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Chairman: Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway)

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Statements were made by:

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Mr. Qian Jiadong (China)
Mr. Cromartie (United Kingdom)
Mr. Fields (United States of America)
Mr. Rossides (Cyprus)
Mr. Souza e Silva (Brazil)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 50 (continued)

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION: COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME OF DISARMAMENT

Mr. STRUCKA (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic welcomes this opportunity for an exchange of views on the important question of work on and the adoption of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. At the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament the Czechoslovak delegation participated actively in efforts to reach agreement on a comprehensive programme of disarmament, for we see such a programme as reflecting a constructive and comprehensive approach to the accomplishment of the most urgent tasks of disarmament.

It was in the same spirit that, as co-ordinator of the group of socialist countries, we approached the talks on a comprehensive programme of disarmament subsequently held in the Committee on Disarmament. In this we were guided by our desire to make progress on the widest possible range of disarmament problems, foremost among them nuclear disarmament and the elimination of the growing threat of nuclear war. It will be recalled that the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty have consistently supported the adoption of the most radical disarmament measures. This is demonstrated by the initiatives they have submitted to this session of the General Assembly, by the proposals contained in the Political Declaration adopted last January in Prague, and by their repeated appeals to the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a matter of priority to hold talks on a wide range of urgent problems concerning limiting the arms race and bringing about disarmament.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

The objective set by the General Assembly of general and complete disarmament under effective international control has accordingly been embodied in the concrete actions and initiatives of the socialist countries. It is only natural that we should intend to continue to attach due importance to the question of producing a comprehensive programme of disarmament and to promoting most vigorously its adoption and implementation.

In our view, the Committee on Disarmament this year held useful discussions on the whole range of the substantive elements of that programme, including its objectives, principles and its priority tasks, as well as questions relating to the implementation of agreed measures. We especially appreciate the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on this subject under the experienced and energetic leadership of Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico.

But despite the constructive efforts of a large number of delegations, particularly of socialist and non-aligned countries, the Committee was unable to produce a final text for the programme; a number of important questions with a direct bearing on the content of the programme and on ensuring its effectiveness remain unresolved.

We therefore believe that work on a final draft of the programme must continue. We realize, of course, that achieving that objective will be no easy task. Disarmament negotiations move forward slowly, and do so in a world situation which has recently been rendered more grave by the aggressive acts of the forces of world reaction, a flagrant example of which was the recent United States armed military invasion of Grenada.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

The delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic has stressed in a previous statement its view that the effectiveness and significance of a comprehensive programme of disarmament will be determined primarily by the extent to which the programme promotes the implementation of international measures directly aimed at the limitation of the nuclear arms race, at the achievement of nuclear disarmament and at the prevention of nuclear war: in other words, by how the programme responds to those central issues of our time.

Guided by that understanding of the goals and content of the programme, we shall approach in a constructive spirit the work of arriving at a final text. We are convinced that our position reflects the wishes of the overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations and that the Conference on Disarmament - as the Committee on Disarmament will soon be named - will achieve the necessary positive results on the question of a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Although negotiations on a comprehensive programme of disarmament have been in progress for a number of years, the present dangerous and tense situation requires immediate, energetic steps to lessen the danger of confrontation and of the outbreak of nuclear war.

In the course of the consideration at this session of the question of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, some delegations have drawn attention to the importance to the programme of suitable provisions relating to bilateral negotiations between the USSR and the United States of America. We believe that the proposals made in the replies of Comrade Y. V. Andropov to the questions posed in the newspaper Pravda provide an excellent basis for work on such provisions. They are urgent, timely proposals which go as far as is humanly possible towards meeting the other party.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic wholeheartedly supports those proposals, since they are of the greatest significance to the preservation of peace, not only in Europe, but throughout the world. They could thus lead to the creation of conditions propitious also for achieving results on the whole range of problems related to a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Mr. de la BAUME (France) (interpretation from French): As this is the first time a representative of the French delegation is making a statement in First Committee this session, I should like to congratulate you very warmly, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee. Your well-known ability and experience in the field of disarmament are a guarantee of positive results in the Committee's work under your guidance.

(Mr. de la Baume, France)

Since the beginning of the work of the Committee on Disarmament the French delegation has taken a special interest in the preparation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. This project, which is laid down in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, is certainly ambitious, but it seems to us very useful to have such a framework and guidelines for disarmament negotiations as a whole. The Committee on Disarmament started work on this three years ago, but unfortunately it has not completed its task. Perhaps it has gone into too much detail, seeking to define commitments too precisely, without having sufficient regard to the flexibility necessary in such a great undertaking, which will take many years to complete. Moreover, people have sometimes succumbed to the temptation to prejudge certain commitments on the basis of the provisions of the comprehensive programme, without taking sufficient account of the particular circumstances of States and the relative importance of means and obligations.

It is greatly to the credit of Mr. Garcia Robles, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, that, faced with these difficulties, he has prepared another, shorter and simpler document which seems to us to provide a very suitable basis for negotiations. We pay a tribute to him for his initiative. Nevertheless, a certain number of questions will have to be resolved, particularly the question of the texts relating to the current bilateral negotiations on nuclear weapons. It is clear that these negotiations are of interest to countries other than those which are parties to them, and that, as with other provisions in the programme, a consensus will be needed on the forms adopted.

The French delegation was prepared to take part in the exchange of views and negotiations on the comprehensive programme of disarmament if they had had to begin

(Mr. de la Baume, France)

in New York in parallel with the work of the First Committee. Nevertheless, in the light of the present situation, we believe that the work should, rather, continue in Geneva, and we support the proposals to that effect.

We also believe that it is preferable not to set a precise deadline for their conclusion. We very much hope that the Committee will prove able to prepare and eventually present a comprehensive programme of disarmament which will meet the wishes of those who initiated this great idea.

Mr. QIAN Jiadong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Having listened to the statements of several delegations on the comprehensive programme of disarmament, we too should like to state our views on this question.

The second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held last year, requested the Committee on Disarmament to submit a revised draft of the comprehensive programme of disarmament to the present session. Representatives of the member States of the Committee on Disarmament, and Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico in particular, have made great efforts to this end, which have finally resulted in a new draft. This has been no easy task.

The new draft before us provides a good foundation for further negotiations. However, it must be admitted that there is still room for improvement. In some parts of the text there remain divergencies and reservations by various parties. In particular, the most important provision concerning the specific responsibilities of those countries with the largest arsenals have yet to be formulated. As a result, in its report to the Committee on Disarmament the Ad Hoc Working Group has had to stress that the final positions of various delegations cannot be taken until major differences are ironed out and a comprehensive document is drawn up. This shows that the present draft needs further improvement.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

By advocating the preparation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, the non-aligned countries hope to promote disarmament through the formulation of a package of interrelated disarmament measures, thus lessening and eliminating the danger of war and safeguarding international peace and security. In strong support of this initiative of the non-aligned countries, the Chinese delegation has always participated seriously in the discussions, consultations and negotiations on the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

It is especially necessary to reach agreement on the comprehensive programme of disarmament as soon as possible at a time when little progress has been made on numerous issues and when the disarmament process is at a standstill. In these circumstances, we cannot afford to let things break down halfway through. However, we are flexible on how to proceed with the negotiations on this draft, and are ready to respect the opinion of the majority.

Judging from the past few years' experience in negotiations on the programme, we believe that the key to the success of this endeavour still lies in the political will of those countries with the largest arsenals. The overall disarmament process can get under way only when those States have genuinely understood their special responsibilities concerning disarmament and international security and are ready to undertake the commitment to take the lead in arms reduction.

The Chinese delegation is ready to work with all other peace-loving countries in making further efforts to draw up a comprehensive programme of disarmament truly conducive to the promotion of disarmament and to the maintenance of peace.

Mr. CROMARTIE (United Kingdom): I have delayed my contribution to this debate on the comprehensive programme of disarmament because I wished to be able to take account of the views of other delegations.

The comprehensive programme of disarmament is an aspect of disarmament to which we have devoted much time and resources - in the General Assembly, during both special sessions devoted to disarmament; in the United Nations Disarmament Commission; and in the Committee on Disarmament - without, however, reaching a consensus text. It is appropriate, therefore, to take stock and to decide what is the best course for the future. But it is not easy to reach a conclusion as to the general wish on the basis of the few statements made so far.

After the very great efforts made by all delegations during the special session, it was obvious that a certain time must elapse before we attempted to start negotiations again. During the last session of the Committee on Disarmament informal consultations led to a renewed effort to produce a more acceptable text, for which the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group, Ambassador Garcia Robles, must take the credit. The intensive work during the last weeks of the session in Geneva resulted in a text which is shorter, simpler and free of brackets. But even this text is not entirely free of reservations, and there remain gaps in the text on a number of key issues, as previous speakers have recognized.

In the interval since that text was adopted by the Committee on Disarmament, my authorities have studied it very carefully. We find that, as I have already noted, while much of what we had previously found objectionable has been removed, it is equally true that much that we considered valuable has also been lost. This view is obviously shared by other delegations. The question that faces us is: where do we go from here?

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

The Chairman of the Working Group, Ambassador Garcia Robles, has put two choices in front of us:

One is to adopt the draft programme, in spite of its modest nature, at the current session, after solving the outstanding problems. We have always been ready to participate in such discussions, provided there was a genuine will to succeed.

The alternative is to return the matter to the Committee on Disarmament, in the realization that - and I quote the representative of Mexico:

"It would be an illusion to believe that the multilateral negotiating body could consider this matter again with any chance of success at all before at least three years had elapsed".

A decision to this effect would be disappointing after so much effort has been expended both here and in Geneva. On the other hand, some delegations may feel it preferable to adopt this course rather than accepting a text which falls short of their aspirations.

It had been the earnest hope of my delegation that we could discuss our future course of action in a balanced, reasoned fashion free of polemics and accusations. We had such contributions yesterday from the representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany, Australia and Yugoslavia.

The Soviet Union and its allies have, on the other hand, used the occasion not to contribute to a solution to the problem facing us but to cast the blame for our joint failure to agree on a comprehensive programme onto Western delegations. Any of us could pick on particular issues and say that but for the attitude of this or that delegation a comprehensive programme of disarmament could have been agreed. But such a partisan approach only deepens divisions between us. It ignores the fact that there were many aspects on which agreement could not be reached. No one should be deluded into thinking that these delegations that are so critical of

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

others had no problems with the successive texts which have been produced. They have at all stages persisted in maintaining their positions on even minor issues. Even in Geneva this summer, when by general agreement we sought, under the guidance of the Chairman, Ambassador Garcia Robles, to eliminate controversial material, it was these delegations which sought to enter reservations on many of the paragraphs proposed by the Chairman.

My delegation, on the other hand, has done its utmost to collaborate within the limits of its instructions; we sought not perfection but acceptability. We have drawn a line only when the fundamentals of our security policy were jeopardized by the language being proposed. We cannot accept that blame for failure attaches only to us or to our allies. We do not wish to attribute blame to other delegations and we do not believe that attempts to do so make a useful contribution to our debate. I hope that we can henceforth pursue our deliberations in a more constructive fashion.

But before I attempt to analyse the current situation further, I must comment briefly on the comments yesterday by the representative of the Soviet Union on his Government's policy on the intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) negotiations in Geneva. To speak at such length seemed to us rather to divert attention from the subject of our debate, the key issue though INF would be in any comprehensive programme. I would not wish to follow his example. I would only say that we assume that the Soviet Union will be explaining the contents of the Pravda interview to the United States side of the negotiations in Geneva; the negotiating table is the proper place to conduct negotiations. If that is done, the allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will consider any new proposals very carefully. We do not believe in instantaneous rejection of the other side's proposals. It would not, however, appear from President Andropov's interview that

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

the Soviet Union is proposing any change in its fundamental position that it should be allowed a monopoly of intermediate-range missiles in Europe while excluding all such United States missiles. As the Soviet Union well knows, and as my Minister of State, Mr. Luce, emphasized in his address to the First Committee last week, this is unacceptable to NATO.

I would further note that President Andropov's interview proposes that the number of Soviet SS-20s deployed in Europe should be limited to 140. This I would point out is more than the Soviet Union had deployed worldwide at the time of the 1979 decision by NATO which was designed to redress the balance either through an arms-control agreement or by deployments.

Let us now return to the comprehensive programme of disarmament. The most pressing question is whether we should immediately pursue the negotiations in the course of the present session of the First Committee. A number of speakers have expressed willingness to pursue such a course, but no one has expressed great enthusiasm. And how should we interpret the silence of the vast majority of delegations? Perhaps as a lack of interest? Certainly the constraints of manpower and the demands made by the work of the First Committee would make it difficult for many delegations to participate actively in negotiations at this time; and we would all agree that it is desirable to have as wide a participation as possible. A topic of such importance as the comprehensive programme is not to be decided upon by a few delegations in a corner of the room. And would we have, in any case, a reasonable prospect of success in the short time left to us?

As has been pointed out, we have no agreed texts on certain key issues. The passages on INF and the strategic arms reduction talks (START) are crucial. No less is the passage on the prevention of nuclear war.

As is well known, we have failed so far even to decide how to deal with this question procedurally in the Committee on Disarmament. Yet, yesterday, the

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

representative of the Soviet Union laid down a series of preconditions as to the contents of any passage dealing with this which failed totally to take account of different views. Given this attitude, it is difficult to be optimistic about the chances of reaching agreement in the immediate future.

Mr. Chairman, you will no doubt have your own ideas on how we should proceed. But may I suggest that following this debate you may wish to take further soundings of delegations, including those that have not spoken, in order to obtain a better idea of the general wish as to our further procedure. If there is shared optimism as to a successful outcome, we should consider further action at this session of the General Assembly. If there is not, then we may be better advised to remit the programme to the Committee on Disarmament. Previous speakers have indicated that this second course of action would be acceptable to them. But if we do adopt it, we should leave it to the discretion of the Committee to report at an appropriate time.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): The subject of a comprehensive programme of disarmament is, to be sure, a familiar one to all Member States represented here today, and particularly to those of us who serve in the Committee on Disarmament. For five years, following the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, we have pursued efforts to promote our common goal of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control through our work dedicated to the development of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. The United States has reiterated at the highest levels its support for a realistic programme that can provide the necessary framework to guide our disarmament efforts. United States delegations in both Geneva and New York have negotiated in good faith towards the achievement of this end.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

The task of negotiating a comprehensive programme of disarmament has not always been easy, due to the fundamental nature and complexity of the issues involved. Our progress has been slow. Nevertheless, during the 1983 session of the Committee on Disarmament, under the able guidance of the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Garcia Robles, we believe that we have moved a step closer to the conclusion of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. In our view, the negotiations have been moving along in the right direction. As has been noted, the text forwarded to the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly is not complete and is not fully agreed to. While the United States cannot agree to every provision in the text as it stands, we do believe that it could serve as a valuable basis for continued negotiations. It is in this positive spirit that my Government expresses its willingness to continue this effort. We are flexible on the question of where our effort is best continued. We find the view expressed yesterday by the representative of Yugoslavia in this regard rather persuasive.

I have emphasized the significant progress we have made to date in the negotiations on a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Resolution of the remaining problems will not be easy, but is certainly not beyond our reach. Any solution, however, will have to meet the security needs of all countries concerned. It is to achieving such solutions that our efforts should be directed, rather than to counter-productive attempts to place blame on individual States for the slow progress that has marked our negotiations to date.

The United States has approached the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament within the framework of its overall national security policy - a policy based on enduring principles aimed both at achieving and maintaining peace. An essential element of that policy is the search for sound arms-control agreements.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

My Government is committed to that search. President Reagan himself pledged his support to this goal when he spoke before the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament on 17 June 1982. On 26 September 1983, President Reagan, in a plenary meeting of this session of the current General Assembly, reaffirmed the United States Government's commitment to reduce nuclear arms and to pursue realistic arms-control agreements. It is with this sense of realism and commitment to the arms control process that the United States has approached our negotiations on a comprehensive programme of disarmament. While the United States believes that early progress could be made on specific arms-control issues, it nevertheless has supported the broad approach underlying the negotiations on a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Such a programme can provide both a broad guide to action towards disarmament and a means of measuring progress.

As to specifics, a question was addressed to my delegation concerning comprehensive-programme-on-disarmament language on the strategic arms reduction talks and on the intermediate-range nuclear force negotiations. In view of the well-known and fundamental differences in the positions, it should not come as a surprise to anyone that development of such language is extremely difficult. Moreover, one party in those negotiations has threatened to abandon them which, of course, further complicates the difficulties in reaching consensus language.

It should also be clear, particularly after listening to the comments made yesterday, that the resolution of these specific paragraphs alone will not cause the other problems we face to dissipate. My delegation has approached these negotiations with flexibility and with a recognition that the security concerns of all nations must, in the final analysis, be taken into account. It is clear, however, that this approach has not been adopted by all States. The negotiations have, in some cases, been retarded by the counter-productive attempts of a few

(Mr. Fields, United States)

countries to use the comprehensive programme of disarmament as a vehicle to alter the fundamental security policies of States, or as a means to impose upon others their own particular positions. The actions of the USSR yesterday, for example, in specifying a number of preconditions to be met for successful negotiations on a comprehensive programme of disarmament stands in stark contrast to its protestations of openness and flexibility. Other States also pointed out that specific sections of the draft text of a comprehensive programme of disarmament were inadequate from the perspective of their governments. It is clear that the difficulties we encounter do not involve only one or two issues and we should not deceive ourselves that a change in the position of one or two States is all that is needed to complete the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

My delegation came to this room yesterday hoping for serious, non-polemical discussion of the comprehensive programme of disarmament. We are gratified indeed that most of the statements were made in that spirit. We regret, however, that some delegations used these discussions primarily to exacerbate confrontation and to attack the policies of my Government and some others. This is not productive and it detracts from the serious nature of the issue at hand.

Yesterday, we listened to a lengthy defence of Soviet policies, particularly regarding the negotiations on intermediate nuclear forces in Europe. The United States has been negotiating seriously in Geneva, even though the Soviet Union has at the same time been deploying SS-20 missiles at the rate of one per week. In those negotiations, the United States has demonstrated its serious intentions by displaying remarkable flexibility and a desire for mutual accommodation. As regards the latest proposals of the Soviet Union, the United States has indicated that it remains open to their consideration and will seek additional information and clarification at the legitimate place to do so, which is at the negotiating table.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

In the discussion yesterday on the comprehensive programme of disarmament, some delegations questioned the United States commitment to arms control and disarmament. A decision taken just the other day by the member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to which the United States is obviously a part, is a further unequivocal demonstration of the commitment of both NATO and the United States to the objective of maintaining stability at lower levels of arms. We have yet to see any concrete demonstration of the loudly proclaimed commitment by the other side. The decision was taken by NATO on 27 October 1983, at Montebello in Canada, and it provides for the withdrawal of 1,400 nuclear warheads during the next several years. This further withdrawal, taken together with the already accomplished withdrawal of 1,000 warheads, will bring to 2,400 the total number of nuclear warheads to be removed from Europe since 1979.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

Moreover, this reduction will not be affected by any deployment of long-range intermediate nuclear forces, since one warhead will be removed for each Pershing-2 or ground-launched cruise missile warhead which is deployed.

Contrary to the impression that some wish to create that NATO has been fuelling an arms build-up by adding to its nuclear armoury, this sustained programme of reductions will have reduced NATO's stockpile to the lowest level in over 20 years. NATO ministers urge the Soviet Union to follow the example set by the alliance, to halt and reverse its build-up of nuclear forces and to join NATO in the search for a safer future.

It is our sincere hope that the Soviet Union will respond to this call. The picture is clear. If any question remains about the sincerity of any nation in seeking effective and verifiable disarmament agreements it is obvious to whom this question should be addressed.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I hope I shall be able to both clear and brief in making the remarks I should like to offer at this time. We have before us the question of a comprehensive programme of disarmament based on the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We have listened to many statements. My friend the representative of the United States has now spoken about security, and security is surely one of the vital elements of any programme of disarmament.

However, the programme that has been prepared has ignored the fundamental basis of the Final Document. I shall quote from that document and demonstrate its absence from this programme. I refer to the question of security. We have heard from many sources, and most emphatically from the representative of the United States, that we want security - security for all. The security concerns of all parties must be taken into account, as he has just told us.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

Let us therefore see what the Final Document has to say about security.

The third paragraph of the Declaration states:

"Genuine and lasting peace can only be created through the effective implementation of the security system provided for in the Charter of the United Nations". (resolution S-10/2, para. 13)

Where in this programme of disarmament is there reference to the security system provided for in the Charter of the United Nations? If we want separate security for nations we must certainly comply with the requirement for common security, for collective security for all. I would repeat what President Kennedy said in this respect when he was the Head of his Government. He stated:

"The United Nations must be developed into a genuine world security system." President Kennedy emphasized the fact that we must have security through the United Nations. That is what is lacking in all the work that is being done for disarmament - an awareness of the need for security through the United Nations, particularly since such a proviso is an essential part of the Declaration in the Final Document.

The comprehensive programme for disarmament sets as its first priority - and quite rightly - a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Surely that comprehensive test-ban treaty should be the first priority, considering that in the preamble to the partial test-ban treaty there is a clear undertaking to continue relevant negotiations with the aim of achieving a ban on all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time. As far back as the 1971 bulletin of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute we were well aware that there are no technical impediments to achieving agreement on a comprehensive test-ban treaty; it is only the political will that is lacking. If the political will is lacking, no efforts towards achieving a comprehensive programme will avail.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

And why should the major Powers not want security for themselves? Surely they must want it. I am not blaming anyone, but their actions are the result of the force of momentum created by the fact that we live in an era of a United Nations that is incapable of functioning effectively because its Security Council has been deprived of the means to give effect to its decisions, contrary to the Charter. According to the major Powers, security is to be based on parity of armaments. But if we base security on parity of armaments, we are violating the Charter. The Charter does not intend security to be based on the principle of the use of force but, on the contrary, prohibits the use of force and asks for collective international security. It does so in its Preamble, in Chapter I, "Purposes and principles", and throughout the text, culminating in Chapter VII. If we ignore the Charter of the United Nations, if we create a Security Council that is unable to take effective decisions and if we thereby prevent the creation of an operative security system as provided for in the Charter, we shall have no security. And if we have no security, we cannot proceed to disarmament.

We need not dwell upon the other failures of the disarmament programme; we need not go into that here. Let us first ensure that any programme of effective disarmament is based upon effective security through the United Nations, for the reasons I have already stated. That is the fundamental provision of the Charter.

I should now like to turn to a problem that is reflected in the words uttered by representatives of many valiant countries in statements that are perfect in every other respect - and I have in mind the statement by the Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom, who said that "The United Kingdom is resolutely committed to the search for security" through disarmament.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

This reflects a misunderstanding. The reverse is true. It is security, effective collective security in accordance with the Charter, that will make disarmament possible. We are all well aware that if there are no arms people are more secure than when there are armaments and nuclear weapons. But it is not by waiting for all the armaments to be destroyed that we will achieve security. International security is necessary in order to arrive at disarmament, as clearly appears from the Charter. The Charter speaks of disarmament as flowing from international security and as part and parcel of it. The problem we are facing is how to halt the arms race. This requires co-operation in international security, not antagonism in arms competition. Article 2 (4) of the Charter prohibits the use of force; but by asking for parity of weapons we are inviting the arms race and the use of force. We are acting in the context of the use of force, when the only thing that stops us from using force is parity.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

But parity is never achieved for the simple reason that each side aims at achieving superiority so that it can protect itself from the other side's acquiring superiority, and that is why the arms race goes on and never stops.

We hear about negotiations for direct disarmament measures. This is an exercise in futility, as we have seen. There is no possibility of reaching agreement on disarmament negotiations straightaway without concurrent efforts to create international security. These are basic to any comprehensive programme of disarmament.

I will not go any further because I think I have laid down the fundamentals that are required for a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Mr. SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil): I do not have a prepared statement concerning the question of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, but my delegation should none the less like to make some contribution to this debate. I think we have taken a very wise decision in setting aside a day or two for the procedural discussion on this question which has been hanging over our deliberations here and in Geneva since 1978. As a matter of fact, we should recall that the comprehensive programme of disarmament followed a decision taken by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and after that decision the programme was submitted to the Disarmament Commission, which in 1979 prepared guidelines on which a draft programme on the comprehensive programme of disarmament should be adopted.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission did not have such a difficult task because in the space of two weeks it was able to prepare these guidelines, which were then sent to the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. We have to recognize that for four years the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva has tried very hard to prepare and adopt a draft programme to be finally approved by the General Assembly, and this draft programme has been going back and forth between the Committee on Disarmament and the General Assembly.

(Mr. Souza e Silva, Brazil)

We made a very strenuous effort in 1982 during the course of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and once again we failed.

This year in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, again we tried hard and again we failed.

The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, Ambassador Garcia Robles, made every possible effort to achieve a compromise text acceptable to each one of us, but he did not succeed in his efforts, and it was he who opened the debate on this question at our first procedural meeting concerning that question. With his usual precision and accuracy he presented us with two possible alternatives. The first alternative was to make another effort during the course of our deliberations in the First Committee. I think that most, if not all, of the speakers who participated in that debate recognized that there was no possibility of arriving at agreement at this session of the General Assembly. The second alternative was to send it back to Geneva, to resume our negotiations on this draft programme. When Ambassador Garcia Robles put forward his second alternative, he said that we should wait at least three years before looking into this matter again.

I might disagree in a certain sense with the perspective presented by Ambassador Garcia Robles that, in such an important endeavour of the international community and of the United Nations, three years should elapse before we make another effort to reach a conclusion on the adoption of a programme on disarmament. That is why I venture to suggest a third alternative.

The third alternative would be to consider the possibility of sending the draft programme on disarmament to the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and I base that suggestion on what has just been said by the representative of the United

(Mr. Souza e Silva, Brazil)

Kingdom, who suggested that after we heard the speakers in the debate you, Mr. Chairman, should proceed with your consultations even with those delegations which did not participate, to see what would be the best course of action for us to take. When I said we might also consider the submission of this draft programme to the United Nations Disarmament Commission I had two reasons for saying it. The first one is that we should recognize that the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva has failed in its endeavours, and I am afraid that if we wait for three years, or even less, to resume our negotiations we might meet with the same failure that has frustrated our efforts for the past four years.

My second reason is that it was the United Nations Disarmament Commission which established the guidelines for the elaboration of the programme. So after all that has happened in those four years and all the work done in trying for agreement in Geneva, it might be time to send it back to the United Nations Disarmament Commission so that that body could review it and see whether the efforts made in Geneva met the guidelines unanimously approved by the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Furthermore, it is the United Nations Disarmament Commission in which the whole membership of the United Nations is represented. So I think it is even fairer to have it analysed and reviewed by the whole membership of the United Nations than by the more restricted forum in Geneva. I could also mention that the agenda of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for next year could very well accommodate one more item.

For those reasons, my suggestion is that in your consultations, which I hope you will proceed with on this matter, this further alternative be also taken into consideration and that you might eventually report to us the general reaction of our First Committee as to the best course to be followed in considering the draft programme on disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee listened to a number of speakers yesterday afternoon and today commenting on the comprehensive programme of disarmament. Those observations concern both the substance of the matter and its more procedural aspect. In addition, we have heard references made to the programme in statements made during the course of the general debate. The speakers have all expressed their commitment to continue and complete the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. However, different views have been expressed on how best to proceed with this work. Those differences relate to the method, the place and the timing.

I shall not attempt to summarize the views and the comments; rather, I suggest that delegations now take the necessary time to reflect carefully on them and undertake informal consultations amongst themselves so as to have the best possible basis for the decision that we shall eventually take on how to proceed with the work on the programme. Our aim will certainly be to provide the best possible basis for completing work on the programme for its adoption in the future.

As Chairman, I shall do my best to assist in those consultations. I shall certainly, as has been suggested here by some speakers, continue my own consultations. I shall continue to consult delegations on as wide a basis as possible. I encourage those who did not speak in our discussions yesterday afternoon and today to inform me of their views on the subject. Thereafter, on the basis of those consultations, I shall keep the Committee informed at the appropriate time and in an appropriate manner.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees that we should proceed in that manner.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.