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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway)

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GENERAL DEBATE

ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

Statements were made by:

Mr. Minikon (Liberia)  
Mr. Wegener (Federal Republic of Germany)  
Mr. Meiszter (Hungary)  
Mr. Tinca (Romania)

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

AGENDA ITEMS 43 TO 63, 139, 141, 143 AND 144 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MINIKON (Liberia): As the First Committee meets, representatives once again, on behalf of their respective Governments, make suggestions and comments on disarmament and related political and security matters. Many tell of plans and programmes they propose to undertake for the achievement of arms control and disarmament. Although the means and methods may be different, we are of the view that all of this is designed to ensure international peace and security and to prevent a nuclear war.

In this connection, the Liberian delegation finds praiseworthy the pronouncements by nuclear-weapon States that they would not be the first to use nuclear weapons. We also find consoling and admirable the words by another nuclear-weapon State to the effect that "a nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought".

As to their proclamation of general principles, we trust that the world can rely on their sincerity and not on their tactics. We hope that all efforts and discussions here and elsewhere will not result in a dialogue of the deaf, and that the implementation of resolutions which this Committee intends to recommend to the General Assembly for adoption will not remain barren.

To speak to so distinguished an audience as is present in this room on political and security matters imposes on a speaker the duty to rise above international, bloc and pact disagreements and distrust, in the interest of genuine international peace and security, bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, which, inter alia, are: "To maintain international

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peace and security and to that end to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace ...".

The super-Powers all too often have seemingly engaged in a competition, each trying to show which could paint the ugliest picture of the policies the other follows. We have heard the criticism levelled against them that, because they have been so busy condemning each other, they have caused a situation to develop where the ties which have held us together and which have committed us to at least a few common ideals have been so weakened that the authority of the United Nations has been threatened.

That has not always been so. There was a time when Members were proud of the United Nations. The Charter of 1945 contains these moving words:

"We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, ..."

Can anyone in this Committee quarrel with those sentiments? The aspirations which led to the founding of the United Nations were noble and they are as valid today as when they were first entertained.

As this juncture, I should like to dwell on a matter that is most necessary and important for international peace and security, that is, the denuclearization of Africa. It is hardly necessary to state that Liberia continues fully to support the objectives of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in Cairo in 1964, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in 1965.

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My delegation studied very carefully the Secretary-General's experts' report of 1980 on South Africa's plan and capability in the nuclear field, which established South Africa's capability to manufacture nuclear weapons. This has caused much concern and alarm among Africans. My delegation continues to be disturbed, because we believe that in times of desperation the Pretoria régime would not hesitate to use nuclear blackmail to preserve its white supremacy.

We are all aware that South Africa continues to intimidate neighbouring countries against supporting African liberation movements. Some of those neighbouring States, particularly Zambia and Angola, and most recently Lesotho, have been constantly subjected to brutal bombings and attacks by South Africa. Undoubtedly, racist South Africa, armed with nuclear weapons, would not flinch from likewise intimidating the whole of Africa. And such an ominous prospect constitutes a grave threat to world peace.

But long before South Africa acquired a nuclear capability, its strength in conventional weaponry was formidable, and it remains so today. The mandatory arms embargo, imposed by the Security Council in resolution 418 (1977), is not being observed by many States and the authors of that resolution must have intended that it have loopholes. We say that because South Africa has been able to acquire powerful new military equipment despite the arms embargo. It is our understanding that that régime is the world's tenth largest arms manufacturer, with a capability in the field of artillery that is perhaps unequaled throughout the world. These advances have been based on technology and materiel acquired from certain countries and their transnational corporations.

Why are those States and their transnational corporations arming South Africa? South Africa, the colonizer of Namibia, cannot be a protector of democratic values nor can it be a shield against ideological aggression - real or imagined. The

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arming of the Pretoria régime only enables the South Africans to kill men, women and children and to subject a whole nation and, indeed, Namibia to oppression and repression. Let me ask another question: Why have certain countries been so ready and willing to defend the human rights of people living under ideological oppression and yet remain blind to the unspeakable plight of those living under racist oppression?

My delegation takes this occasion to commend the Director and Staff of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDR) for their sincere dedication and for the excellent work they have been doing - in this case, regarding regional security relating to Africa. We are therefore prepared, if so requested by the Institute, to support the convening of a conference of research institutes and other interested parties on African security, in the context of the 1964 Declaration, in co-operation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, and in consultation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Such a regional conference, we hope, will further highlight Africa's interest and concern regarding its peace, security and stability. In the meantime, my delegation hopes that it will be possible for the Institute to ascertain any clandestine scheme designed to make Africa become a site for the nuclear waste of industrialized countries. We consider this matter urgent.

Liberia pledges its support for all genuine disarmament efforts, whether the approaches are different or similar. We shall be guided by principles, not expediency. My country, though small, will continue to make its humble contribution and add its voice to those who are anxious that mankind be protected against the horrors of a nuclear war by whatever political means available. Liberia, as a small country, is all too aware of the African proverb: "When elephants fight, it's the grass that suffers".

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We therefore appeal to the two super-Powers to continue their negotiations and to do so with at least some degree of good faith and open-mindedness. We also urge them to prevent an arms race in outer space. In the context of this appeal, other aggressive-minded countries should be mindful of their own obligations to the maintenance of international peace and security. Efforts should be made also to prevent conventional war and the proliferation of arms.

In closing, I should like to quote some inspiring words from the Late Prime Minister Nehru in a statement before the General Assembly many years ago:

"The essential thing about this world is co-operation, and even today, between countries which are opposed to each other in the political or other fields, there is a vast amount of co-operation. Little is known, or little is said, about this co-operation that is going on, but a great deal is said about every point of conflict, and so the world is full of this idea that the conflicts go on, and we live on the verge of disaster. Perhaps it would be a truer picture if the co-operating elements in the world today were put forward and we were made to think that the world depends on co-operation and not on conflict."

Finally, I should like to add the voice of my delegation to those of the representatives who preceded me in extending to you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau sincere congratulations on your election to these high and important positions in this Committee. I wish to thank you especially for having afforded me the opportunity to address this body and to share these few remarks with the Committee. I am certain that under your able guidance this Committee will accomplish its assignment satisfactorily.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): I should like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/38/L.5 on confidence-building measures. I do so on behalf not only of my own delegation but of 33 others which are sponsoring it. At the outset, I should like to express our gratitude to the large number of delegations that have associated themselves with this draft resolution. My delegation is very gratified that the sponsors' positive response to the present text is in keeping with the traditional support which resolutions on confidence-building measures have enjoyed over the past years in the General Assembly. Accordingly, my delegation again expresses the wish that this draft be adopted by consensus.

Five months ago in this very conference room the United Nations Disarmament Commission, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 37/100 D, considered the elaboration of guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and for the implementation of such measures on a global or regional level. It was the first time that this universal organ, the United Nations, examined the concept of confidence-building measures by way of a detailed substantive discussion. All delegations agreed on the growing importance of the confidence-building process in a world characterized by political tensions, an increasing recourse to the use or threat of force and an alarming arms build-up in many parts of the globe. There was wide agreement that confidence-building measures, while not a substitute or pre-condition for disarmament, possess a positive potential in terms of creating favourable conditions for agreement on arms limitation and on disarmament measures and can make an important contribution to the reduction of mistrust and fear among States and, thereby, to the prevention of war.

Representatives who have taken part in the proceedings of the United Nations Disarmament Commission will remember the high quality of the in-depth examination

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of Germany)

of the subject and the wealth of analytical insight that accrued to the working group charged with that agenda item. A great number of delegations made statements in order to share their perspectives on confidence-building measures with other delegations, many of them speaking for the first time on this important subject. At the end of the working period of the working group of the Commission, there was a widespread feeling that a solid groundwork had been laid for the elaboration of guidelines for confidence-building measures and that the United Nations Disarmament Commission could look forward to a successful completion of the task assigned to it within an appropriate time frame.

Indeed, in the report of the Disarmament Commission to this session of the General Assembly, the Commission recommended that

"... the work to be accomplished under General Assembly resolution 37/100 D be continued by the Commission at its next substantive session in 1984 with a view to the elaboration of guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and for the implementation of such measures on a global or regional level". (A/38/42, p. 26)

The present draft resolution undertakes to translate the recommendations thus formulated by the Disarmament Commission into action by this session of the General Assembly.

It is proposed, in operative paragraph 3, that the General Assembly request the Disarmament Commission to continue and conclude at its 1984 session the consideration of the item in question. The good work of the first annual exercise in 1983 indeed opened the prospect that the Commission might finalize its work at its next session and submit to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly a body of guidelines as requested.



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of Germany)

In addition to this central operative paragraph, delegations will easily recognize the text of the draft resolution as familiar. It largely reiterates and consolidates the results of the consensus resolution of the past year.

While the draft resolution is basically of a procedural character, these supplementary, preambular and operative paragraphs place a request to the United Nations Disarmament Commission in an appropriate perspective.

One additional preambular paragraph might be noted: it refers to a recent important event in the field of confidence-building measures. It welcomes the convening in Stockholm of the Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe - the Conference agreed upon by the participating States of the recently concluded Madrid follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The addition of this preambular paragraph is quite in keeping with the universally positive reception which the conclusion of the Madrid meeting has found in statements by delegations, both in plenary meetings of this session of the General Assembly and in this Committee.

My delegation is confident that the high degree of coincidence between the wording of last year's consensus resolution on the subject of confidence-building measures and this year's draft resolution will facilitate the building of a consensus on the present text.

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of Germany)

In concluding, I should again like to recall the excellent quality of the work performed by the Disarmament Commission in May and June of this year. As the then and often exciting debates on confidence building were conducted in the Working Group they were not reflected in an official verbatim record. However, the meetings were taped and the wish was expressed by many delegations to have the debates transcribed. Jointly with the Secretariat, my delegation, which was privileged to preside over the the proceedings of the relevant working group of the Disarmament Commission, took it upon itself to produce a comprehensive verbatim record of the entire session, considering that the availability of a complete transcript of the proceedings might contribute to the success of next year's meeting. The unofficial transcript of about 200 typewritten pages will shortly be available to interested delegations on request.

I should also like to recall another event pertinent to the subject. As a follow-up to an invitation extended by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, an International Scientific Symposium on Confidence-Building Measures took place at Schloss Grach in the Federal Republic in May of this year. Diplomats and scientists from many countries, and representatives of all major security perceptions represented in this General Assembly gathered and joined forces in an interesting definitional effort relating to confidence-building measures in the security and military realm, mindful in particular of the needs of non-aligned countries of the third world. A book containing the papers submitted at that conference and a transcript of the lively discussions are being prepared. Here, again, it will be my delegation's pleasure to make those texts available to delegations in the near future.

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of Germany)

My delegation hopes that the various efforts at shaping and implementing confidence-building measures will make a major contribution to the preservation of peace and the promotion of disarmament. The present draft resolution is designed to further those ends. We are confident that a consensus on it will be possible.

Mr. MEISZTER (Hungary): In my statement today I should like to deal with the problems of chemical weapons.

The question of the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons has been engaging the attention of the disarmament community for about 25 years and has been on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament for a little short of 15 years. During this long period of time almost all essential and partial aspects of this complex problem have been discussed in the course of deliberations.

This year can surely be seen as one of special relevance for the approach to this issue, if for no other reason than the intensity of negotiations. All in all, in the Committee on Disarmament the number of meetings of various bodies seized of the problem of chemical weapons, including formal and informal meetings of the Committee on Disarmament itself, as well as the meetings of working groups and the four contact groups, number more than 100 this year.

In the course of the general debate and the present exchange of views in the First Committee, several delegations, referring to the activity of the Committee on Disarmament, pointed out that it was perhaps in this field that that body showed the most positive record. They underscored that the approach of the majority of delegations was sober and restrained and that, as a consequence, the work of the Committee on Disarmament in this field could be characterized as most business-like. They also underscored that, as a result, the Committee on

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Disarmament had managed to start the process of consideration and preparation of the draft provisions of a future convention. We are therefore under the impression that several delegations believe it is on this issue that we are closest to the real possibility of elaborating a convention.

While the Hungarian delegation appreciates the work done by the Committee on Disarmament, especially the activities of Ambassador McPhail of Canada, the Chairman of the Working Group, as well as those of his colleagues, the co-ordinators of the contact groups, it considers the whole question to be more complex than it might appear from the aforementioned opinions. On the one hand, we are aware that certain steps have indeed been taken towards substantive progress; but, on the other hand, we have no less clearly in mind that the successful completion of work comes up against serious difficulties. We believe that we should be equally aware of the underlying causes of such difficulties.

To express the feelings of my delegation in a very precise manner, I would say that essential steps have been made but that much more could have been done. There are various reasons for the lack of sufficient progress; two of them are of particular importance. The work of the Committee on Disarmament in general and in the field of chemical weapons has been adversely affected, first, by the very unfavourable international situation and, secondly, by certain acts of some of the negotiating parties - acts that run counter to the professed aim of concluding a chemical weapons convention.

The prevailing situation is hence characterized by the concurrent presence of certain positive and negative elements. The positive aspects, in our view, include the fact that this year has witnessed a somewhat more constructive attitude on the part of most of our partners. At the same time, we note with regret the great

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degree of rigidity in the postures of some negotiating partners on essential issues. Another problem lies in attempts to direct negotiations towards technical details of verification, which raises the danger of endless delays in the negotiating process.

However, the most serious of all problems lies in the fact that, while negotiations are under way on the effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction, one of the most influential negotiating partners decided last June, with the approval of its highest legislative body, to allocate a huge sum for the production of a new type of chemical weapons, namely, binary weapons. The fact that the said negotiating party declared that it would start the production of those weapons if the Geneva talks failed to produce results implied, in our view, an outright negative approach. This type of linkage may be regarded as a more or less understandable step only if the party setting a condition is unable to influence the creation of that condition - in other words, if the party tying its action to the outcome of the negotiations did not itself participate in the negotiating process and hence was unable to bring direct influence to bear on its outcome. But if such a party takes part in the negotiations and makes its step conditional on their outcome, it is thereby virtually seeking to have a free hand to adopt negative decisions. Therefore, the October 1985 time-limit is not a panacea.

The other day we were struck by a remark of the representative of the United States, who said that, owing to certain circumstances, his country "had no alternative but to take limited steps to modernize" its chemical weapons capability. Well, if allocation of \$130 million for only two components of that arsenal is a "limited step", I wonder what could be called an unlimited one.

(Mr. Meiszter, Hungary)

The Hungarian delegation, being fully aware of the destructive and non-discriminative effects of chemical weapons, is of the view that the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction represent one of the most urgent disarmament measures of our time.

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The 5 January 1983 Political Declaration of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty appeals to all States to provide a new stimulus for negotiations, including those in the Geneva Committee on Disarmament, with the aim, inter alia, of accelerating the elaboration of an international convention on banning and liquidating chemical weapons. That appeal is of continuing timeliness.

The Hungarian delegation would therefore be pleased if the General Assembly were to urge the Committee on Disarmament to intensify the negotiations in the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons in fulfilment of its present mandate in order to achieve accord on a chemical weapons convention as early as possible. This is the ultimate goal to attain and, of course, a comprehensive task to be solved. In the meantime, as was proposed in the communiqué of the 14 October 1983 meeting of the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the States members of Warsaw Treaty Organization, the removal of chemical weapons from Europe could be a very useful step towards their complete prohibition and elimination on a global scale.

Mr. TINCA (Romania) (interpretation from French): My delegation's earlier statement was devoted exclusively to the grave danger the nuclear armaments of Europe pose to the lives of the peoples of that continent and to international peace and security. The profound disquiet aroused in us by the build-up of nuclear armaments on our continent, particularly the prospect of the deployment of new intermediate-range nuclear weapons, is all the more justified in that there is a tendency on the part of some in this forum to minimize the seriousness of the present situation and its extremely negative consequences for the peace and security of European countries and other States.

As the President of Romania recently stressed, we feel that the proposals made at the current Geneva talks provide real opportunities to reach agreement on preventing the deployment of new missiles and on the withdrawal and destruction of

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those already in place. It is still possible, through joint efforts, to reach an agreement to maintain the balance of forces, not by adding new armaments, but by the reduction of present stockpiles to the lowest possible levels. There are no problems, however complex, that cannot be resolved through negotiations when one proceeds on the basis of the interests of peace and when one acts realistically and responsibly towards the destinies of peoples.

That is why we feel that the General Assembly should, as a matter of the greatest urgency, appeal to the two parties involved in the negotiations to do their utmost to guarantee that the talks will continue in a spirit of flexibility and responsibility, bearing in mind the security interests of all States, and to ensure that the talks will register positive results as soon as possible.

We are convinced, moreover, that the urgent conclusion of an agreement on the crucial problem of intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe would be of decisive help in bringing about an improvement in the world political climate and in restoring and consolidating trust, and that it could represent a point of departure for the conclusion of certain more complete agreements designed to halt the arms race and lead to disarmament.

I should like in my statement today to present the position and proposals of Romania with regard to other disarmament problems on our agenda that are no less urgent and of an equally high priority. I am of course referring now to the problems of nuclear disarmament as a whole. As President Ceaucescu recently emphasized,

"mankind has reached a stage where the level of armaments, and particularly nuclear armaments, represents a danger to civilization itself and to the very existence of human society. The fundamental problem of our age is the prevention of war and the guaranteeing of peace."



(Mr. Tinca, Romania)

The almost daily development of international events and the alacrity with which recourse is had to the brutal force of arms in a highly complex and tense political situation, as well as the risk of any conflict's degenerating into a world-wide nuclear confrontation, make it ever more necessary that problems of nuclear disarmament be taken up in a realistic manner based on a realization of the truth that the security interests of each State can be achieved only within the framework of the maintenance of international peace and security.

The solution of nuclear disarmament problems has become an essential requirement for guaranteeing continued improvement in the life, peace and progress of all peoples. Any theory or strategy based on the use of nuclear weapons is fallacious and cannot provide for anyone's security, for a nuclear war cannot be won.

Indeed, it is no accident, nor is it the result of some fleeting psychosis, that the problems of nuclear disarmament and of disarmament in general figure among the most basic concepts in current trends of contemporary philosophical, social and political thought, or that the cessation of the arms race and the destruction of nuclear weapons are rightly included in the programmes and platforms of broad-based political parties that enjoy large mass followings. Nor is it an accident that ordinary people of the most varied political and religious persuasions see their future as being linked to the imperative need to avert a nuclear disaster and to ensure their basic right to life.

Thus we are faced with a phenomenon whose influence hangs like a permanent cloud over the evolution of human society as a whole, and we are in no way exaggerating when we state that the struggle to eliminate nuclear war is a determinant factor in the political and social life of peoples.

It is our firm conviction that we must act as a matter of urgency, given our high responsibility based on our understanding of both the complexity of the

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problem and the gravity of the peril that the constant build-up of nuclear weapons poses to all of mankind. There is no lack of proposals, ideas and strategies for giving effect to this desideratum, either in the United Nations or in disarmament negotiating forums. Urgency and responsibility are the key words because they emphasize the need for all States to have the political will to come to the negotiating table and to engage in serious and sincere discussions imbued with the significance of the historic moment in which we are living.

The Romanian delegation is of the opinion that our attention must of priority be focused on measures aimed at halting the nuclear arms race and reducing nuclear armaments. Reversing the arms race, like the reversal of any momentum, entails - because of an inexorable natural law - achieving a state of rest. Any action to reduce the number of nuclear weapons - or of conventional weapons, for that matter - must begin with a halt to the spiralling increase in their production. We therefore find it difficult to see how one can reduce the number of nuclear arms and, at the same time, continue to manufacture and deploy ever more highly developed weapons and to create new systems of mass destruction.

This is why the halting of the arms race seems to be a first test of the viability and credibility of any measures for the genuine reduction of nuclear arsenals. For that same reason Romania has from the outset supported a nuclear-weapons freeze, as proposed by India and, at this session of the General Assembly, by the Soviet Union. My country itself has repeatedly made concrete proposals to freeze nuclear spending.

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One cannot overemphasize the obvious consequences of a freeze on armaments, whether nuclear or conventional, or on the aberrant escalation of military spending, for the improvement of the international political climate, the reduction of tension and the resumption and consolidation of détente. Nevertheless we feel that measures to halt the arms race and to freeze the level of armaments should not be viewed as a goal in themselves but as a component of a coherent programme of disarmament - primarily nuclear disarmament.

In the final analysis, the best guarantee that nuclear weapons will not be used is their reduction and eventual complete elimination. In this context I wish to recall that one of the essential proposals of the whole set of disarmament measures proposed by Romania at the second special session dealt with the prompt commencement of negotiations to halt the production of nuclear weapons and proceed to their gradual reduction and eventual complete elimination.

In our view, the implementation of these proposals should take place in a spirit of good will and flexibility - without rigid conditions or ultimatums. They must be based on recognition of and respect for the principles of legality and undiminished equal security for all States. The key to the negotiations' effectiveness is that they be conducted not from positions of strength, which would directly imply the risk of continuation of escalating military competition, but rather on the basis of a clear understanding that at present, with the rapid growth in science and technology, the balance of forces, stability and international peace and security can henceforth be assured only through a reduction in armaments to lower and lower levels. The halting of the production of nuclear weapons and the reduction pari passu of such weapons cannot take place in a political vacuum. The adoption of measures to this end influences and is influenced by the international political atmosphere and by the way in which States, primarily the nuclear States, intend to comply with the elementary norms of international law, the Charter and,

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in a word, the sovereignty and independence of peoples - their right to manage their own destiny.

Today more than ever before, disarmament requires permanent respect for the principles of international law and the elementary norms of relations between States, which is the only solid foundation for an increase in international trust. It is difficult to imagine the maintenance of an atmosphere of trust, which is absolutely necessary for negotiations on such complex problems of disarmament, while the sovereignty and independence of States are gravely violated and resort is had to the anachronistic policies of military intervention in the affairs of other States, adding new focal points of tension and confrontation to those already existing and increasing the danger to international peace and security; as long as interference in the internal affairs of States takes the place of co-operation and understanding and as long as the right of peoples to choose their own path to economic and social development is brutally cast aside.

It is impossible to guarantee the conditions necessary to halt the arms race and set up decisive disarmament measures so long as force and the threat of force are currently used in international affairs, as long as disputes between States are not resolved through peaceful negotiations and as long as the voice of reason and responsibility for the destiny and lives of peoples and for international security is not heeded.

We believe that in present conditions the adoption of measures to prevent nuclear war, even measures limited in content, would have special political meaning. They would indicate a concern for the need for change in present trends and would sustain the hope that nuclear weapons would never be used. In this respect we have welcomed the unilateral declarations of China and the Soviet Union not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and we hope that the three other nuclear Powers will do likewise. The commitment on the part of all the nuclear Powers not

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to be the first to use nuclear weapons will, without any doubt, constitute a decisive step towards the prohibition of such weapons and open up the prospect of their reduction and complete elimination.

In our opinion, the most significant factor in limiting the sphere of use of nuclear weapons is the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, with the nuclear Powers undertaking never to resort to nuclear weapons or, in general, to the use of force in those zones.

Let me reaffirm the determination of Romania to act consistently to turn the Balkans into a zone of friendship, co-operation, good-neighbourly relations and peaceful coexistence, free of nuclear weapons. The establishment of such a zone in the Balkans would be a step towards a nuclear-weapon-free Europe and would have a most positive effect on peace and security in the continent as a whole.

At the same time, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is one of the paths towards restriction of the use of nuclear weapons. In our opinion, it is vitally necessary to maintain the viability and credibility of the existing Treaty on the subject. It is also essential that the nuclear Powers parties to the Treaty carry out the obligations they have assumed and negotiate in good faith on measures for a real reduction of nuclear weapons.

We also advocate confidence-building measures among States and the urgent adoption of practical measures towards that end - measures that are capable of responding to the real causes of the state of uncertainty, suspicion and fear that has come into being in inter-State relations. In this connection, we consider most positive the Madrid consensus on the convening of a conference on confidence-building measures, security and disarmament in Europe and the agreement to hold a whole series of meetings designed to ensure the continuation of the Helsinki process.

(Mr. Tinca, Romania)

The cessation of the nuclear-arms race and its reduction, as well as all measures for disarmament, must take place under strict and effective international control. It is in the interest of all parties to ensure that the agreements they have signed are accompanied by a verification system that is as efficient as possible, one that will provide a guarantee and give confidence that the obligations assumed will actually be carried out in good faith. The choice of specific ways and means of verification, national or international, should be subordinate to one single objective, that of ensuring the establishment of the respective treaty while giving due respect, of course, to the sovereignty and full equality of all States parties.

Taking as a point of departure the central role and prime responsibility of the United Nations for disarmament and the vital interests of all peoples in its attainment, Romania continues firmly to advocate the establishing within the United Nations of an international body empowered with the right to monitor and inspect strict compliance with measures designed to halt the escalation of armaments and implement agreed disarmament measures.

Furthermore, we conceive the implementation of measures aimed at halting the nuclear-arms race and reducing nuclear-arms levels on the basis of a coherent approach, in close correlation with the implementation, if not simultaneous, at least in successive phases, of other disarmament measures, such as the prohibition of chemical weapons and new types and systems of nuclear weapons, the demilitarization of outer space and the reduction of conventional armaments. Such an approach could be reflected only in a comprehensive programme of disarmament. We strongly advocate its negotiation and adoption as a matter of urgency, just as we favour negotiations on this problem in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and fully support the legitimate demand of the Group of 21 that the programme should be politically and legally compulsory.

(Mr. Tinca, Romania)

As I emphasized at the beginning of my statement, over time an impressive number of proposals have piled up on the negotiating table. We consider it absolutely essential that this session of the General Assembly find appropriate ways and means of bringing about a radical change in the method of approaching the problems of nuclear disarmament in the framework of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. We also point out again that unless genuine negotiations are organized on nuclear disarmament topics of urgency and extreme importance that body is in danger of finding itself on the periphery of the attention which States and international public opinion accord to disarmament.

Closely linked to the idea of ending the escalation in arms, as my country sees it, is the reduction and cessation of the human and material effort to sustain armaments, an effort expressed in the military budgets of States, particularly the nuclear States and the militarily powerful States.

For years Romania has been firmly committed to promoting concrete proposals for a freeze and reduction of military budgets.

I shall not dwell on the profoundly negative effects on other aspects of social life of the frantic build-up of arms expenditures. We have already done so abundantly in our previous statements in this Committee or in the Disarmament Commission. We do not think there is any need to convince anyone of the truth, which is supported by many studies and reports, that the growth of military budgets has no positive effect on the political and economic life of peoples. The hope that the swelling of military budgets and the manufacture of arms will solve the present economic and financial crisis is illusory. The policy of arms build-up and the growth of military spending, far from resolving the chronic problem of unemployment, tends to aggravate it and accentuate budget deficits and external indebtedness, while in the social sphere it sustains violence and the feeling of uncertainty and fear, and feeds the war psychosis.

(Mr. Tinca, Romania)

If we insist on the need to freeze and reduce military budgets, we do so not only because of the positive political effects that that would have but also because the concrete results obtained in this regard could have a more favourable impact on the settlement of other major issues facing mankind today. Perhaps no other disarmament theme is so close to the confluence of the two basic problems of the contemporary world - disarmament and development. Even a relatively small percentage drop of 10 per cent in expenditure on arms would help release the resources so sorely needed to sustain the efforts being made by States to bring about economic recovery, resources which are also needed to finance aid to the developing countries.

Because of the profoundly harmful consequences of military spending and the need to put an end to this scourge, which is laying waste to the energies and resources of the peoples, Romania has repeatedly made concrete proposals to freeze and reduce military budgets. My country recently decided to freeze its expenditure on arms until 1985 at the level of 1982, and it has proposed that the States of the two military alliances - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact - should agree jointly to a 20 per cent reduction in military budgets, compared with 1982 levels, until 1985.

Here again we reaffirm the proposal which the President of my country made to the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States, as set out in document A/38/375, that the two nuclear Powers should unilaterally decide to freeze their military budgets for the next two years at the 1983 level and begin negotiations to reduce their military spending.

We welcome the fact that an ever-increasing number of Governments are beginning to take a very close look at the question of freezing and reducing military budgets. The views expressed and the proposals made, although based on different approaches, really amount to an expression of concern, which seems to us



(Mr. Tinca, Romania)

perfectly normal and inevitable, about the harmful effects of this phenomena, which will have to be remedied sooner or later.

We are also convinced that the effort to harmonize the positions of States in order to facilitate concrete negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military budgets, in which the Disarmament Commission is now engaged, is more relevant than ever. In this context I reaffirm my country's determination to continue to work with other States to accelerate and conclude the process started in 1981 aimed at identifying and elaborating the principles governing negotiations between States to conclude international agreements on the freezing and reduction of military spending. Moreover, at this session my delegation also intends, together with other delegations, to submit a draft resolution that will guarantee the political and procedural framework needed to attain this goal at the earliest possible date.

The seriousness of the times in which we live and the danger hovering over mankind make it essential that the United Nations should affirm more vigorously its role in, and responsibility for, disarmament. It must contribute, by its practical actions, to making sure that the dialogue on disarmament has an efficient basis, helping to reduce the state of tension and confrontation, resuming the policy of détente and maintaining international peace and security. Nevertheless, the United Nations is, at the end of the day, the sum total of the will of the Member States, and it is the duty of us all to create the necessary conditions for the United Nations to rise to the task of carrying out the work it is given. Only in this way shall we demonstrate the extent to which the Governments that we represent obey the will of their peoples, which want to live in peace and freedom, safe from the danger of war and the use of force.

## ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to the election of its Rapporteur. I have pleasure in calling upon the representative of Mongolia, Mr. Erdenechuluun.

Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia): Although my delegation has already had an opportunity to offer its congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, and the other officers of the Committee, I cannot but say how pleased I am to see you presiding over the First Committee.

I am today performing a pleasant duty in nominating Mr. Humberto Goyen Alvez as Rapporteur of the First Committee.

Born in Tacuarembó, Uruguay, Mr. Humberto Goyen Alvez studied law and social sciences in the University of Montevideo from which he holds a Bachelor of Arts degree. In 1980 he graduated as Master of Arts in international relations at the New York New School for Social Research. He also attended a number of specialized courses on various economic, defence and security problems.

Mr. Goyen Alvez's professional experience goes back to 1962, when he joined his country's Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In the early years of his career he held different posts in consular, commercial and political departments and was chief of the cabinet of the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. He then served as adviser in the executive branch of the Government. From 1967 to 1980 he was consul and consul-general in Switzerland and the United States. From 1980 to 1983 he served as chief of departments in the Foreign Ministry. At present Mr. Humberto Goyen Alvez is alternate representative of Uruguay to the United Nations.

In view of his impressive academic background and his professional experience in international matters, I am pleased to recommend the election of Mr. Humberto Goyen Alvez to the post of Rapporteur of this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I am certain that I am expressing the sentiments of all members of the Committee when I offer him our thanks for his important contribution to the work of the Committee as its Rapporteur during the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

As Mr. Goyen Alvez is the only candidate for the post of Rapporteur, I take it that, in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure and with established practice, the Committee will dispense with the secret ballot and declare Mr. Goyen Alvez Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Goyen Alvez (Uruguay) was elected Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to express my most sincere congratulations to the representative of Uruguay on his election as Rapporteur of the First Committee and I now invite him to take his place on the platform.

Mr. GOYEN ALVEZ (Uruguay), Rapporteur of the Committee (interpretation from Spanish): First I should like to express to you, Sir, and through you to all the members of the Committee and its officers my most sincere thanks and gratitude for conferring upon me this distinction which is an honour to my country, to Latin America and to the developing countries. I wish also to extend this expression of gratitude to my friend Mr. Erdenechuluun, representative of Mongolia, for the excessively kind words he expressed in proposing me as a candidate for this post. I can only express to the whole Committee my sincere pledge that I will co-operate in every way possible and that through my modest contribution to our work I shall strive to merit the trust which the Committee has placed in me. To this end I know that I shall always be able, Sir, to count on your dynamic leadership and on the lucid and patient work of the secretariat led by Mr. Rathore.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Rapporteur for his generous remarks and his expression of willingness to co-operate with me and my colleagues, the officers of the Committee. I am certain that I am expressing not only my own view but also that of the two Vice-Chairmen when I say that we very much look forward to close co-operation with him during the present session.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.