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Chairman: Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway)

CONTENTS

GENERAL DEBATE AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

AGENDA ITEMS 43 to 63, 139 to 141, 143 and 144 (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Statements were made by:

- Mr. Kravets (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)
- Mr. Qian Jiadong (China)
- Mr. Pitfield (Canada)
- Mr. Turbanski (Poland)
- Mr. Albornoz (Ecuador)
- Mr. Faki (Saudi Arabia)

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

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

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Many delegations participating in this debate have rightly raised the question of the need for the urgent elaboration of an international convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons, one of the most dangerous types of weapons of mass destruction. This problem has acquired a particular urgency and acuity, and the overwhelming majority of States as well as a broad segment of international public opinion desire its prompt solution. The reaching of prompt agreement on the total prohibition of chemical weapons has been frequently advocated by the General Assembly, and at its two special sessions devoted to disarmament it adopted concrete decisions on this important question.

In the general debate in the General Assembly this year, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic emphasized that any further delay in solving the problem of the prohibition of chemical weapons carries with it not only a threat that stockpiles of such weapons will increase but also the threat that more countries will acquire them. The practical solution of the problem of the prohibition of chemical weapons can be found in the proposal submitted by the Soviet Union, which contains the basic provisions for such a convention. That document is under consideration in the Committee on Disarmament. It takes into account the results of the Soviet-American negotiations on the matter and also the views expressed by other States that have spoken in the First Committee and in the General Assembly.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

In the Soviet draft convention much thought has been given to proposals that embrace all aspects of the prohibition of chemical weapons and that provide for the complete cessation of their development, production and stockpiling, as well as for the gradual destruction of existing stockpiles, up to and including the elimination of facilities for their production. In the past year, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons has done considerable work in the search for mutually acceptable solutions. We should particularly like to point out the fact that the Committee on Disarmament is almost prepared to begin work on the elaboration of a text for a future convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, and in various individual contact groups efforts have been made to draft language for some of its provisions. However, the results of this important work still cannot be qualified as satisfactory, and this is because one of the participants in those negotiations, the United States, has been pursuing a policy designed to exacerbate the chemical-weapon race.

Reference has been made here to the decision taken by the United States Senate to allot \$130.6 million in fiscal year 1984 for the production of binary weapons and for the manufacture, inter alia, of an airborne chemical weapon, the "Big Eye", as well as shells for 155-millimetre artillery pieces.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

These plans are just a part of a \$10 billion 10-year programme of the United States in preparation for chemical warfare and are designed to bring about a many-fold increase in the stockpiles of chemical weapons. The programme announced by Washington provides not only for the mass production of new types of chemical weapons, primarily binary weapons, and the development of means of using them in warfare but also for the deployment and stockpiling of new types of chemical weapons on the territory of Western European and other countries of the world. This decision of the American Senate, which is fraught with such danger for the cause of peace, cannot be described otherwise than as one more confirmation of the fact that so far as the prohibition of chemical weapons is concerned the United States is simply covering its position by making declarations about the need to prohibit and destroy chemical weapons while in fact doing its utmost to keep its hands free for the implementation of far-reaching large-scale plans for the stockpiling and build-up of its chemical arsenals. This dual standard in the approach of the United States Administration to the problem of the prohibition of chemical weapons, as indeed in the case of all other disarmament measures, is a grave impediment to the solution of the problem of the elimination of chemical weapons. Indeed it could even be said that it makes such a solution impossible.

The socialist countries have made very considerable efforts to find solutions to the various aspects of the problem of the prohibition of chemical weapons. These include such major attempts by the Soviet Union to find common ground with other countries as: the adoption of the principle of systematic international on-site inspection, including the verification of the destruction of stockpiles by systematic obligatory inspections within an agreed quota; the inclusion in the convention of provisions concerning the strengthening of the régime under the Geneva Protocol; and, lastly, agreement to take into account the considerations put

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

forward by a number of countries with regard to the initial declarations of stockpiles of chemical weapons. These Soviet proposals should make possible a substantial advance in the whole process of negotiations, and the Soviet Union was given due credit for them in the Committee on Disarmament.

While persistently advocating the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons world-wide, the socialist countries are proposing that parallel measures towards that goal should be adopted within the confines of the European continent. This was the purpose of the initiative in the Prague Political Declaration relating to the liberation of Europe from chemical weapons.

What is holding up the negotiations? Why has agreement on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons so far not become a reality? There is a single reason: it is the absence of readiness on the part of the United States and its closest allies to reach an agreement. The United States representatives in the Committee on Disarmament constantly try to evade the substance of the issue, to digress into futile technical discussions, and make clearly unrealistic proposals, knowing them to be unacceptable.

In its working paper on the prohibition of chemical weapons, submitted to the Committee, the United States virtually renounced its previously recognized principle of the voluntary nature of on-site inspection in the case of suspicion of a violation of the convention, and thus hardened its position on the problem of controls. It also refused to prohibit chemical weapons completely, trying to keep outside the framework of the future convention those types of such weapons systems as were extensively used by the Pentagon in its aggression in South-East Asia, which, as has been irrefutably demonstrated, caused immense harm to the population.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

In its ludicrous anti-Soviet campaign, the United States has accused the Soviet Union of using such poisonous chemical weapons in various parts of the world, but in fact it is clearly covering itself with ridicule in doing so. Bee excrement is being presented as a toxic substance. The falacious nature of the United States assertions has been clearly demonstrated in a number of impartial studies prepared by prominent scientists, yet they are still repeated by the United States delegation during this session. The purpose of this campaign is clear: it is to compel people to forget the real facts of the use of chemical weapons by the United States warmongers in Viet Nam in the 1960s and early 1970s and to cover the traces of their crimes against the peoples of South-East Asia.

The Soviet Union has submitted to this session of the General Assembly a new constructive proposal for a freeze on the production and deployment of chemical weapons pending the conclusion of an appropriate international convention. This would be an important temporary measure. Its adoption, pending the attainment of agreement on the complete elimination of chemical weapons, would be true confirmation of the willingness of States to exclude chemical weapons from their arsenals and would help to strengthen trust and hasten the achievement of a relevant agreement. We entirely support this important initiative and consider it necessary that the General Assembly call upon all States to freeze the production and deployment of chemical weapons and halt preparations for chemical warfare. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic resolutely advocates the adoption by the General Assembly of decisive, urgent measures to break out of the deadlock on the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons. One such measure would be a recommendation by the Assembly to the Committee on Disarmament to speed up, as a matter of urgency, the preparation of an international convention on this matter.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

My delegation wishes to dwell further on another important matter: the reduction of military expenditures. This is an inalienable, integral part of the policy of the socialist countries, a policy which is based on principle and designed to secure the limitation of the arms race and disarmament. As far back as 1973, the Soviet Union was responsible for the initiative that led to the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 3093 (XXVIII) on reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries. That resolution provides a sound basis for the successful solution of the problem of the reduction of military budgets. However, there has been not the slightest reduction in military budgets since then. The reason for that is the unwillingness of a number of States, primarily the United States, to agree to the adoption of practical measures to reduce their military expenditures and to their policy of unceasing inflation of their military budgets.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

To justify this position, use is again being made of a tactic designed to disperse the substance of the question into a number of abstract studies, models of comparability, accountability and so on. This is a cover for their lack of political will and their unwillingness to agree to a real reduction of military expenditures.

In the opinion of my delegation, the achievement of a practical agreement on the reduction of military budgets does not require a great deal of time as long as States show the political will and a sincere desire to resolve this urgent problem. We believe that to bring about a prompt solution in regard to this matter, the General Assembly should appeal to the permanent members of the Security Council and other States with large military capability to agree that there should be no increase of their military expenditures, for example, from 1 January 1984 and to agree on specific measures for their practical mutual reduction in the subsequent period, in order that the funds thus released may be used for the needs of economic and social development, including that of the developing countries. Such measures could relate to the reduction of military budgets in both percentage and absolute terms.

The freezing of military budgets, which have now reached astronomical levels, is, in our opinion, not an end in itself. Rather it is a first important step which would help to bring about the implementation of specific measures for the reduction of military expenditures, reduce the material preparations for warfare and build trust among States.

The Ukrainian SSR believes that all these and other problems relating to the reduction of armaments are capable of being resolved. For this it is necessary to be prepared to enter into honest agreements on the basis of the principles of equity and equal security. Unfortunately, this approach is clearly absent from the policies of the United States, in which a prominent place is taken by a desire

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

to guarantee at all costs the material ambitions of that country. The treacherous and unprovoked attack by the United States on defenceless Grenada with an overwhelming military force and with the use of modern weapons is the clearest manifestation and confirmation of that.

Mr. QIAN Jiadong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): In my statement I wish to speak on two questions: outer space and chemical weapons.

There are a few items concerning the arms race in outer space on the agenda of this Committee. Today, the Chinese delegation would like to express some general views on the question.

For many centuries space was thought to be or depicted as a beautiful, peaceful and harmonious fairyland or paradise in various myths and legends. And outer space does have a promising prospect before it thanks to rapid scientific and technological development. It offers all countries boundless possibilities for the promotion of the economy, culture, science and technology. People all over the world ardently hope that the space they share together will be exploited solely for peaceful purposes in the interests of mankind. Regrettably, however, the international tension and turmoil of today does not leave tranquil outer space alone, which is now overshadowed by a fierce rivalry in the form of the arms race.

Despite the huge arsenals in their possession, the two super-Powers with the most sophisticated space technology spare no expense in the research and development of outer space weaponry. As a result, outer space is in danger of being militarized. To build up their respective 3C (command, control and communication) systems, these two countries have launched thousands of military satellites for reconnaissance, communication, navigation, monitoring and early-warning purposes. While one super-Power started to test its anti-satellite weapons more than a decade ago, the other has been going all out to catch up. It is reported that the Soviet Union carried out a missile exercise last year aimed

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

at knocking out the reconnaissance satellites of its adversary. For its part the United States made public its intention to bring its anti-satellite system into operational stage within five years. Furthermore, they are pushing their contention for space supremacy to a new peak by developing large-scale anti-missile systems and the sophisticated weapons to counter such systems, such as space-based anti-missile laser weapons, microwave and high-energy particle beam weapons and so on. All this has irrefutably borne out that outer space has already become an important new realm of the super-Power arms race and that the "star wars" are no longer a scientific fiction but are fast becoming a reality. In the face of such a challenge and threat, all the people on this planet cannot but feel grave concern. There is a growing demand for an immediate halt of the outer space militarization and arms race, with a view to safeguarding international peace and security.

Greatly concerned about the fact that outer space is becoming another arena for the arms race, both the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the previous two sessions of the United Nations General Assembly called upon the international community to take further measures to check this dangerous trend and requested that the Committee on Disarmament negotiate on this critical question. Due to the quarrels and divergencies between the super-Powers, however, the Committee on Disarmament has so far not succeeded even in the effort to establish a working group, let alone to conduct substantive discussions and negotiations on this matter. It has thus failed to live up to the eager expectations of the people all over the world.

China has always stood for a ban on the arms race in outer space. It fully agrees with the basic principle and final goal of the "demilitarization of outer space" and "outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes". It consistently holds that the exploration and exploitation of outer space should serve to promote the economy, science and culture of all countries.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

With the "demilitarization" of outer space as the overall objective, we believe that both outer-space weaponry and the satellites for military purposes should in principle be prohibited or restricted. Since military satellites can either serve hostile purposes or play a certain role in monitoring the implementation of disarmament agreements and in giving advance warning against a surprise attack, it is a rather complicated question to prohibit or restrict such satellites. Therefore, we can begin with banning all kinds of outer-space weapons. We agree that the Committee on Disarmament should set up a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to negotiate on the prohibition of testing, development, production, deployment and use of all kinds of outer space weapons and on their destruction, and to draw up relevant international legal instruments. In the meantime, we also agree that a ban on anti-satellite weaponry can be taken as a first step.

At present, it is the Soviet Union and the United States that have the capability to deploy weapons and use force in outer space. Rightly regarded as the only two big space Powers, they have an unshirkable responsibility for preventing the arms race in outer space. Should they be genuinely willing to stop their arms race in outer space, to refrain from deploying and using any weapons there and to destroy all such weapons already in existence, that would certainly deserve our hearty welcome. It is completely justifiable to ask them to give a positive response to the call of people throughout the world to halt the arms race in outer space and to use outer space solely for peaceful purposes. Whether these big space Powers will match their self-proclaimed sincerity for peace with their own deeds, one can only wait and see.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

The question of banning chemical weapons has remained on the agenda of this Committee for several years. It has always been a focus of attention and concern for all States. As far back as the First World War, this barbaric and detestable weapon caused heavy casualties among soldiers and civilians, thus arousing worldwide indignation. Consequently, the prohibition of chemical weapons had for many years been the common desire of the people, who made great efforts to this end. The "Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare" signed in Geneva in 1925 was a crystallization of such endeavours by the international community. During the Second World War, this Protocol played a significant part in restricting the use of chemical weapons. It is most regrettable, however, that there are still hundreds of thousands of tons of chemical weapons in the arsenals of the super-Powers, although the Protocol has been in force for decades. This amply proves that while having enormous nuclear arsenals in their possession, they do not intend to renounce chemical weapons, which are also weapons of mass destruction, as a means of war. In recent years, a chemical arms race centred around quality improvement has also been a part of the super-Powers' rivalry for military superiority. Particularly worrying is the fact that reports on the use of chemical or toxic weapons in some areas of armed conflict have been heard from time to time. All this underlines the urgent demand for speedy negotiations for the conclusion of a convention on the comprehensive prohibition and thorough destruction of all chemical weapons.

Thanks to years of hard work, the Committee on Disarmament, charged with drawing up such a convention, has made some headway in certain related questions.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

This is surely commendable. Under the able guidance of its Canadian chairman, this year's Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons has compiled a document outlining all the component parts of the envisaged convention and clearly listing the agreements and divergencies involved. It has thus served to help all the negotiating parties in setting forth their positions as well as to lay a solid foundation for drafting the basic provisions of the convention.

There has been considerable dispute on whether a ban on the use of chemical weapons should be included in the convention. After several years' discussion, however, the opinion in favour of such a ban has gained wide support. More and more countries have come to believe that, far from weakening the 1925 Protocol, this will complement and strengthen it. It is true that the Protocol has played an important historical role and will continue to do so. We should strive to uphold its lofty spirit and objective. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that in terms of the requirements of our time this important legal instrument, drawn up about half a century ago, cannot be totally free from loopholes. The major drawbacks are that the Protocol fails to constitute a categorical ban on the use of chemical weapons in armed conflicts, which are not wars in a legal sense, and that it does not have provisions for verification. It will therefore be a complement to and development of the Protocol to have a convention on comprehensive prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons, which bans the use of such weapons in war as well as in all kinds of armed conflicts and which makes provision for effective verification.

As for the question of verification, we hold that in addition to verifying the use of the chemical weapons, the process of destroying their stockpiles and dismantling the production facilities should also be subjected to effective

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

verification, including necessary on-site inspections. At present, the views of various sides on the question of on-site inspection remain far apart. We hope that reasonable common ground can soon be reached so that effective and strict verification can be combined with a minimum of intrusiveness.

There have been further reports and evidence this year with regard to the use of chemical and toxic weapons in some areas of armed conflict. They deserve our serious consideration. It is our opinion that pending the negotiations on and conclusion of the aforementioned convention, it is imperative to formulate procedures and measures to investigate the possible violation of the Geneva Protocol, with a view to safeguarding the authority of the Protocol and applying sanctions against such acts of violation. Having voted in favour of resolution 37/98 D of last year, which deals with this matter, we hope that that resolution will be fully implemented.

Among various items under discussion in the Committee on Disarmament, the prohibition of chemical weapons is regarded as an area where substantive progress can be expected. Like many other delegations, we hope that speedier progress can be made in the negotiations on chemical weapons. The Chinese delegation will continue to take an active part in these negotiations in the hope of concluding the convention as soon as possible, so as to eliminate these barbaric, lethal weapons from our planet once and for all.

Mr. PITFIELD (Canada): Sir, I wish to join those speakers who have preceded me in offering my congratulations to Mr. Vraalsen on his election as Chairman of the First Committee, and to the other officers of the Committee on their election. In these troubled times the First Committee in its role has a critical responsibility for international security and arms control. Mr. Vraalsen's role as Chairman of this Committee is pivotal and he is to be congratulated on accepting this challenge. I should add that the historical association of friendship between his country and mine makes it a special pleasure for my delegation to see a representative of Norway presiding over our deliberations.

In his report the Secretary-General has rightly pointed to the central importance today of the question of disarmament and arms limitation, and particularly the prevention of nuclear war. Despite the considerable efforts that have been made over the years towards this crucially important objective - and there have been some notable achievements - there is a shared concern on the part of the international community about security. Anxiety over the threat of war has not been diminished, and for good reason. The accumulation of weapons of mass destruction has not stopped and we are witness to the development of more and more sophisticated nuclear and conventional arms.

Over the years the focus has been on arms control and disarmament - on controlling and eliminating the technical means of making war. Arms control and disarmament have a simple but seductive appeal: reduce or destroy the tools of war and you will eliminate war. The problems of preserving peace and security, however, are extremely complex.

We have, of course, to continue as energetically as we can the pursuit of ways and means of harnessing the technology that feeds arms competition. In this forum our discussions take place in the context of certain given factors, particularly the established policies of our Governments. We are, in a sense, captives of our

(Mr. Pitfield, Canada)

histories. This is often an inhibiting element in our search for consensus. What, in essence, we are dealing with here and in other forums relates to the capabilities of nations to wage war in present circumstances. Our immediate goal is a lower level of arms and armaments at an equal or enhanced level of security.

What has been left largely to one side in our discussions is the more fundamental question of intentions, which govern the use of arms. The issue of intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe, which has taken a new turn with the Soviet Union's announcement of planned additional deployments of missiles in the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia, illustrates how important this question is. While understanding intentions does not automatically guarantee peace and security, we should be concerned that intentions in this crucial area of policy are not misunderstood.

In the end, successful arms control and disarmament measures depend on a real intention to keep the arms lid on. This is hardly a revelation, but it is a truth we should constantly remind ourselves of as we, in forums of this kind, debate the issues of arms control and disarmament. As Prime Minister Trudeau pointed out in a speech in Guelph, Ontario, on 27 October:

"We may at some point be able to freeze the nuclear capability in the world at greatly reduced levels. But how do we freeze the menacing intentions which might control those weapons which remain? Therein lies the inadequacy of the nuclear freeze argument."

Here we get to the core of the current debate: the unsteady relations that have divided East and West over the years and the absence of real political dialogue that could ease tensions. There was a time in the 1970s when détente brought the promise of such dialogue. Regular consultations at the most senior levels of political leadership appeared to offer the way to developing

(Mr. Pitfield, Canada)

understanding, mutual respect and a willingness to search for ways of avoiding crises. As détente became divisible and subject to doubt, the prospect it offered of building confidence in the intentions of each side faded.

In today's atmosphere of suspicion and distrust, how can we help in restoring the confidence which might move things forward? At Guelph, Prime Minister Trudeau referred to a

"strategy of political confidence-building" which would involve "steps that reduce tensions caused by uncertainty about objectives, or caused by fear of the consequences of failure; steps that might mitigate hostility and promote a modicum of mutual respect; steps that build an authentic confidence in man's ability to survive on this planet."

Prime Minister Trudeau particularly had in mind regular high-level dialogue based on openness regarding intentions, mutual respect, reciprocal acknowledgement of legitimate security needs, a determined approach to crisis management and incentives for flexibility. The objective would be to establish a better communications network between the two super-Powers and the East and West generally.

The burden of this strategy rests with the political leadership in each country, which alone, perhaps, can show the flexibility needed to explore new policy directions. Prime Minister Trudeau has already begun the high-level consultations he has advocated and will soon be personally meeting with other leaders.

It is our hope that political leaders will take up the challenge and that their efforts can be translated quickly into practical terms in the various negotiating forums. If there is to be genuine dialogue in those negotiations it has to be based on a viable international security policy. The foundations of such a policy must include the principles of reciprocity, transparency, balance and confidence.

(Mr. Pitfield, Canada)

We find the lack of confidence particularly disturbing in the super-Power negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF), in Geneva, which have reached a critical stage. In no other forum is a true dialogue as urgently needed as in the INF talks. If they are to have a chance at success, the parties must accept as their fundamental objective increased mutual security rather than unilateral advantage. It is of the utmost importance that the two sides persevere in the bargaining process and come to grips with central issues. We strongly support a negotiated solution that will make deployment of any intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe unnecessary. At the same time, in the absence of concrete results in the INF negotiations, we are convinced that there is no alternative to deployment of the West's intermediate-range missiles. The urgency lies in making this alternative unnecessary.

As evidence of the West's determination to see a reduction in the level of nuclear weapons in Europe, I would draw the Committee's attention to the decision of the Western alliance's Defence Ministers last week at Montebello, Quebec, to withdraw, unilaterally, 1,400 tactical nuclear warheads from the number in Western Europe during the next several years. That will bring to 2,400 the total number of warheads which will have been unilaterally removed by the West since 1979.

A great deal of hope is riding on the Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe which will be starting its work in Stockholm in January. Our hope is that the development of confidence through a régime of confidence-building and security-building measures covering Europe may result in transparency and predictability in military affairs, which in turn could induce a degree of security among participating States that would make a balanced reduction of armaments a viable option.

For our part, we here in this Committee have our own contribution to make to the creation of a stable environment of increased security.

(Mr. Pitfield, Canada)

In this forum our objective is surely to reinforce the multilateral approach to arms control and disarmament. What we do must contribute to multilateralism and not detract from it. Our efforts, essentially, must be directed to establishing consensus and to working out practical frameworks for negotiations which will result in tangible arms control and disarmament measures. We must continue with the necessary preliminary work for the time when an improved atmosphere permits the successful conclusion of these negotiations. It is our responsibility to resist the tendency in these times of deteriorating international climate to take up the politics of the megaphone, in which confrontation is valued over consensus and debate serves not the purposes of dialogue but rather to divide and disunite. The challenge for multilateralism is to reverse these trends.

(Mr. Pitfield, Canada)

There is another challenge before us in the arms control and disarmament process and that is to recognize the contiguity of interests in moving towards common agreement among developed and developing countries on international security issues. Nowhere is this truer than in the case of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the strengthening of which poses one of the most urgent challenges to multilateralism.

Each of us has a responsibility to maintain and support the arms control and disarmament process. The degree to which that responsibility is exercised is reflected in the voting patterns of the General Assembly. Unfortunately our agenda has become overcrowded over the years and there is a tendency towards duplication of effort in the race for resolutions. Priorities have to be set if we are not to dilute and divide our efforts.

We Canadians, of course, have our views on this subject. Our priorities are: first, to support strongly negotiations to limit and reduce nuclear arms; secondly, to promote early progress towards the realization of a multilateral comprehensive test-ban treaty; thirdly, to assist in preparing a convention which would completely prohibit chemical weapons; fourthly, to promote the evolution of an effective non-proliferation régime based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty; fifthly, to work towards the objective of prohibiting the development, testing and deployment of all weapons for use in outer space; and sixthly, to participate actively in negotiations to limit and reduce conventional forces.

On the urgent nuclear issues our objective is twofold: the inhibition of the development of new weapons systems and the reduction of nuclear arsenals, designed to achieve a stable balance at lower levels. We are also considering making proposals for other international agreements which could help to restrict destabilizing qualitative developments in strategic technology.

(Mr. Pitfield, Canada)

We prefer to see concrete agreements rather than declaratory resolutions which promise restraint but in effect do not provide for the means to ensure that promises are kept. Verification is a commonly agreed necessity if we are to make real progress in disarmament and arms control negotiations. Agreement on the establishment of international verification mechanisms is one of the clearest indications of real intentions. We have therefore assigned a high priority to research in this area.

On 20 October the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan MacEachen, announced the establishment of an arms control and disarmament verification research programme based in the Department of External Affairs. Additional personnel resources will be focused in this area. An initial amount of \$500,000 has been allocated for this programme. This amount will be increased to \$1 million by next April.

This initiative has been undertaken in order to help the creation of an atmosphere conducive to progress in disarmament. The verification programme will focus primarily on technical aspects and will build upon the greatly increased attention we have recently been devoting to verification. The compendium of arms control verification proposals which we submitted to the Committee on Disarmament in 1980, and which was updated in 1982, and the resultant quantification and conceptual studies are both examples of approaches to these issues on a very practical and basic level. Canada has as well technical expertise, in both the private and public sectors, which can be applied in a number of areas, including seismology, remote sensing, toxicology, communication satellites and chemical-weapons detection, destruction and defence. We intend to marshal this expertise more fully as our special contribution in support of the negotiation of agreements on nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons systems.

(Mr. Pitfield, Canada)

We shall be sharing the results of our work with the international community. We hope in this way to make a contribution to the technical needs of the arms control and disarmament process, but I would stress that the times demand that we also look beyond technicalities and focus on the need to develop confidence and dialogue; that those who would really wish to make a contribution to arms control and disarmament should talk with each other and not past each other.

To return to a point I made at the outset of my remarks, there are few other issues on which so many in the West - and indeed elsewhere - have been so engaged as this matter. Given the implications of nuclear warfare, this preoccupation is entirely understandable and justified. We all want to see progress in arms control and disarmament. The key lies in increasing mutual security. That will not be possible as long as mutual suspicions about intentions remain. The challenge facing us in trying to overcome this hurdle - and this is a point Prime Minister Trudeau made at Guelph - is in applying a political effort to points along the East-West trend line in order to reverse it from its present dangerous downward path.

Mr. TURBANSKI (Poland): Since this is the first time I have spoken in this Committee I should like to begin by offering my congratulations to the Chairman, Mr. Vraalsen, and the other officers of the Committee on their election.

In our two earlier statements in this Committee we presented Poland's position on some of the key disarmament issues on our agenda. Today we would like to focus our attention on the report of the Committee on Disarmament and to supplement earlier statements on matters relating to that important body and its place in the system of disarmament negotiations as, to quote the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, the

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

"single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of limited size taking decisions on the basis of consensus". (resolution S-10/2, para. 120)

Before I enter into specifics I should like to make one general observation. When addressing ourselves to the broad problem of disarmament, we should keep in mind paragraph 2 of the Final Document, in which the General Assembly rightly pointed out that

"Unless its avenues are closed, the continued arms race means a growing threat to international peace and security and even to the very survival of mankind". (ibid., para. 2)

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

Unfortunately, developments since 1978 have fully confirmed the validity of this sombre assessment. In his message on the International Day of Peace delivered on 20 September this year - five years after the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament - the Secretary-General described the world of today as one "in which conflict is pervasive and in which in many ways conditions seem more conducive to war than to peace".

May I interject here a brief comment on a very recent and tragic development, which, while outside the scope of the main subject of my statement, certainly had a strong maleficent impact on the general political environment and on the atmosphere of disarmament negotiations. It will be recalled that Mr. Perez de Cuellar spoke hardly more than a month before the United States, once again believing that might was right, invaded tiny non-aligned Grenada. The attempts to justify this glaring violation of the United Nations Charter are really nothing more than - to quote the title of an article by Tad Szulc which appeared in the 28 October 1983 edition of The New York Times - "Making the world 'safe' for hypocrisy". Indeed, it seems that the United States is little inclined to practise itself what it preaches to others.

So, as everyone can see, the Secretary-General's sobering note of pessimism has found complete justification in a very short period of time.

In that message, the Secretary-General went on to say that "peace must be seen not only as an ideal but as a permanent requirement". There cannot be true and lasting peace unless the arms race is stopped immediately and we proceed without delay to genuine disarmament.

Several preceding speakers presented their assessment of the work of the Committee on Disarmament and the results it achieved during 1983. I think it would not be far from the truth to say that the general feeling was one of keen

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

disappointment. This feeling was very succinctly expressed by the representative of India, Mr. C. P. N. Singh, when in his statement on 25 October he stated:

"Unfortunately, there has been hardly any progress on any of the major issues. There is an increasing tendency to emphasize unimportant and subsidiary issues in such a manner that the overriding objective of preventing a nuclear war and proceeding towards nuclear disarmament is impeded at every stage." (A/C.1/38/PV.13, p. 38)

There is really hardly anything I could add to his opinion, except perhaps that we believe that what he said about the prevention of a nuclear war - certainly the most glaring example - applies almost equally to other issues on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament.

I wish also to recall here that, as we have stated in the past, we assess the results of the work of the Committee on Disarmament through the prism of specific progress made with regard to the top priority questions, which, in our view, include: effective measures to prevent the threat of a nuclear war through concrete agreements on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; the elimination of chemical weapons; preventing the arms race from spreading to outer space; and the prohibition of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, including neutron weapons. Since this position of ours remains unchanged, the disappointment of my delegation at this time is not surprising.

The major reason for the virtual lack of progress is that, except perhaps in the field of chemical weapons, the Committee is in fact becoming more and more a deliberating forum instead of a negotiating organ and its special features are not being utilized in a proper way. This, in turn, was due to the regrettable fact that a group of States was unwilling to undertake concrete negotiating steps and

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

insisted instead, in clearly diversionary tactics, on procedural, technical and secondary issues. This attitude was most sharply reflected in the discussions on the questions of prevention of nuclear war and prevention of an arms race in outer space. While we welcome the inclusion of the item on prevention of nuclear war in the Committee's agenda, we deplore the fact that the opportunity to achieve tangible results in those two areas has come to naught, since their substantive consideration has been blocked by the refusal of the same group of States to have appropriate working groups set up. Apparently, some countries are unwilling to do more for disarmament than merely pay it lip-service.

If we persistently recall the dreadful experiences of the Second World War, including those of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is because we have heeded the warning that George Santayana once gave, when he said: "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." And since today - when mankind has at its disposal weapons capable of obliterating all life from the surface of our planet and \$1.3 million are being spent every minute on armaments - remembrance of the past, important as it still is, is not nearly enough, we firmly believe that the implementation of such initiatives as the recent Soviet proposals on the condemnation of nuclear war and on a nuclear-weapon freeze are of paramount importance. In the light of the present dangerous state of international relations, a comprehensive freeze of nuclear weapons by all the nuclear-weapon States would constitute an exceptionally important contribution to the fulfilment of the most pressing task of our time - that of preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war. It would also be a particularly significant step towards curbing, and ultimately halting and reversing, the arms race. We hope that the resolutions which the General Assembly will adopt in the broad context of nuclear weapons will contain proper guidance for the Committee also on the question of prevention of

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

nuclear war, and we draw attention to the utmost urgency and vital importance of this problem.

Turning to the subject of chemical weapons, we wish to note that some progress has been achieved by the Committee in its efforts aimed at elaborating a convention prohibiting such weapons. We note, in particular, that agreement has been achieved on the structure of a future convention. We have, therefore, a document recording areas both of convergence and of divergence which constitutes a generally acceptable basis for future work. At the same time, however, we cannot but voice our regret that the results of the 1983 session certainly fall short of our legitimate expectations. We believe that the main reason for the far from adequate progress on this very important issue is the fact that a chemical weapon convention is simply undesirable for certain States. The recent allocation by the United States Congress of new substantial funds for binary weapons bears out our belief. One of the major unresolved issues remains that of verification, where no progress has been made because of the insistence by some Western countries - the United States in particular - on unrealistic and excessive demands which would transform the question of verification into a goal in itself. We hope that those countries will show more flexibility and realism during the next session of the Committee on Disarmament. We likewise consider that the organization of workshops, no matter how spectacular, cannot be a valid substitute for a genuine desire to achieve tangible progress in the matter of banning chemical warfare.

I must add here that there was nothing in the statement the representative of the United States, Ambassador Fields, made yesterday afternoon - and I listened attentively - that could lead my delegation to alter its assessment of the problem of a chemical weapon ban.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

On the other hand, we welcome the recent Soviet proposal to freeze the production and deployment of chemical weapons pending the conclusion of a convention on this subject. We sincerely hope that next year the Committee on Disarmament will finally be able to fulfil its task in this connection.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

As regards the question of prevention of an arms race in outer space, we have deplored earlier the inability of the Committee to deal in a substantive manner with this issue, the ever-increasing importance of which cannot escape anybody. It will be recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 36/99 of 9 December 1981, requested the Committee to embark on negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on the text of an appropriate international treaty to prevent the spread of the arms race to outer space. At this juncture we wish to welcome once more the new and topical initiative of the Soviet Union on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the earth. We are deeply convinced that this initiative should give fresh impetus to the work of the Committee on this important item on its agenda.

On the question of a nuclear-test ban, the position of Poland has been defined in the Political Declaration of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty adopted at Prague on 4 and 5 January 1983, in which its signatories appealed to all States to provide a new stimulus for negotiations, including negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament, with a view, inter alia, to elaborating "in the shortest possible time a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests" (A/38/67, p. 6). The Committee has at its disposal enough substantive material - I would refer to the Soviet and Swedish drafts - to enable it finally to begin concrete negotiations.

On the subject of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, I wish to put on record our sincere appreciation for the long and painstaking efforts of Ambassador Garcia Robles to have this important document completed. We fully recognize the significance it would have for future disarmament endeavours and regret that, despite the amount of attention it devoted to it, the Committee was once again unable to agree on a full text. We also believe that this question merits the full concentration of efforts in the future. We are also of the opinion

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

that - as pointed out by Ambassador Garcia Robles on 17 October - the draft should not represent a step backward from the Final Document. I might add that any method leading to a speedy finalization of the text and its ultimate adoption would be acceptable to us.

The Committee on Disarmament, taking into account the appropriate resolution of the General Assembly, has decided to change its designation, beginning in 1984, to that of Conference on Disarmament and to increase its membership by no more than four States. I should be less than candid if I did not mention here that, in our opinion, it is obvious that neither the change of the Committee's name nor the increase of its membership will per se enhance its effectiveness.

Addressing the General Assembly on 30 September, the Chairman of the Council of State of the Polish People's Republic, Professor Henryk Jablonski, stated inter alia:

"The international community has never had available such widely developed machinery for disarmament negotiations on a regional and global scale; yet the results are in inverse proportion to the needs and possibilities. This makes it unmistakably clear that the problem lies not in the machinery but in the need to overcome an obsession with military superiority and with the pursuit of illusory security through acceleration of the spiral of armaments and destabilization of the strategic balance."

(A/38/PV.13, p. 16)

We believe this observation is relevant also in the context of the Committee on Disarmament.

As we have stated earlier, only the genuine political will to work out, in a spirit of compromise and mutually advantageous co-operation, specific binding disarmament agreements can bring about the long-awaited and vitally necessary progress.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

I should like to express in this connection my delegation's satisfaction at its co-operation in the Committee with the Group of 21 of non-aligned and neutral States. In general, we approached the issues under consideration along similar, if not the same, lines. This does not, of course, mean that all the relevant proposals and suggestions were easily found to be mutually acceptable, but there was always a common will to sit down and negotiate in earnest towards a meaningful compromise.

In concluding, I should like once again to stress the importance Poland attaches to the work of the Committee on Disarmament and to pledge anew our firm support for efforts aimed at enabling it to achieve, without further delay, tangible results in its future activities.

Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, the delegation of Ecuador is very pleased that you were unanimously elected to assume the responsible task of conducting the work of this important Committee and it extends its good wishes also to the other officers of the Committee and members of the Secretariat serving it.

The fact that the General Assembly is discussing disarmament and continues to do so at every session is an indication of its faith in the intelligence of the human species and in the world Organization, for the creation of which disarmament represented one of the basic motivations. Even though 40 years has elapsed since the ending of the Second World War, which led the founding peoples of our Organization to establish it and to commit themselves to achieving disarmament, the commitment of the major Powers continues, and the other countries of the international community are correct in reminding them of that fact, particularly because in 1985 the United Nations will be celebrating its 40th year.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

On 30 October 1943 the Foreign Ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China signed in Moscow a pact which, on the basis of the Declaration of the United Nations of 1 January 1942, recognized:

"the need to ensure a swift and orderly transition from war to peace and to establish and maintain international peace and security with the least possible use of the human and economic resources of the world on arms."

The commitment also entered into

"to hold conferences and to co-operate with others among the four Powers and with other Members of the United Nations to make possible a general and practicable agreement with regard to the regulation of armaments in the post-war period"

goes back to that era.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

Too much time has gone by without any significant progress in these areas. The conferences have been held. The United Nations, the Disarmament Commission and Committee on Disarmament are fully operating; a landmark in the work and the fulfilment of hopes are to be found in the adoption of the Final Document and the Plan of Action of the first special session devoted to disarmament. Thus, both the comprehensive programme on disarmament and the World Disarmament Campaign are aspects of tangible action which entail a follow-up of disarmament resolutions, of which there has obviously been a proliferation without implementation. This is an alarming fact which was referred to by Mr. Garcia Robles while stressing the particular importance of some of them during this debate.

These resolutions are part of our programme of work. Therefore, were there to be political will - which is obviously what is lacking in certain powerful sectors - the way towards progress in the field of disarmament would be open and attainable. Specific action in following up each of these issues is one of the duties of this Committee, not only for technical reasons but as a basic response to the widely supported requests of the peoples of the world and of countries, large and small. That is so because on our planet, which is in imminent danger of a nuclear holocaust and the abhorrent crisis brought about by the astronomical and increasing cost of weapons, the voices of the medium-sized and small countries, which are the vast majority of the human species, should also be heard. The nuclear Powers have no right to refuse to listen to the clamour of these peoples who turn their eyes from all corners to the United Nations and demand a stop to the arms race and to nuclear insanity. The planet is not owned by the super-Powers alone. We, the chorus of poor countries lacking economic, military and technological power but fully entitled to have human, natural, scientific and technological resources channelled to the peaceful purposes of development - the raison d'être of the

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

United Nations, and a requirement of justice nationally as well as internationally - also count for something.

Speaking before this General Assembly, President Osvaldo Hurtado Larrea of Ecuador stated:

"For the good of mankind the arms race must cease, especially that of the major Powers, and the threat of a nuclear holocaust must end. After having lived through a promising state of détente in recent years, we now find ourselves in the midst of a political and military confrontation whose implications might prove to be more serious than those of the cold war. People everywhere are in duty bound to defend peace, whether they come from the East, the West or the third world. A return to dialogue and sanity is, above all, the responsibility of the major Powers." (A/38/PV.12, pp. 13-15)

At the same time, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ecuador,

Luis Valencia Rodriguez, said:

"The greatest danger to mankind's subsistence is the increase in nuclear arsenals with their tens of thousands of such weapons and a total explosive power of more than a million bombs similar to that used on Hiroshima, sufficient to destroy the world many times over."

That is why Ecuador, a founding Member of the United Nations, a country which believes in the rule of law and which follows a clear democratic institutional trend, a country of untarnished international conduct joins in the appeal from other peoples of the world that the two major super-Powers should find a way to reach agreements which guarantee the continued existence of the human race on earth.

That is why we also view with concern the virtual paralysis in disarmament negotiations this past year and the non-compliance by some countries with major resolutions on disarmament adopted by consensus or by an absolute majority in the

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

General Assembly. That is why in this debate we have called attention to the need to combine drafts on similar topics, in order to avoid overlapping or having to adopt texts which, though obviously well-intentioned, are not very likely to be implemented. We also support the call for progress in the Geneva negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union, through a meeting of minds in various forums, on intermediate-range nuclear weapons, as well as on strategic nuclear weapons. It would also be desirable to include tactical nuclear weapons in those negotiations to be held with the participation of the United Nations, perhaps with the presence of the Secretary-General, as the representative of Mexico has already proposed.

As an appropriate mechanism to promote disarmament, Ecuador advocates recourse in the United Nations to the system of peaceful settlement of disputes. That would have the immediate effect of reducing the enormous expenditures on conventional weapons which are such a burden on the economies of poor countries, increasing their level of debt. These expenditures are encouraged by the immoral and indefatigable agents of the merchants of death and poverty..

No nation can be absolutely sure of its military superiority, nor truly defend itself from nuclear attack. It is therefore elementary logic to maintain the age-old values of our civilization to prohibit nuclear war over and above any ideological or political confrontation.

My delegation welcomes the announcement by the Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament on the composition of that negotiating body, with an increase in its membership by four States. Ecuador is an observer in the Committee and it trusts that agreements on this matter will be presented to us at the next session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

My delegation once again appeals to France to ratify Additional Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and it wishes to remind members of the commitment of all States bound by the Treaty and its additional protocols to refrain from activities affecting Latin America's status of military denuclearization.

No one disputes the direct relationship between disarmament and development, but the deterioration in the world situation and the crisis brought about especially by the onerous military costs and the inequity of the terms of trade, make it urgent to begin disarmament and to transfer funds to development, thereby passing from the phase of debate to that of action. Otherwise the situation, serious as it is, could become untenable and reach catastrophic proportions economically and socially and, therefore, politically. The first victims, of course, would be the weak countries, and among them those which have taken an almost heroic stand in defence of their democratic institutions. In this regard we wish to mention the excellent study of the United Nations on disarmament and development.

There are more than 70 million persons engaged in military activities, including some 3 million scientists and experts, some of whom could be transferred to the areas of peace and development. In 1981, out of 14 essential minerals, 3 to 12 per cent were devoted to military use, as was from one quarter to one third of the world's oil consumption. Every minute the world military budget absorbs \$1.3 million while 30 children die from lack of food and medicine.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

One of the major Powers devotes \$200 billion each year to military expenditures, while it is difficult to obtain a small contribution for the basic constructive United Nations activities of a multilateral character for purposes of development, such as those of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which has a mere \$2 billion a year made up of voluntary contributions from 140 countries. With only one third of that military expenditure it would be possible to meet the most pressing needs for the transfer of technology and the promotion of development, which are so necessary and which would do much more to reduce tension and to bring the world closer to an era of effective and lasting peace than would nuclear submarines, one alone of which would cost as much as the education budgets of 23 countries, with 160 million schoolchildren, could be met.

The situation is becoming worse not only because of the instances of international violence which we read about in the daily newspapers, but also because there has been a 4 per cent increase this year in the world's military expenditures, as compared with the 2 per cent increase for the past four years. This is according to information from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and means that in 1982 we had exceeded the \$700-billion mark.

Ecuador attaches great importance to the work of the Committee on Disarmament, a multilateral negotiating body in which many non-aligned countries participate. The lack of progress in the Committee in the areas of curbing the nuclear arms race, promoting nuclear disarmament, prohibiting nuclear-weapon tests, preventing nuclear war and preventing an arms race in outer space is a cause of concern everywhere. With regard to chemical weapons, there has at least been some progress concerning the complex problems of verification in the negotiation of a text of a convention in that area. We are also pleased to note that the Committee on Disarmament has presented to this Committee a revised text of the

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

comprehensive programme of disarmament. While the new draft programme is not yet complete and important questions are still unresolved, such as the stages of implementation, timetables for implementation and the legal nature of the document, we trust that the General Assembly will be able to adopt the programme at this session.

Ecuador has stated year after year in this forum and in the outer space Committee that outer space must be maintained as an area of peace. The geostationary orbit in which satellites are placed is restricted and crowded and should be placed at the service of developing countries and, in particular, the equatorial countries, given their specific geographical location. We view with concern the fact that the space Powers devote enormous sums to space research for military purposes and to the development and manufacture of weapons to be deployed in space, anti-satellite weapons and laser devices, apart from the well-known use of space for military espionage. If the international community does not adopt the necessary measures to prevent the extension of the arms race into outer space, outer space will soon become another battlefield for the major Powers, thus increasing the nuclear peril on earth. We hope that at its 1984 sessions the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva will adopt without delay organizational decisions leading to the negotiation and conclusion of an agreement or agreements to prevent the dangerous arms race in outer space.

These are some of the concerns and positions of Ecuador in the field of disarmament. These are shared by other Andean, Latin American and third-world countries in general, as is clear from the debates in the First Committee. Our voices cannot continue to be disregarded, although the mass communication media of the large countries tend to pass over in silence the concerns expressed in United Nations debates. Today we have with us the very respected voices of the

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

youth and progressive sectors of both developed and developing countries, as shown by the demonstrations in many European and Asian and in our western hemisphere countries. That is why in the Committee on Information we reached a consensus in recommending that:

"The World Disarmament Campaign should take fully into account the role of the communications media, which is the most effective way in which to promote at the level of world public opinion a climate of understanding, confidence and co-operation leading to peace and disarmament, the promotion of human rights and development."

As an expression of the feeling in private and educational institutions in my country concerning recent acts of international violence, the university council of the Catholic University of Guayaquil denounced in a special report of 3 September of this year

"the danger of the elimination of our civilization and of the very existence of mankind which would result from a military confrontation with nuclear weapons in the hands of the opposing blocs, as well as the expenditure of unimaginable amounts of money for the manufacture of weapons of death, while the entire world argues about an unprecedented economic crisis".

If no progress is made in disarmament the threat of a third world war will increase, and the responsibility for this will be borne exclusively by the great Powers. It is essential to put an end to the almost total militarization process of the super-Powers. The fact that 27 items on the provisional agenda at the beginning of this session of the General Assembly dealt with disarmament questions shows the seriousness of this problem and the high priority which the international community assigns to it. My delegation will support those drafts which aim at the prohibition of the use of force in international relations, the strengthening of

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

the mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes and the attainment of nuclear disarmament as a step leading to general and complete disarmament under international control.

In this regard, we wish to reiterate the principles which constantly govern the foreign policy of Ecuador, such as the rejection of the occupation of territories by force, the inadmissibility of the use or threat of use of force in international relations and the need to apply the basic principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. Ecuador believes that the logical and essential corollary to disarmament - the practical way to the non-use of force in international relations - is the system of the peaceful settlement of disputes, provided that it is operative and specific and includes the machinery which can truly apply the relevant articles of the United Nations Charter.

To the unbridled growth of the nuclear and non-nuclear arsenals of the two super-Powers, must be added the deterioration in their political relations.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

This is viewed with grave concern by small countries since in a clash we would all be the victims. That is why the rivalry between them should be shifted with urgency, through disarmament, to other spheres: to ideological discussion at the theoretical level, to science, the arts, sports - but should not take place in the military sphere. That is why measures likely to contribute mutual trust in a climate of détente, especially in the nuclear field, must be strengthened, as the Federal Republic of Germany has been urging, in a very welcome conceptual approach as so clearly explained by the representative of that country in this Committee in his appeal for greater transparency in the military behaviour of both the super-Powers. Only in this manner, in an atmosphere of détente, can we escape from the near certainty of mutual destruction, which is today approaching at a frightening speed, since the balance of terror can be no safeguard against it. In such a climate, favourable to the control and reduction of armaments, the true concept of collective security can be developed that will be more genuine and stronger to the extent that the nuclear arsenals on our planet can be reduced or at least frozen until the time comes when they can finally be eliminated. Not much time is left. The time has come for words to give place to those deeds that we have been analysing and describing now for decades in this Committee. To attain this would be the greatest success of a new era finally attained, thanks to the spirit of the United Nations and to the civilized capacity for co-existence of the human intelligence.

Mr. FAKI (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me first, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee.

At this moment in our history, when the peoples of the world are taking a very pessimistic view of our slide towards the abyss of war, it is high time that we reminded the great Powers of their immense responsibilities. Those great Powers,

(Mr. Faki, Saudi Arabia)

after all, bear the primary responsibility for strengthening the role of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, and for making the maintenance of peace and security in the world, not just a theory but a fact.

In this context, when we recall the responsibility of the great Powers for world peace, we would do well to emphasize the special responsibility of those Powers for security in the Middle East, where it has been threatened for many decades. The peoples are entitled to live in freedom and peace, safe from international terrorism. It is for the great Powers to guarantee that security. Here we must focus our attention on one of the problems threatening peace in that region and in the world generally - the Palestinian problem, a time-bomb which could explode at any moment in the Middle East. How can security in the Middle East be guaranteed unless a radical solution to the Palestinian problem is found and unless the rights of the Palestinian people, who have been denied the most elementary rights, justice and equity, are restored? When in 1974 Iran proposed the inclusion in the agenda of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly of an item on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia welcomed that initiative, being motivated by a desire for peace and stability. We voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 3263 (XXIX) which appealed to all parties concerned in the area to refrain from producing, testing, obtaining, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons and to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament adopted resolution S-10/2 which, inter alia, called upon the States of the Middle East region to agree to place all their nuclear activities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and to accept the role of the Security Council regarding verification.

Israel is the only country in the Middle East which has nuclear weapons and the capacity to manufacture them.

(Mr. Faki, Saudi Arabia)

In December 1978 the General Assembly adopted resolution 33/71 A, which requested the Security Council to call upon all States to end all transfer of nuclear equipment or fissionable material or technology to Israel. The General Assembly expressed its alarm, in its resolution 34/89, about increasing information and evidence of Israel's activities aimed at the acquisition and development of nuclear weapons, and expressed its conviction that the development of nuclear capability by Israel was a threat to peace and security in the region and in the world.

In that resolution 34/89, the Secretary-General was asked to prepare a study, with the assistance of qualified experts, on Israeli nuclear armament. The Secretary-General appointed a group of experts, but before the report was completed Israel proved that it did not deserve to be a member of this international Organization by defying all its principles and bombing the Iraqi nuclear research reactor which was under IAEA controls and subject to verification in accordance with IAEA procedures. The Security Council considered this aggression, and decided to condemn Israel for committing this crime - one of its many crimes against the region. Israel, which itself has a nuclear reactor, which has developed nuclear weapons and conducted nuclear tests in other countries, and has chosen the path of terrorism and aggression by use of force to defend its existence and survival, was unable to tolerate this peaceful nuclear venture, and destroyed the Iraqi research reactor for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy while it was still being built. The Security Council condemned the Israeli aggression, and clearly noted that Israel had refused to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, whereas Iraq had been a party to the Treaty since 1970. The countries of the Middle East, which had welcomed the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region, are aware that the establishment of such a zone is pointless as long as Israel continues to reject the will of the international community and to

(Mr. Faki, Saudi Arabia)

maintain that wrong is right and make terrorism its rule of conduct. This is a double-edged weapon. This attitude is proof of Israel's aggressive intentions and its familiar policy of violating the United Nations Charter and international law and custom in pressing ahead with its own aims. The pursuit of that course is an established policy to achieve aims which are contrary to all the practices that this Organization is committed to.

(Mr. Faki, Saudi Arabia)

In this context Israel, which has pursued the path of aggression and international terrorism in its relations with other States, has proved how dangerous that course is, and what a serious threat it is to world peace and security. The international community must shoulder its responsibilities to deter Israel from perpetrating its crimes, and must apply against Israel the sanctions provided for in the Charter. The countries that are giving military and financial support and supplying arms to Israel must become aware of the danger posed by such assistance. The countries of the Middle East are determined to protect themselves from Israeli terrorism. Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons will further increase the arms race and the danger to peace in the region and throughout the world, as long as it continues to disregard United Nations resolutions.

If the countries supporting Israel refuse to try and deter it by the means available to them, and as long as the United Nations is paralysed in its efforts to apply the sanctions provided for in the Charter, the international community must expect the other States in the region to become increasingly aware of the danger confronting them and to take the necessary measures to protect themselves, and to denounce Israel's position and its responsibility for the acceleration of the arms race and the increasing tension in the area. All this increases the danger of an armed conflagration erupting as a result of Israel's terrorist activities. We therefore urge those who are supplying Israel with arms and funds to realize that they are encouraging criminal behaviour in one of the most sensitive regions in terms of world peace. My delegation will support any decision of this Committee directed to deterring Israel's aggressive militarism.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the decision taken by the Committee, this afternoon we shall take up the question of the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.