempts are being made to secure the deployment of neutron weapons in Western Europe and in other parts of the world. Over a broad geographic area, from Diego Garcia to Okinawa, and over the expanses of the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans, both the land and the waters are being crammed with nuclear weapons through a pathological desire to add more such weapons where they are already in place and to deploy them where there are none.

The nuclear arms race, to which is now being given a qualitatively new dimension, increases the risk of war, inter alia, through an accident or technical error. The situation is being made worse by the fact that, even in the conditions of a nuclear arms race there are some who, with criminal thoughtlessness - as if the lives of millions of people were not at stake - are bandying about all kinds of doctrines and concepts of limited and protracted nuclear war, or selective or countervailing nuclear strikes - all based on the same reliance on the first use of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Any sober-minded person would readily see that to think of the unthinkable, namely, the admissibility of nuclear war, disregards the single most important reality of the nuclear and space age, which is that if any nuclear war were unleashed, it would inevitably become world-wide. That is the fatal threshold beyond which life on earth itself may be destroyed.

Every time eminent scientists, physicists, physicians, ecologists or military experts lift the veil covering hypothetical nuclear missile war scenarios, they reveal a truly monstrous abyss which has little in common with speculative calculations of the trigger happy strategists who, in effect, think in pre-nuclear war terms. To hear them makes it appear that nuclear war is just a variety of conventional warfare but with more extensive consequences. However, a good look at the real facts shows that the soldier's conventional view of war is as outdated and as simple minded as is the straight-forward Velasquez picture of the helmeted Mars compared to the apocalypse of Picasso's Guernica.

The final documents adopted by the Third World Congress of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War held in the summer of 1983 point to the fact that all-out nuclear war would instantly kill hundreds of millions of people, and thus call into question the future of those who might survive the initial attack: the medicinal services would be unable to provide effective aid for the survivors: future generations would inherit a violated biosphere on a planet poisoned by radioactivity: the long-term ecological consequences of nuclear explosions would affect later generations: indeed, if account is taken of all that is known and, even more important, of all that is still unknown, about the consequences of nuclear explosions, there is a danger that human life on our planet would cease to exist.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Similar conclusions have also been reached by scientists working in other fields and by sober minded politicians and military figures.

Clearly the advocacy of reliance on force, and particularly on nuclear force, blasphemously declared by some to be political realism, is biological nihilism, and therefore also political nihilism, because nuclear war is the road of no return. A truly realistic policy cannot be based on the possibility of experimenting with our planet to determine its capacity to survive a nuclear holocaust. That is the point repeatedly made by the Soviet Union: there can be no victors in a nuclear war.

People on all continents are rightly asking whether the slide towards the nuclear abyss can be halted and whether we can move on to another road in world politics.

We would answer that question most emphatically in the affirmative. The history of the post war years has proved convincingly that the threat of a nuclear war can be averted. Mankind has gained experience in the consolidation of peace and international security. For an entire decade international relations were developing in a spirit of détente. That was certainly a valuable gain for the international community. And there is no alternative. The gravity of the existing situation and the present level of the danger of war urgently require a return to the policy of détente and to a joint search for ways of preventing nuclear war.

What is now the essence of the problem of assuring peace and international security? Succinctly expressed, it is maintenance of the approximate strategic military equilibrium existing in Europe and on a global scale between the Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and between the Soviet Union and the United States. That equilibrium makes an objective contribution to the preservation of peace. Reluctance to accept that reality and a striving for military supremacy and destabilization of the military and political situation lead to an escalation of the arms race and a greater threat of nuclear war.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The Soviet Union has done, and will continue to do, its utmost to preserve that equilibrium and to seek the reduction and limitation of armaments on the basis of the existing equilibrium so that approximate parity at any given moment would be maintained, but at an increasingly lower level. That position is realistic, it is scientifically and politically sound, and it is in keeping with the interests of both sides and with the cause of world peace.

To that end, it is crucial that the nuclear weapon Powers strictly adhere to a defensive doctrine. That is precisely the doctrine that forms the basis for the building of the Soviet armed forces, including their nuclear components. Yes, we are maintaining the combat readiness of our armed forces at an appropriate level, taking into account the threats to our security. But we do that because we must. The arms race has always been imposed on us from outside. Preventive wars of any type or scale, and concepts of preemptive nuclear strikes are alien to the Soviet military doctrine.

Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, has pointed out in his recent statement that:

We do not separate the well-being of our people and the security of the Soviet State from, let alone oppose it to, the well-being and security of other peoples and other countries. In the nuclear age one cannot look at the world through the prism of narrow egoistic interests. Responsible statesmen have one choice - to do all they can to prevent a nuclear catastrophe. Any other position is short-sighted, nay more suicidal.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

As pointed out in the communiqué of the recently concluded Sofia meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Warsaw Treaty States, the Soviet Union, together with its allies, is offering an alternative to nuclear disaster, in a broad complex of proposals designed to eliminate the threat of nuclear war, halt the arms race and bring about disarmament and détente.

The Soviet Union considers it necessary to strive to create reliable material, political, legal, moral, psychological and other guarantees for the prevention of nuclear war at every level - unilateral, bilateral and multilateral. Our intentions are matched by specific deeds.

The Soviet Union has assumed the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. This has been a resolute and bold move considering that the United States and other NATO nuclear Powers find the unleashing of nuclear war possible and have not reacted at all in response to this action of the Soviet Union. The adoption of the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons is not a mere declaration. In military terms it means that more attention will be paid in the building up of armed forces to the objectives of preventing armed conflicts from becoming nuclear, thus necessitating the introduction of even stricter standards in the establishment and the makeup of the manpower of the forces, and in the organization of strict controls guaranteeing the exclusion of unsanctioned launchings of nuclear weapons - from tactical to strategic. If other nuclear States which have not done so followed the example set by the Soviet Union, this would amount in actual practice to the renunciation in general of the first use of nuclear weapons.

We cannot fail to agree with the remarks of the speaker who just addressed the Committee, the representative of Mexico, Mr. Garcia Robles, who said that the question of the non-first-use of nuclear weapons is one of the most important issues before us.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The other truly tangible measures adopted by the Soviet Union on a unilateral basis are: the cessation in 1982 of further deployment of medium-range missiles in the European part of the Soviet Union and, moreover, the actual reduction of part of these armaments; the non-stationing of additional medium-range missiles beyond the Urals in an area where they would have western Europe within their range.

This year yet another significant move has been added to the Soviet Union's record of unilateral peace initiatives. The Soviet Union has assumed an obligation not to be the first to launch into outer space any type of anti-satellite weapons. In other words, the Soviet Union thereby has declared a unilateral moratorium on such launchings for as long as other States, including the United States, refrain from launching into outer space any type of anti-satellite weapons of any sort. This decision is yet another manifestation of the goodwill of the Soviet Union and its determination to promote in actual deeds the elimination of the threat of war.

The significance of unilateral actions in this sphere of the prevention of nuclear war is self-evident. At the same time, of course, unilateral efforts alone are not enough.

The Soviet Union has taken a properly responsible approach to the on-going negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States on limitation of nuclear arms in Europe and on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms. We believe that these negotiations should not be conducted merely for the sake of holding negotiations, but in order to reach concrete results; and we are firmly convinced that it is quite possible to reach a common position at these negotiations on the basis of strict compliance with the principle of equality and equal security. But, just as it is impossible to applaud with one hand, the efforts of one side alone are clearly inadequate to get results in the talks. The state of affairs at these negotiations makes my point in this regard perfectly clear.



(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Let us now turn to the negotiations on the limitation of nuclear weapons in Europe that have now entered the decisive phase. As far back as two years ago the Soviet Union proposed a truly zero option for Europe: the elimination of all nuclear weapons, both medium-range and tactical. I emphasize, this was a genuine zero option. However, since NATO was not prepared to adopt such a radical solution - and the Soviet Union is still ready to do so - the Soviet Union proposed a not so radical yet far-reaching option: the renunciation of the deployment in Europe of any new medium-range missiles and the reduction of all existing missiles by roughly two thirds, leaving 300 missiles on the USSR and NATO sides, respectively.

In view of western claims that such option would be unfair because the Soviet Union could, supposedly, retain within those 300 systems more missiles than NATO has at its disposal, the Soviet side declared that it was willing to keep - after the reductions in Europe - exactly as many medium-range missiles as Britain and France have in their possession. Accordingly, the two sides would be left with equal numbers of nuclear-capable aircraft of medium radius of action. Moreover, we also expressed our agreement to negotiating equal numbers not only of the delivery vehicles - that is, missiles and aircraft - but also of nuclear warheads carried by them.

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As a result, the Soviet Union would have in the European zone far fewer medium-range missiles and warheads on those missiles than it had before 1976, when it had no SS-20 missiles at all.

Finally, the USSR quite recently took another major step towards a positive solution of the problem of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe. In the event of a mutually-acceptable agreement being reached - including the renunciation by the United States of its plan to deploy new missiles in Europe - the Soviet Union would not only reduce its own medium-range missiles in the European part of the country to a level equal to the number of missiles possessed by Great Britain and France, but would also eliminate all the missiles removed. In that way a significant number of SS-20 missiles would also be dismantled. Thus, a major, real disarmament measure has been proposed with a view to considerably facilitating agreement.

But the United States has adopted a different kind of approach at the negotiations. For a long time the United States has been proposing that the USSR reduce to zero - that is, destroy - all its medium-range missiles, and not only in the European but also in the Eastern part of the country, while NATO would not destroy a single missile or aircraft. In other words, the purport of this proposal, which can be called a zero option only as a mockery of common sense, boils down to zero missiles for the USSR and zero reductions for NATO.

Another variant on this lopsided position is found in the so-called interim solution proposed by the United States, under which the USSR would have on the one hand to reduce its medium-range nuclear arsenal and on the other hand to give its blessing to the deployment in Europe of a certain number of new United States missiles in addition to existing British and French missiles and the European forward-based systems of the United States itself.

Even now the United States continues to press for this solution, which would enable it in any event to begin at the end of 1983 the deployment in Western Europe of its new medium-range missiles, in addition to the American forward-based nuclear systems already in place there. The United States is merely covering up this fact with talk about some sort of United States flexibility in the Geneva talks. Another helping of this "flexibility" has

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just been dished out, and the inherent deceit is obvious this time too. The essence of the latest so-called flexible movement in the United States position amounts, as before, to a proposal that agreement be reached on how many Soviet medium-range missiles are to be removed and how many new American missiles are to be deployed in Europe in addition to the nuclear arsenal already possessed by NATO.

The current United States position not only precludes the possibility of reaching agreement, but is altogether devoid of elementary common sense. How is it possible, for example, to find an even remotely reasonable justification for the refusal to take into account British and French missiles in the overall balance of nuclear arms? The British and French systems, which are capable of destroying targets on the territory of the USSR and its allies, even now constitute a significant component of NATO's nuclear arsenal.

The stubborn reluctance of the United States to take them into account is clearly intended to delay the talks and enable that country to deploy its missiles in Western Europe by invoking the intransigence of the Soviet Union. Capable as they are of destroying targets deep inside Soviet territory, these missiles are designed to become an absolute addition to the United States nuclear arsenal and to upset the existing regional and global balance in NATO's favour. However, it is not only targets on Soviet territory, but also targets in some other countries, including African and Asian countries, that could turn out to be in the sights of these new American missiles.

Together with the other Warsaw Treaty countries, the Soviet Union continues firmly to advocate that an early agreement be reached in the negotiations which provides for the renunciation of the deployment in Europe of new medium-range nuclear missiles and for appropriate reductions in existing medium-range nuclear systems in that continent. As was emphasized in the communiqué issued on 14 October 1983 in Sofia, Bulgaria, by the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Treaty States,

"The possibility of reaching at the Geneva negotiations an agreement consonant with the interests of the peoples of the world still exists. In this context it was pointed out that if no agreement were reached in the talks before the end of this year it would be necessary for the negotiations to continue for the purpose of reaching one, with the

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United States and its NATO allies waiving the deadline they had themselves established for the deployment of new medium-range nuclear missiles."

The USSR is willing in those conditions to observe the freeze it has unilaterally declared on medium-range missile systems deployed in the European part of its territory and to carry out the unilateral reduction of such systems that began when the freeze was declared, as a major contribution to the creation of the conditions necessary for the successful completion of the talks.

A situation similar to that in the talks on the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe is developing in another Geneva forum: that of the negotiations on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms.

At these talks, the Soviet Union has been proposing as a first step, a freeze on the strategic nuclear arsenals of both sides and that they should both forgo not only any increase in the present number of missiles, but also the development and testing of new types and kinds of strategic arms, as well as limiting to the maximum extent possible the modernization of existing systems.

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But this would only be a first step. The Soviet proposals call for deep reductions of all strategic weapons in the interests of enhancing over all military strategic stability. Specifically, the draft treaty put forward by the Soviet delegation at the Geneva talks proposes that the existing arsenals of both sides be reduced by approximately 25 per cent, to equal levels. The number of nuclear warheads on these armaments would also be cut substantially to equal agreed ceilings. All channels for the continuation of the strategic arms race would be blocked. There would be a ban on the deployment of long-range cruise missiles and other new kinds of strategic systems, and the possibilities for competition between the two sides in a qualitative upgrading of their arms would be very strictly limited. All these limitations and reductions would of course be subject to verification. The Soviet Union then would be prepared to move towards even deeper reductions.

Here too the United States position is aimed at obtaining unilateral military advantages rather than an honest agreement. The reductions as proposed by the United States would affect the Soviet strategic arsenal to a considerably greater degree than the American arsenal. It is true, however, that from time to time the United States side engages in a tactical gliding around some important problems facing the negotiations. However this does not change the over-all picture. Allow me to give a concrete example. As soon as the United States felt that it wanted to ensure a future deployment of another inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) - the Midgetman - in addition to the latest MX ICBMs, which are to increase the United States nuclear arsenal by at least 1,000 high-yield warheads, the United States delegation in Geneva hastened to declare its readiness to adjust its position. The United States delegation declared its willingness to raise its earlier proposed limit of 850 on deployed sea-and-land-based ballistic missiles.

The same is true of the recent United States idea of a build-down, or increase in reductions. Even according to United States mass-media estimates, that idea would in effect mean a faster reduction of land-based ICBMs which

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constitute the backbone of the USSR strategic nuclear forces than of sea-based missiles, which are more important for the United States of America. The thrust of the new United States proposal is to channel the strategic arms race towards a qualitative improvement of missiles and bombers rather than to curb it. Thus that proposal is by no means a step forward; rather, at best, it is a move sideways.

Though the negotiations on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms have so far failed to advance, the Soviet Union, together with other socialist countries, believes that progress is feasible at these negotiations too, if the other side also strives for it, not in words, but in deeds.

While recognizing the special responsibility of the USSR and the United States for averting nuclear war, we believe at the same time that active multilateral efforts are required of all States of this planet, irrespective of their size, geographical location, social system and of whether they possess nuclear weapons or not or of whether they are members of some military-political grouping or are non-aligned. Only joint efforts by all those who cherish peace can contain those who are pushing the world towards the abyss and hinder the unravelling of intricate political knots and the achievement of constructive agreements.

The recent Madrid meeting of States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe has demonstrated that neither the present-day world tensions nor considerable differences in national policies are an insurmountable obstacle to finding areas of agreement in order to produce solutions which clear the horizons of world politics.

We attach exceptional importance to the United Nations, the most representative international forum. United Nations decisions, aimed at the prevention of nuclear war and the curbing of the arms race and at expressing the will of the States Members of the United Nations, carry great moral and political authority and have significant potential for influencing positively the policies of States.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The recent report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the work of the Organization rightly notes that the task of eliminating the threat of nuclear war

"should override the differences of interest and ideology which separate the membership." (A/38/1, p. 3)

In our view the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly can and should make its own meaningful contribution to the cause of reducing the military threat and strengthening universal security. Today, more than ever, it is important for the States Members of the United Nations to have full awareness of themselves as united nations determined to act for the sake of saving present and future generations from nuclear annihilation.

Aware of the utmost importance of uniting efforts in the struggle against the nuclear threat, the Soviet Union has submitted to this session of the United Nations General Assembly a draft declaration on the condemnation of nuclear war. It proposes that the General Assembly condemn nuclear war resolutely, unconditionally and for all time as the most hideous of all crimes that can be committed against the peoples of the world and as a gross violation of the foremost human right, the right to life.

It is imperative that the States Members of the United Nations declare as criminal acts the formulation, advocacy, dissemination and propaganda of political and military doctrines and concepts designed to substantiate the legitimacy of the first use of nuclear weapons and, in general, the admissibility of unleashing nuclear war. This stand of the Soviet Union is an organic expression of its principled approach to the questions of war and peace. The founder of the Soviet State, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, pointed out that "socialists have always condemned wars between peoples as barbaric and atrocious".

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

At the same time this Soviet proposal is a follow-up to recent United Nations decisions. Two years ago the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe, which solemnly proclaimed that those statesmen who would decide to be the first to use nuclear weapons would be neither justified nor pardoned, and a year ago it adopted a resolution calling upon all the nuclear Powers that have not yet done so to follow the example set by the USSR and assume an obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. The adoption at this session of a declaration condemning nuclear war in all its forms and manifestations would contribute to the creation of a political climate that would make the actions of those who are devising plans for the first use of nuclear weapons more difficult, and would build confidence among States, thus contributing to the implementation of practical measures to limit and reduce nuclear arms. This would become another large-scale political action by the United Nations aimed at removing the nuclear threat.

The Soviet Union believes that the condemnation of nuclear war should be effectively backed up by practical steps to curb the nuclear-arms race.

In this respect a freeze on nuclear armaments in qualitative and quantitative terms by all States possessing them would be an extremely timely and feasible measure. The majority of the countries of the world and the broadest sectors of world opinion have supported it. The United Nations has also come out in favour of a freeze of nuclear arsenals. We respect this will of the peoples and are actively working for its realization.

Last June the Soviet Union advanced a concrete proposal to this effect addressed to all the nuclear States. Unfortunately it too has not found a positive response on their part. Today we are again focusing attention on this question, proposing that the General Assembly adopt a resolution entitled "Nuclear arms freeze", whose draft the Soviet delegation is submitting to the First Committee. The essence of the Soviet proposal is to reach agreement between all nuclear-weapon States to cease the build-up of all components of nuclear arsenals, including all kinds of nuclear-weapon delivery systems and nuclear weapons, renunciation of the deployment of nuclear weapons of all kinds and types, declaration of a moratorium on all tests of nuclear weapons and on tests of new kinds and types of their delivery systems, and cessation of the production of fissionable materials for the purpose of manufacturing nuclear weapons.



(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

It goes without saying that a nuclear freeze under appropriate verification would be most effective were it to be carried out simultaneously by all the nuclear Powers. Such a freeze could be of indefinite duration or be limited in time, a matter that could be negotiated by the nuclear States. At the same time, the Soviet Union considers it possible that the proposed freeze would initially become effective as regards the USSR and the United States by way of an example to the other nuclear-weapon States, hopefully prompting them to take similar steps in the nearest possible future.

A nuclear freeze that is both effective and relatively easy to achieve would make a contribution to the strengthening of strategic stability by removing apprehensions that the deployment of new systems of nuclear weapons would have a destabilizing effect. As a result, the risk of the outbreak of nuclear conflict would greatly diminish. Correspondingly, the degree of trust among nuclear-weapon States would sharply increase and a breakthrough in improving the overall atmosphere in the world would materialize.

Naturally a freeze is not an end in itself, for the threat of nuclear war exists even at the present level of military confrontation. That is why we consider a nuclear-weapon freeze as a major step towards halting the nuclear-arms race, reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear-weapon stockpiles, thereby making it possible completely to eliminate the threat of nuclear war.

The complete and general cessation and prohibition of tests of such weapons would erect a reliable barrier against the escalating risk of nuclear war because of qualitative upgrading of nuclear weapons. Let me here again say how much I agree with the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Garcia Robles, who said that a nuclear-weapon-test ban is long overdue. We feel it is important that the General Assembly should at this session call upon the Committee on Disarmament to elaborate a draft treaty on this subject as a matter of the highest priority. The Soviet draft entitled "Basic Provisions of a Treaty on the Complete and General Prohibition of Nuclear-Weapon Tests", submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, represents a sound basis for early agreement on this matter.

Pending the conclusion of such a treaty, we are proposing a moratorium on all nuclear explosions. As a practical step in this direction, the Soviet Union

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reaffirms its readiness to give effect to the Soviet-United States treaties limiting underground nuclear-weapon tests and on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, provided that the United States acts likewise.

Unfortunately, the United States position with respect to the aforementioned threshold treaties as well as with respect to the problem of the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests indicates that this arms limitation measure has also fallen victim to nuclear programmes, under which the Pentagon intends to develop and produce about 17,000 new nuclear weapons within six years. And while previously attempts were made to conceal its unconstructive approach by references to verification complexities and other spurious arguments, a recently published reply by the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency to a congressional commission "dots all the i's". The reply states that "nuclear tests are necessary for developing and modernizing warheads, for maintaining the dependability of the stockpiled arsenals and for evaluating the effect of the use of nuclear arms".

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

At the same time, as demonstrated by the discussion of this problem in the Committee on Disarmament, the overwhelming majority of States attach tremendous importance to it and are putting forward concrete considerations in this respect. The Soviet Union is prepared to consider in a constructive spirit the proposals of other States aimed at facilitating the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. In this context, we take note of the initiative put forward by Sweden, which has introduced its own draft treaty in the Committee on Disarmament.

The Soviet Union is advocating most resolutely the immediate and specific elaboration of a nuclear disarmament programme the realization of which would lead to the one hundred per cent elimination of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union is naturally prepared to negotiate such verification as would guarantee the programme's implementation by the nuclear States. A thorough consideration of this question has led us to the conclusion that the experience of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in control procedures could be used for the purposes of verification of specific nuclear disarmament measures.

In an atmosphere of an escalating nuclear threat the task of strengthening the non-proliferation régime becomes particularly urgent, above all because of the possible acquisition of nuclear weapons by Israel and South Africa. The prospect of some other States, in particular Pakistan, acquiring nuclear weapons is another cause for concern. The spread of nuclear weapons throughout the planet and particularly their appearance in areas where the threat of war is highest would undoubtedly do considerable harm to both regional and international security.

The Soviet Union actively supports the idea of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world, in particular in Northern Europe, in the Balkans, in the Middle East and in Africa. It is in favour of a proposal to create a zone free from battlefield nuclear weapons along the line separating the NATO and the Warsaw Treaty countries.

We advocate the speedy solution of the question of strengthening the security guarantees of non-nuclear-weapon States by the conclusion of an international convention on this issue and the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions calling upon all concerned to refrain from building up nuclear weapons on foreign territories and making qualitative improvements in them. It is high time to begin negotiations on a convention on the prohibition of the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear neutron weapons.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

In order to redouble efforts aimed at averting nuclear war and at solving other arms limitation questions, we think it is necessary to intensify work in the Geneva multilateral disarmament body. We would like to express the hope that the transformation of the Committee on Disarmament into the conference on disarmament will not only change the name, but also the state of affairs. It is now time to move on from endless procedural debates to substantive negotiations on problems which are known to require prompt solution.

In reaffirming its previous proposals and putting forward new ones the Soviet Union declares its readiness to act together with all countries, irrespective of their socio-political systems, and with all those that advocate the strengthening of peace and international security.

The calendar of historic dates also reminds us that this is both necessary and possible. This October marks the fortieth anniversary of the Moscow meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom which, in the face of the threat of fascist barbarism, decided in principle to create an international organization for the maintenance of international peace and security. The underlying principle was that of joint action in the name of peace by States with different social systems. Abiding by that principle, the States of the anti-Hitler coalition were victorious in the Second World War. That principle has withstood the test of time, and is today no less relevant than it was 40 years ago, because once again humanity must ensure that reason triumphs over barbarism - this time the barbarism of nuclear maniacs.

Humanity has not lost, nor can it lose, its reason. This is forcefully demonstrated by the upsurge of the anti-missile and anti-war movement in Europe and other continents, made up of people of various social, political and religious affiliations. In this context, I would especially like to emphasize the importance of the decisions of the World Assembly for Peace and Life, Against Nuclear War, held in Prague last June, the very name of which reflects the main demands of all peace-loving people. Today as never before it is imperative for all peoples and every human being to understand the impending threat in order to pool their efforts in the struggle for their survival. The United Nations is also called upon to promote this objective.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

It has taken a long time for mankind to evolve, but it could take but an instant to exterminate it. Today history does not offer much time for a search for solutions. We must choose the most effective of them without delay. The Soviet Union's proposals on that score have been put forward. We are most certainly prepared to consider without prejudice any other proposals aimed at overcoming the nuclear threat. What is needed now is action, the exercise of political will on the part of all States. As for the Soviet Union, it will not be found wanting. The Soviet Union has always been and will continue to be a resolute and consistent fighter for the prevention of nuclear catastrophe, for world peace, détente and disarmament. We are willing to do everything in our power, but we expect other States to do likewise.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): It is for me personally, Mr. Chairman, as for all delegations who know you, a real pleasure to see you presiding over the First Committee. We are convinced that your interest in questions of disarmament, your initiative, sincerity, and charisma will make the work of the Committee more constructive and fruitful, especially in view of the current international situation, which is reminiscent of the cold war, as Ambassador Garcia Robles rightly reminded us.

I wish also to congratulate the Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Elfaki of Sudan and Mr. Tinca of Romania. We are familiar with the important role they play in various fields in the United Nations.

The present international situation, characterized by tension among the major Powers, between the major Powers and the other countries of the world, and within the various blocs and groups themselves, requires us to take a comprehensive and objective view, especially in the United Nations and a Committee such as ours which is working on questions of international security and disarmament. In doing our work we must divorce ourselves from the propaganda and counter-propaganda campaigns, otherwise the credibility of our approach to the international situation particularly concerning disarmament and international relations, will be undermined. We are making an effort to strengthen that credibility through our procedural work, as you, Sir, said in your statement at the beginning of this meeting.

Although consideration of the international situation as a whole is part of the work of this Committee, I do not intend to discuss it, since my delegation will be speaking on that subject later. However, I believe that its consideration is a necessary prelude to linking the development of the international situation with negotiations and other activities in the field of disarmament.

We all recall that twenty-five years ago, in 1959, the General Assembly declared the question of general and complete disarmament the most important question facing the world today. That was the situation twenty-five years ago that is the situation today, but it is twenty-five times more frightening since, although some say that nuclear war is impossible in view of the risks and possible consequences, yet the danger is clear, and international society,

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

having achieved such a high intellectual and cultural level, cannot leave its survival or destruction to chance, at the mercy of the actions and judgement of a few fallible individuals in a small number of States.

Two essential factors strengthen this argument. One is the competition, confrontation and mistrust between the two major Powers, which is constantly increasing, to the point where the situation could get completely out of control at any moment. The second is that this confrontation and this competition and conflict arise from causes which have nothing to do with the interests of the great majority of countries and peoples: indeed, they have a harmful effect on their interests and on their political, economic, scientific and other plans. The risk of an East-West confrontation increases every day, firstly because international institutions are incapable of playing an effective role in eliminating it, and secondly because of the lack of political will on the part of several States which have a special importance in the world today, including some whose political will is a key factor in the structuring of contemporary international relations. We can no longer accept this situation as a *fait accompli* imposed on us: we must set about changing it as a very serious situation with harmful effects on our daily life which is blocking the progress desired by all countries, especially the countries of the third world, and forcing us to gamble with our own future and that of coming generations.

Having noted the inability of international institutions to discharge their proper role, and the lack of progress in bilateral negotiations between the major Powers, our only possible course, in a field as important as that of disarmament, is to insist on the continuation of collective and bilateral negotiations, and to work to strengthen the effectiveness of the existing system of international negotiations, that is, the Geneva Committee on Disarmament. At the same time we must call on the two super-Powers to pursue negotiations on disarmament or arms reduction, on strategic weapons and medium-range weapons, and on all other matters in respect of which discussions between those two Powers have become an important element of all integrated international disarmament efforts.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

In saying this, we are not calling for dialogue simply for the sake of dialogue, however useful that might be: we are calling for responsible dialogue based on a political will free from any suspicion of a leaning towards the use of force, domination, expansion or coercion.

Egypt attaches considerable importance to the studies of the Committee on Disarmament, formerly known as the Conference. The process envisaged must not be confined to a mere change of name. The studies in question are the result of a whole year's work by the Geneva Committee, and represent the common ground among its members, whatever their political or ideological leanings. The importance of these efforts stems from the fact that the Geneva Committee on Disarmament is the only United Nations forum in which effective progress can be made towards general and complete disarmament. We must make use of it.

It may be recalled that the delegation of Egypt referred, in its first statement in the First Committee at the last session to the need for the Disarmament Committee to consider ways and means of making its work more effective. That means we must equip the Committee to do so. A rigid adherence to the consensus rule impedes the Committee's work and can even paralyse it. That is certainly not the way to bring to a successful conclusion the current negotiations in the various working groups, which we believe now provide the best means of pursuing disarmament negotiations.



(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

The delegation of Egypt has a fundamental comment to make on the work of the Commission at its past session, which was mentioned in the report to the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. In a number of important areas the question of working groups, the definition of their mandate and the need to reach a consensus on their creation have proved to be a barrier to an in-depth study of the subject and took up much of the Commission's time in discussing the mandate of some working group or other. Very frequently these matters have made it impossible to create certain working groups. We therefore feel that the General Assembly should stress the following.

First, the method of creating working groups to consider certain questions on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission is very important;

Secondly, it is necessary to define the mandate of the working group in terms of agenda items to be considered by it. It would be absurd to create a working group on halting the arms race and on nuclear disarmament, without asking it to fix a timetable within which to achieve those objectives:

Thirdly, the view that the mandate of the working group should be very general and broad seems to lose sight of the purpose of creating the working groups and seems to be designed to turn them into a group of experts to consider the Commission's agenda, which is certainly not the reason why working groups were created by the Disarmament Commission:

Fourthly, the mandate of the working groups could be drafted flexibly enough to make it possible for them to consider every aspect of a question in the knowledge that the final aim in setting them up is to reach one or more consensus agreements on the agenda item. We believe that the concept of a consensus should be flexible and applied objectively.

Referring now to the Committee on Disarmament and the effectiveness of its work, I should like to take up the question of its membership. The delegation of Egypt welcomes the addition of four new members and we hope that this increase in membership will give its work further momentum but we think that the main criterion of the effectiveness of the work of the Commission does not have to do with the number of members but with their effective participation, their political will and ways and means of increasing that effectiveness.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

In this discussion of the work of the Committee on Disarmament, I should now like to take up certain points on its agenda. I shall deal first with a nuclear test ban. Notwithstanding the creation of a working group to consider this question -- and this is the first item on the agenda of the Committee -- it has not been possible to make tangible progress in starting negotiations on a nuclear test-ban treaty, the main aim of the working group. In this connection we would like to propose the following:

First, the mandate of the working group, as now worded restricts its activities to the question of verification and hampers the start of real negotiations on the treaty.

Secondly, for a number of sessions until now verification and control have been the only subjects tackled by the working group. Although those questions are important, we do not feel that they should be considered independently of the substance of the matter, namely the drafting of a nuclear-test-ban treaty.

Thirdly, the delegation of Egypt, in the context of the Group of 21 believes that the means of control and verification in use at the present time are sufficient to arrive at guarantees regarding observance of the test ban. What is missing is an authentic political decision to reach a final agreement on a matter of the highest priority as agreed in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament.

Fourthly, it follows from the foregoing that the mandate of the working group should be amended to make it clear that the group should start negotiations on drafting a nuclear-test-ban treaty, including the question of control and verification. It is to be hoped that we can reach agreement on this so that the group will be able to undertake negotiations at the next session in Geneva.

Amendment of the working group's mandate is very important, especially since the group declared at the end of its work that it had gone as far as it could on the subjects of control and verification.

Fifthly, in order to allow the negotiations to bear fruit, we appeal to the nuclear-weapon States who decided not to participate in the work of the group to reconsider their position as soon as possible. It would be absurd to reach a agreement on a nuclear-test-ban treaty without the participation and acceptance of all nuclear-weapon States within the framework of the 1963 partial nuclear-test-ban Treaty.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

On this subject, Egypt welcomes the draft treaty prepared by Sweden as a positive step since it contains a number of ideas that deserve consideration.

Secondly, cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and disarmament, high-priority items of particular importance, as can be seen from the Final Document of the special session on disarmament, are at the very crux of disarmament efforts. No further proof of that is needed. Nonetheless, the inability of the Committee on Disarmament to set up a working group on this runs counter to the unanimous opinion on the need for a ban on nuclear weapons and for a halt to the unbridled arms race.

Egypt, however, agrees with the Group of 21 on the need to begin multilateral negotiations and to continue bilateral and regional negotiations, which are necessary, logical and of crucial importance to all States in the interests of their security and survival. However, the concern of all States cannot absolve the nuclear-weapon States of their very special responsibility deriving from their nuclear potential. We appeal to all, particularly the nuclear-weapons Powers, to enable the Committee on Disarmament to play its part. We hope that the proposal of the Group of 21 will receive consensus support in the Committee in order to make it possible to set up the working group in question as soon as possible.

With regard to the cessation of the arms race and to bilateral and multilateral talks, quite obviously Egypt has been following very closely and with great interest the negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States. We are deeply concerned at reports that the talks might be broken off. We hope that the parties concerned will show the political will to press on with the negotiations and arrive at positive, tangible results, in order to bring the nuclear arms race to a halt.

(Mr. Boussa, Egypt)

Thirdly in connection with these extremely important subject, I wish to refer to the question of the prevention of nuclear war. It is, of course, absurd to see a deterioration in the already grave international situation and a frantic arms race while, at the same time, the Committee on Disarmament has so far proved unable even to establish a working group on this question -- on the pretext that the question of the prevention of nuclear war is linked to nuclear disarmament, and even the prevention of war in general, and that it would therefore be preferable to discuss the matter in informal meetings. In our view, that is not a convincing argument, but I shall not refute it here because that has already been done.

Nevertheless, I would once again emphasize that Egypt's position is that of the Group of 21 as regards the need to consider this question separately in a special working group, for reasons that are obvious from the very title of this agenda item. I should like to add that informal meetings cannot be a substitute for meetings of working groups -- a method that has proved to be the best so far, since it enables the Committee on Disarmament to fulfil its essential task as a negotiating body and to reach disarmament agreements. The Group of 21 has shown a spirit of understanding and flexibility by agreeing to reduce the number of its meetings, in view of the short time available and the difficulty of reaching agreement at the last session of the Committee. It is to be hoped that the parties concerned will also demonstrate understanding and flexibility so that a working group can be established at the beginning of next year's session of the Committee.

Fourthly, I turn to the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Of course, the members of the First Committee are all familiar with developments in the consideration of this matter in conformity with General Assembly resolution 37/83, which requests the Committee on Disarmament "to establish an ad hoc working group on the subject at the beginning of its session in 1983, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space". (resolution 37/83, para. 6)

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

It is highly regrettable that the Committee on Disarmament proved unable to put that resolution into effect, despite the flexibility shown by the Group of 21. That flexibility is clearly demonstrated in the documents issued on this subject, which contain a proposal of the Group in regard to the terms of reference of a working group.

In this respect, I draw attention to what I said at the beginning of this statement in relation to the general work of the Committee on Disarmament and to the need to determine the objectives of working groups in the light of the subjects entrusted to them, if we are to reach agreements on those subjects. All disarmament questions are by nature complex, but that should not be used as an excuse to delay the efforts to fulfil the aims decided upon.

We believe that it is necessary to hold negotiations, within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and we think that that should be done in a working group. We request the Committee to undertake the consideration of this question at its next session, because the striking, indeed terrifying, development of space technology makes it imperative not to waste time. The delegation of Egypt attaches the highest importance to this agenda item. It is engaged in consultations on a draft resolution in this regard, which it hopes will be adopted by consensus.

Fifthly, let me take up a number of agenda items on which the Committee has made some progress but on which we must work even harder in order to conclude consideration of them.

The first of these items is the convention on chemical weapons. There is no doubt but that the Working Group on the question of chemical weapons has made considerable progress. That is why I think it is high time to start drafting texts on the subject. I would note here document CD/408, proposed by Egypt and endorsed by the Group of 21. It contains a number of points which we think should be included in the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons in order to ensure its credibility and effectiveness.

(Mr. Houssa, Egypt)

These points relate essentially to the commitment by States to respect the convention, particularly the provisions made for the collective responsibility of parties to it in cases of breaches of the convention and measures to deter violations by parties to the convention as well as to protect parties against any violation committed by non-party States. We feel that the role of the Advisory Committee on this matter must be strengthened. My delegation believes that the results of the activities of the Working Group are important and positive developments that should be used in the work of drafting provisions of the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

I take up next the convention on radiological weapons. Egypt has already welcomed the increased support for the Swedish proposals to prohibit attacks on nuclear facilities. Recent events show the importance of this matter and its close link with radiological weapons, for any attack on nuclear facilities results in fact in a dissemination of nuclear radiation. The Group of 21 has stated its position on this question, emphasizing the need to take up the matter of the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities while, at the same time, being prepared to negotiate on the question of radiological weapons. Hence, we cannot accept a draft convention that separates the question of radiological weapons from the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities. The differences on the question in the Committee on Disarmament must be overcome and the necessary efforts must be made to conclude this convention.

I turn now to the comprehensive programme of disarmament. There can be no doubt that the failure of the second special session devoted to disarmament to adopt a comprehensive programme of disarmament constitutes a failure to carry out the goals set forth in paragraph 109 of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament. We were all very disappointed, because we had placed great hopes in the adoption of this programme. Following that failure, the Committee on Disarmament was asked to draw up a draft comprehensive programme of disarmament for submission to this session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Houssa, Egypt)

Those of us who have followed the activities of the Working Group established to consider this item are aware of the difficulties encountered by the Group, particularly in regard to the chapters on principles and on measures to be taken. While paying a tribute to Ambassador Garcia Robles for the efforts he made in presiding over the Group, with his well-known experience and wisdom, we nevertheless think that the efforts must be continued if we are to achieve a comprehensive programme, overcoming the present difficulties. We feel that the negotiations that will take place here during this session on the parts of the programme not agreed upon in Geneva will be a step forward towards the objective.

This brings us to express our support for the proposal for the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider this question during the coming weeks and to present to the First Committee a report making it possible to judge the situation on the spot, as it were.

In this context, I would note that the delegation of Egypt attaches special importance to the question of measures that would build the kind of confidence among States necessary to establish an atmosphere favourable to the achievement of real progress on disarmament. Whether these are multilateral, bilateral or unilateral measures, they are very important. Indeed, Egypt believes that the cessation of the flow of arms to the States of a given region for the purpose of ensuring superiority over other States of the region, on the pretext of security considerations, would be significant progress and would prepare the way for a reduction of tensions and the establishment of an atmosphere favourable to the peaceful solution of existing disputes.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Let me now briefly touch on a few points which could be taken together. The first is establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zones in certain regions, such as Africa, the Middle East and South Asia, and the creation of zones of peace in other regions, such as the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, as indicated in the Final Document, which emphasizes the importance of such zones. Indeed, their importance as a contribution to general and complete disarmament and to a way of reducing tensions in the world cannot be over-emphasized.

Egypt continues to support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and we will have an opportunity of discussing the proposal in detail and submitting a draft resolution to that effect in the coming weeks. Since the appeal to all States at the Lusaka summit meeting of the non-aligned countries, to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, Egypt has always supported the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, in accordance with the desire expressed by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session. Efforts made to bring this about, and to arrange for a world conference on the subject, have met with a series of obstacles that have prevented the progress we had hoped for. As a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, Egypt appeals to all concerned, particularly the great Powers, to co-operate in enabling the Committee to complete its preparations for the conference to be held in Sri Lanka next year, and invites the major Powers to attend.

I must say that I can hardly speak about disarmament without referring to the relation between disarmament and development. These questions are of crucial importance and urgency in the light of the terrifying rise in military spending, with its resulting drain on natural and human resources, especially in the developing countries, the deterioration of the world economy and the grave crisis now threatening the economies of the third world countries, and the effect of that situation on the international political situation. In other words, there is a triangular relationship between disarmament, development and international security, elements which interact upon each other.



(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

In conclusion, let me touch briefly on a question of some interest - disarmament studies. Egypt is convinced that disarmament studies can make a valuable contribution, and welcomes the idea of reviving the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies; the fullest use should be made of its studies, which contain many recommendations and important findings that could contribute to progress in disarmament. In that connection I would like to refer to the work of the Group of Experts on conventional arms and disarmament. The Working Group was unable to complete its task in the time allotted, because of the many difficult aspects of the subject matter. We therefore feel that this Group should be given extra time to complete its work and to report back to the General Assembly at its next session.

Mr. ROMULO (Philippines): Mr. Chairman, may I say at the outset how pleased I am to see you in the Chair of the First Committee as once again we embark on our review of the arms race and security. Your dispassionate approach and equanimity, and your experience and concern with this area, are our assurance that our discussions will be skilfully guided.

I venture to say that the proliferation of proposals for steps in arms control has become as awesome as the proliferation of nuclear weapons. While we warmly welcome each new suggestion as an indication of interest in the pursuit of arms limitations, it has become difficult to follow the implications of the proposals and counter-proposals, flying as fast and thick as missiles. Many times, it appears, one has not landed before another streaks past it going the other way.

It might be well to examine in general terms the intent and content of some of these proposals, and try to determine how they relate to the work of this Committee and the various bodies of the United Nations seized of the question of disarmament. Perhaps we should begin with strategic nuclear-weapons systems, as these are generally regarded as the most threatening to human life, in fact to all life on the planet.

The current positions of the United States and the Soviet Union appear to be the following, although they change with such rapidity that one may be forgiven if the review is out of date within a day or two.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

For his part, we heard Mr. Troyanovsky of the USSR state on 4 October that his country calls for a reduction by more than a quarter of the total number of strategic delivery vehicles, or missiles, with a concurrent reduction to agreed equal limits of the aggregate number of nuclear weapons, or warheads, carried by these delivery vehicles.

The President of the United States, in his address to us on 26 September, mentioned that his country had been prepared to reduce by one half the number of strategic missiles on each side, and the numbers of warheads by one third.

Both these proposals have tremendous merit, being the largest immediate cuts ever considered relatively simultaneously by the proponents. They also have specific differences, the more significant of which concerns the number of warheads to be cut. Here, each proposal favours the proponent, since the USSR has more powerful missiles with fewer warheads, and the United States more warheads. In this circumstance, as in so many others, the argument ranges around percentage cuts versus cuts by numbers of warheads. It seems reasonable, however, that with goodwill the differences could be bridged. What is important, as always, is that the rough parity which is now generally acknowledged to exist in strategic missiles be maintained, and the principles of balanced and equitable reductions be observed throughout the reduction process.

In his United Nations address, the United States President made a further proposal: namely, that there be reductions and limits on a global basis, under which circumstance the United States would limit its missile deployments in Europe. The full parameters of this proposal require further exploration.

Meanwhile, in the European area, the USSR has proposed a standstill or a freeze in respect of both strategic and medium-range missiles in Europe during negotiations, which presumably would forestall planned United States deployments of cruise and Pershing 2 nuclear weapons systems, but might provide a breathing space, useful to slowing down the present tempo of the arms race.

It is difficult to tell what earlier proposals remain on the table for discussion, and for this reason I am confining my comments to those made or alluded to at the General Assembly or since.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The United States President has in the last few days introduced a new concept, that of the build-down. This concept has a definite appeal which derives from the fact that more than one older strategic nuclear warhead would be discarded each time a new one was built. Over time this procedure might -- or might not -- result in sizable reductions, depending on the formula agreed upon. There may be additional difficulties. Might the proposal not put a premium on a continuing race in research and development and the search for new and more dangerous weapons? The way in which different formulas would affect the differing weapon configurations of the super-Powers is hard to foresee, and may prove to be complicated in practice.

One extremely useful lesson appears to have come out of the renewed effort to achieve control of the strategic nuclear arms race. It is that multiple-headed missiles (MIRVs) increase insecurity, not security, because they are destabilizing, because they give the advantage to the party which decides in times of stress to strike first. With 5 or 10 warheads per missile there is the possibility that one or another party might be tempted to eliminate the forces of the other. With one warhead per missile this temptation does not appear.

Thus all the energy, time and materials put into MIRVs is now seen to have been mistaken, a fact which many strategists pointed out before these weapons were built or deployed. It is always much more difficult to climb down a tree than up, and when heavily committed. Getting rid of MIRVs will prove no exception.

Further with respect to Europe, the proliferation of proposals is much more complex than that concerning strategic weapons, because the circumstances are very involved. What shall be taken into consideration? Intermediate range missiles only? Missiles and airplanes capable of delivering the same warhead? Tactical weapons as well? Submarines in the area? Because of the mix of weapons, any formula of equity is much more difficult. The United States has proposed a zero option for all intermediate range missiles in Europe: as Mr. Reagan put it, "a whole class of weapons". The USSR has suggested a zero option of all nuclear systems, as Mr. Troyanovsky stated, including medium-range and tactical. Failing that, the USSR has proposed that deployment of any new medium-range systems -- meaning Pershing II and cruise missiles -- be cancelled, in return for which all existing systems be reduced by approximately two thirds.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Again, we find that the proposals tend to favour the proponents, at least in their initial form. But then, the purpose of negotiations is to narrow these positions. Some further steps have been offered. The USSR has suggested reduction of its own medium range missiles in the European part of the Soviet Union to a level equal to the number of missiles possessed by France and Britain, and would eliminate all the missiles affected by that reduction, including a considerable number of SS-20 missiles. The Western States, it will be recalled, had stated that the British and French weapons could not be included, as they constitute a separate national deterrent. In these two positions again there appears to be room for accommodation since they are extremely wide ranging and significant.

I have undertaken this short review because it is difficult to keep before us any composite view of the current status of initiatives by the two super-Powers. At the same time, it is important to us if we, as an oversight Committee of the United Nations, are to respond appropriately.

I have several concerns about the conduct of negotiations on these various proposals. I wonder if both States are allowing adequate time for a full and thoughtful response at the negotiating table before launching new proposals with complex ramifications? The history of disarmament negotiations has often shown that, for lack of adequate time for response, valuable proposals have been dropped before the range of response and possible accommodation were fully explored. The range of proposals now before the two competing Powers are so significant, involving as they do possible deep reductions in nuclear weapons, that they deserve most careful exploration.

I have another major concern that involves a question to which this body has frequently directed its attention, namely, that both parties should abstain from introducing any new complications such as additional nuclear weapons systems into the present situation for whatever reason.

Again, disarmament history has a lesson for us. It is that whatever is done by one party is inevitably repeated by the other, irrespective of whether the overall effect is to heighten insecurity rather than security. Thus, the concept of a moratorium, a standstill, or a freeze on the introduction of new weapons or additional numbers of old ones is of the utmost significance

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

in the search for arms regulation. Not doing so leads to long waits while one side duplicates the newest developments so that psychological parity is restored and negotiations can resume. I say psychological because the overkill capacity of both parties may be little affected in fact.

It will be noted that very little of the substance I have discussed has immediate application within the First Committee of the United Nations or for that matter within the Disarmament Commission or the Committee on Disarmament. We must draw the obvious conclusion, namely, that the United Nations continues to be confined to the role of a cheering section when it comes to negotiations on the substance of disarmament.

I see a need for a very different situation, given the paucity of results from disarmament negotiations from 1945 to this date. The United Nations, after all, is the Organization which its Members, and in particular the permanent members, established for questions dealing with international security and disarmament. The United Nations should be intimately and deeply involved in deliberations most important to the future of all its Members. While I see little likelihood for this development in the short term, I should like to see a time in the not too distant future when appropriate officials of the United Nations will be enabled to offer suggestions and recommendations to the negotiating parties, based on the rapidly developing expertise being generated within the expanding Centre for Disarmament and other concerned United Nations affiliate bodies.

Turning now to the deliberations within our own house, this has not been, as is broadly recognized, a vintage year. The small achievements to be noted stand out only by their singularity. Thus, once again our agenda is crowded, and overcrowded, with unfinished items and new ones being added to the old. Our admonitions, our appeals are dutifully made and registered, but frustration is the banner under which we meet.

As I have mentioned earlier at this session of the Assembly, we are at the twentieth anniversary of the partial nuclear test ban treaty and have not yet achieved the second step - a comprehensive treaty. Nor have we achieved a treaty on the banning of chemical weapons, especially the deadly nerve gas weapons. In the absence of the capacity to alter the course of events in any major ways, the United Nations is, however, providing a valuable support system for the elaboration of new perspectives, studies and possible next steps in the disarmament picture. It is beginning to perform the needed task of examining the wider parameters of a global security system which will permit disarmament and is holding open to all States the opportunity to negotiate agreements in good faith within its forums when they may be ready to do so. Because of the United Nations efforts the world is much wiser in the field of disarmament than it had previously been.

There are a few fields in which the United Nations has the opportunity to develop a significant role related to disarmament in implementation of its central mandate regarding peace and security.

A study on the significant proposal of the Government of France for the creation of an international satellite monitoring agency has been completed. During this session we shall consider further steps towards its possible implementation. The proposal has the support of a significant number of Governments at present. I regret, of course, that it is not currently supported by the two major nuclear protagonists. I do not believe we should be dismayed by this fact. I believe it may be seen as an opportunity for the rest of the membership to contribute to breaking the deadlock between them and towards establishing the rightful role of the United Nations in this field. By definition, the United Nations is the agency responsible for monitoring compliance with arms control agreements, and it requires the technical capacity to do so. When I say "United Nations" in this context, I am referring of course to the entire institution, including its satellite agencies, to which the new projected monitoring agency would be added.

A review of the study prepared by the Secretary-General indicates that the usefulness of the agency would include the capacity to oversee crisis areas and United Nations peace-keeping missions - an invaluable adjunct to the present capabilities of the United Nations. In this sense it can become an early warning system alerting the Security Council to signs of developing

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crisis in time to set in motion actions to arrest conflict before it starts.

There are perhaps three major concerns being expressed regarding the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency: the present disinterest of the United States and the USSR, technical expertise and money. A considerable period of preparation will be required before large amounts of money are needed. When they are, it will be well to remember that the amounts will be insubstantial in comparison to the sums nations are committing to both conventional and nuclear arms.

The needed technical expertise is not confined to the super-Powers but is largely already available among the States supporting the monitoring agency. The present and, I think, temporary disinterest of the United States and the USSR provides an opportunity for the United Nations membership to undertake an initiative demonstrating the rightful and necessary role of the United Nations in establishing the conditions for disarmament. Thus, I would urge that Members consider most seriously in their disarmament priorities the upgrading of the approach to establishment of the international satellite monitoring agency.

Most of our agenda is rather threadbare, we must confess. We have seen the items year after year. This does not, of course, absolve us from the responsibility to appeal once again for forward motion on a nuclear freeze or moratorium, on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, on a treaty banning chemical weapons and on other questions. To these perennials, I would add also an emphasis on the curtailing of steps towards the militarization of space, including the development of anti-satellite weapons. It is always many times easier to deny a development than to dismantle it once in place.

I have spoken often about the psychological factors which underlie and ultimately determine the continuation of the nuclear arms race. Today I wish to stress only one factor: security. The arms race is, for the most part, a futile search for national security. The means employed, however, in this search clearly are succeeding not in providing security but in guaranteeing massive insecurity. Again, in turn, disarmament measures, looked upon as a security goal, are not being achieved. Here again, the basic reason for their non-achievement is that States are not convinced

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that disarmament in and of itself will provide security. In this they are quite right. Disarmament measures can bring a better atmosphere and with it a better chance for the taking of those steps which will provide security and have been our goal since the founding of the United Nations in 1945 -- those steps which will result in the gradual erection of a true international security system.

Security has become a collective and indivisible responsibility for the global community; and security requires not only disarmament but also the means of keeping peace and settling disputes among States. I have to say that our knowledge of the processes of disarmament now far outstrips our understanding of the necessary institutions for peace-keeping and peace-making which will make disarmament safe and possible. In my view, only when this serious imbalance is redressed can we expect to make the kinds of gains in disarmament which alone can ensure the continuance of humanity in this age of interdependence and interaction.

The United Nations is being diminished by the refusal of its Member States as a whole to commit themselves to the processes for collective security which they themselves have established. This is the main reason disarmament is not occurring. Nor can we afford to place our hopes on disarmament as a disconnected phenomenon. Disarmament can occur only when the other elements for creation of a peaceful world, especially machinery for the maintenance of peace, are increasingly present. Let us not delude ourselves. Let us work for disarmament, yes, with the intensity that the situation demands, but realizing that disarmament is only a single pillar and cannot alone support the edifice of peace.

The CHAIRMAN: We have heard the last speaker on the list for this afternoon's meeting. Two delegations have asked to be allowed to speak in exercise of the right of reply, and I shall now call on them.



Mr. IMAI (Japan): The representative of the Soviet Union in his statement today made a remark which might be construed as meaning that there were nuclear weapons on the territory of Japan. A similar remark was made by the Soviet Union during the general debate in plenary meetings at the current General Assembly session. My delegation then exercised its right of reply and stated clearly that such an allegation was totally unfounded. We made clear, as we have always done, that Japan upholds the three non-nuclear principles. These principles, which represent the basic policy of Japan, are well known to everyone here I hope, including the Soviet delegation. I do not intend to go into a detailed discussion here and now. I should like to reserve our right to speak further on this subject on a later occasion.

Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan): The representative of the Soviet Union, during his statement a short while ago, referred to the danger of nuclear-weapon proliferation and, in that context, also referred to Pakistan. In order to put the record straight, I should like to draw the attention of the Soviet representative to the numerous statements made at the highest level by Pakistan that it will not exercise the nuclear-weapon option.

I should also like to draw his attention to the active support that Pakistan has always given to the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones all over the world and, in particular, to its own proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in south Asia.

Lastly, I should like to draw his attention to the active role that the Pakistan delegation has played in all international forums and, in particular, in the Committee on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating forum of the United Nations for disarmament, towards the elimination of the nuclear-weapon threat in all its aspects. May I add that the Soviet delegation to the Committee on Disarmament is fully aware of that role.

Given those facts, I can only express my great surprise at the gratuitous reference that the representative of the Soviet Union thought fit to make in his statement this afternoon.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.