



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 18TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BOATEN (Ghana)

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Mr. NEIL (Jamaica): Mr. Chairman, allow me at the outset, on behalf of the Jamaican delegation, to extend to you our warmest congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are assured by your outstanding qualities as a diplomat and your experience and profound understanding of international affairs that the work of this Committee will be conducted smoothly and efficiently. Our congratulations are also extended to the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Hollai of Hungary and Ambassador Pastinen of Finland, and to our Rapporteur, Mr. Correa of Mexico.

In dealing with the important questions relating to disarmament, the international community faces the profoundly disturbing reality of continued and seemingly irreversible escalation in the arms race. Year after year, despite the concerns and exhortations expressed in this Committee and elsewhere, the accumulation of weapons reaches new and more frightening dimensions. Military expenditures have increased to an estimated \$350 billion annually and new sophisticated weapons of mass destruction are being added to already over-stocked arsenals of destruction. In the current situation, it is difficult to avoid a feeling of despair and frustration as the growth of this destructive potential appears to have become a permanent feature of international life with all its dangerous and disturbing implications.

(Mr. Neil, Jamaica)

The wasteful expenditure on instruments of death and destruction is all the more deplorable in view of the pressing and widespread problems of hunger, disease, malnutrition, inadequate shelter, and poverty which exist today, particularly in the developing countries. It is a sad commentary on the state of our world that vast resources are being diverted from possible economic and social pursuits to an unproductive and wasteful arms race. Such a situation frustrates the purposes and objectives of both the Disarmament Decade and the Second United Nations Development Decade which envisaged a transfer of substantial resources from the developed to the developing countries through disarmament. Many of the developmental requirements of developing countries would be met if a substantial portion of the resources freed by disarmament measures taken by the main military Powers could be used in development assistance, thus contributing to bridging the gap between developed and developing countries and promoting the objectives of the new international economic order.

However, it would appear that the main military Powers are not inclined to consider the pressing priorities of social and economic needs and instead continue to invest resources in arms competition which undermines the efforts of the United Nations to promote peace and security through disarmament.

In the present circumstances the prospects of achieving meaningful progress towards the goal of general and complete disarmament are gloomy. My Delegation considers it necessary to express its dissatisfaction and impatience with the continued failure of the international community to face up to its responsibilities in dealing with the vital question of disarmament. It is true that the record of the United Nations is not completely devoid of new initiatives. Several notable agreements in the field of arms control and disarmament have been concluded, in particular the partial Test Ban Treaty, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Seabed Treaty and the Convention on Biological Weapons. But it is also true that the need of the United Nations community has been lamentably slow and halting, while the problem itself continues to increase with new developments in the technology of nuclear

(Mr. Neil, Jamaica)

and other weapons. It is essential to speed up negotiations since the pace of activity in disarmament should be maintained in the light of the disarmament Treaty, a decade which has seen a considerable increase in the steady and unchecked increase in the accumulation of arms. The immediate prospects for the rest of the decade do not appear to be any better. The report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) on its 1977 session, is not encouraging. What we have is a record of discussions and a exchange of views, which no doubt helped in giving some further clarification on positions taken by delegations, but otherwise the CCD had nothing to report. No agreement has been reached on the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty or a convention on the banning of chemical weapons, and the prospects of early agreement appear to be remote. My delegation recognizes the complexities involved, especially in relation to technical aspects of verification procedures, bearing in mind that any agreement reached should be effective. However, the technical arguments should not be used to obscure the main issue and create unnecessary delay. The conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty is urgent and is a necessary and indispensable first step in the process of nuclear disarmament. The principal difficulty in concluding such an agreement is the question of verification of compliance, and in this connexion my delegation endorses the view that recent developments in seismic methods and techniques make it possible to verify compliance and detect violations of the prohibition. We hope that the results of the adopted Treaty will lead to a solution to this issue.

With reference to the other two international instruments, namely the participation of all nuclear-weapon States and the question of peaceful nuclear explosions, there are indications which justify confidence that these will not be insurmountable obstacles to the conclusion of an agreement. What is required now, is the exercise of political will on the part of the major Powers to work towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament. The absence of such will will only serve to undermine the credibility of that body as an effective instrument for the promotion of worldwide disarmament.

(Mr. Neil, Jamaica)

What might also be required and should be considered at the special session devoted to disarmament, is a careful review of the procedures and methods of work of the CCD, with a view to improving its capacity for taking bolder initiatives, ensuring the effective participation and involvement of States on an equal basis in the process of negotiation, and organizing its work in a more businesslike manner. It appears that at present there is too great a dependence on the submission of identical texts and on the results of negotiations undertaken outside the CCD itself.

In reviewing the items dealing with nuclear weapons, my delegation sees only a few hopeful signs. Over the past year there was a welcome further addition to the signatories of Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The success achieved so far by the Latin American States in the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone will no doubt inspire efforts to establish similar zones elsewhere in the non-nuclear world and alleviate fears of the nuclear threat.

There is, however, one disturbing and ominous development on the African continent. In August of this year, the international community was alerted attention was drawn to preparations undertaken by the racist régime of South Africa to test a nuclear bomb. Timely action was taken which averted the danger, but the apartheid régime has not yet renounced its nuclear ambitions, and will no doubt be continuing its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. In the light of the racist Pretoria régime's record of intimidation and aggression against African States, its persistent violation of the Charter and contempt for international law, the grave danger that that régime poses to international peace and security, acquires a new dimension. My delegation associates itself fully with the call for an immediate termination of the transfer of nuclear technology and materials to South Africa. Such action is imperative, particularly at this time when the situation in southern Africa is so explosive.

(Mr. Neil, Jamaica)

I turn now to the forthcoming special session devoted to disarmament in which such high hopes have been placed. My delegation is among those which have a deep interest in the successful outcome of the session. We are pleased to see from the report of the Preparatory Committee that satisfactory progress has been made in its important tasks. For the session to be a success, States should be prepared to commit themselves to exploring new approaches and to a comprehensive plan of action achieve the goal of general and complete disarmament. A concerted multilateral effort at the special session will thus pave the way for further intensive negotiations at a world disarmament conference which should be convened in the near future.

Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): Mr. Chairman, as I am speaking for the first time, I should like to congratulate you on your unanimous election, which augurs well for the work of our Committee. I assure you of the full co-operation of my delegation, which welcomes your capable leadership. Our congratulations go also to the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur.

For the past two decades disarmament negotiations have been conducted mainly in the form of a dialogue between the two super-Powers. The agreements concluded so far have established ceilings on the production of nuclear armaments, without imposing any constraints on the improvement of the quality of nuclear weapons and thus, within the quantitative confines established, the technological arms race is allowed to continue unabated.

The SALT Agreements, which imposed quantitative constraints in the form of numerical ceilings, gave rise to a qualitative revolution in weapons performance. Developments in advance guidance, propulsion systems, nuclear and non-nuclear warheads and command and control capabilities are now being exploited by the two super-Powers in the design of new classes of shorter-range missile systems for use on the battlefield as well as long-range missiles capable of strategic strikes. When compared with the weapons they are beginning to replace, these new systems offer greater accuracy, longer ranges, smaller size and greater destructiveness, and they are more easily launched and transported. These qualities make it highly likely that the super-Powers will move quickly to deploy this new generation of weapons, especially when these systems appear to open up a variety of new military options.

The constant advances in technology pose a serious problem. By injecting new uncertainties into projections of the future shape and effectiveness of military forces, technological developments will make both sides hesitate to limit new but untested options and reluctant to enter into long-term arrangements whose military implications could change over time. New technologies are bound to frustrate arms control arrangements; no meaningful disarmament can be achieved unless qualitative restrictions are also imposed on the arms race between the two super-Powers. The problem must be tackled, then, at its source. The super-Powers have so far been reluctant to place constraints on an attractive new technology until they understand its operational potential and have actually demonstrated a capacity to exploit it. Once its operation potential is tested



(Mr. Bishara, Kuwait)

and proved, it becomes a permanent part of their military arsenals. Hence, there is no alternative to imposing mutual constraints on any further advances in military technology, which unless nipped in its bud will develop a life of its own and become part of a system that feeds upon itself. Because technological developments have made arms control less manageable, it is essential to check any further advances in military technology.

World public opinion is becoming impatient with arms control as such. It evaluates the agreements concluded so far in terms of virtual disarmament - that is, the general and complete abolition of all arms. It feels extremely disappointed about the gap between the actual achievements of arms control negotiations and their far-reaching ideals. Undoubtedly, arms control has never succeeded in solving the arms problem in a radical and definitive way. Arms control represents an extremely superficial strategy, which hardly gets at the roots of the problem.

People all over the world rightly feel that arms control constitutes a wrong approach, since it aims at curing some of the symptoms, instead of treating the causes. The attempt to cure symptoms does not make sense. In many cases, participation in time-consuming arms control negotiations is merely a palliative, since the eventual signing of arms control agreements does not encroach in any way upon the continuing gigantic armaments effort. Often arms control has practically no connexion with disarmament, as most arms agreements - for instance, the Vladivostock Agreement of December 1974 - are nothing less than agreements to arm, at least to a certain level. The real alternative should be disarmament in a true and meaningful sense, which implies substantial reduction in arms and finally complete and general disarmament.

The harsh fact is that no one has contrived a persuasive approach to eliminate nuclear weapons capabilities from the planet. The partial test-ban Treaty is at best a measure to protect the environment from nuclear contamination and radioactive waste. The two super-Powers are still preoccupied with managing an inventory of horrors which will not go away. So long as nuclear weapons continue to exist, there is always a chance that Governments may in time of crisis, or just as a last resort, choose to use them. Détente is seen as a mechanism to create the habit of restraint on the part of nuclear Powers and a prudent basis

(Mr. Bishara, Kuwait)

for trust among them. Détente must be seen as a transitional phase aimed at the harmonization of the behaviour of Governments potentially in conflict, and a prelude to achieving those reductions in strategic capabilities and related measures which will move the world toward the ultimate goal of abolishing nuclear weapons.

There seems to be a close link between military capabilities and military intentions. The military capabilities of a State are more or less observable, while a nation's intentions tend to elude objective assessment. Capabilities are crucial, but the central point is that constraints on forces may serve less as physical impediments to nuclear war than as testimony to both sides' common purpose not to wage one.

In this context one must recognize the limited potential of quantitative restraints which have consumed the diplomatic energies of the two super-Powers during the last decade. All categories of weapons are relevant to the strategic balance and susceptible to meaningful limitations. Without accompanying controls on technological development, quantitative ceilings and reductions may be offset by qualitative changes in the weapons themselves.

(Mr. Bishara, Kuwait)

There is a new area which is rendered steadily more dangerous owing to rapid advances in technology; that is the area of outer space.

Disarmament agreements in outer space should not be treated as the exclusive preserve of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space but should be discussed as a sub-item of our spectrum of subjects on disarmament. Nobody could deny that the gravest threats to stability on earth may emerge from developments in space. It is therefore incumbent upon us to subject all activities in outer space to the principle of maximum disclosure. If relations between the major space Powers make it possible, a simpler system of pre-launch inspection of all space objects may be preferable and more trustworthy.

My delegation appreciates the businesslike manner in which the Preparatory Committee on the disarmament session has performed its task. In this respect I should like to pay a tribute to Ambassador Ortiz de Rozas for the able manner in which he has guided its proceedings. My delegation shares the sentiment that the special session should not devote too much time to an analysis of theoretical questions. It must be forward-looking and concentrate on future action.

The special session should be particularly concerned with strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Kuwait has always taken the view that the General Assembly of the United Nations should be the main disarmament forum and the main framework for disarmament negotiations. An organic link should be established between the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) and the United Nations, so that the former would become a subordinate body of the latter and fully answerable to it. The membership of the CCD should be revised to ensure equal status for all its members. Disarmament negotiations should cease to be a dialogue between the two super-Powers. Draft treaties on disarmament submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations should be subjected to the normal procedures applicable generally under the law of treaties. The United Nations should not play a merely passive role, but should reassert its prerogatives as the major disarmament forum whose authority should be clearly and unequivocally recognized by the major military Powers and the CCD.

(Mr. Bishara, Kuwait)

My delegation whole-heartedly supports the proposal for the improvement of the existing United Nations facilities for the collection, compilation and dissemination of information on disarmament issues, for an increased use of in-depth studies of the arms race, disarmament and related matters, and for the strengthening of the resources of the United Nations Secretariat.

There is a large number of issues which should be discussed in depth at the special session.

The working papers being prepared by the Secretariat will undoubtedly be of immense help in the Assembly's deliberations at the special session. A variety of disarmament and related proposals have been made in the past by members of the non-aligned group, but they have been scoffed at and ignored by the major Powers. We look forward to a revival of those proposals at the special session, when we hope that the non-aligned group will bring the full weight of its moral pressure to bear in vital disarmament issues. The non-aligned countries have found it difficult to be effective within the CCD, in spite of their enlightened objectives and painstaking efforts. At the special session the rightful role of the non-aligned group as the representative of those countries which have done the least to contribute to the causes of war and have the most to suffer from it must be recognized. Above all, a new style should be developed at the special session in order to avoid a repetition of the disarmament debates held annually in the Assembly's First Committee.

High priority should be given to a comprehensive test ban, which is rightly regarded as the key to nuclear arms control. As in the case of the partial test ban Treaty and the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty should not be made conditional on its acceptance by all the nuclear-weapon States.

The session should devote itself to crucial and central issues, many of which have been pending for years. Due attention should be given to questions that concern non-nuclear-weapon States. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace are of vital importance to States which do not possess nuclear weapons.

At the special session the structure and functioning of existing negotiating machinery on disarmament should also be examined since they are largely responsible for the lack of progress during the past two decades.

(Mr. Bishara, Kuwait)

The arms race has created a serious situation not only for the cause of peace but also for the cause of economic and social development. The waste it implies is attested to in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, in which he states:

"For several years annual world military expenditure has been about \$300 billion. By contrast the World Health Organization has spent about \$83 million over 10 years to eradicate smallpox in the world - a sum insufficient to buy one modern supersonic bomber ... In a world where scientific and technological capability is one of the keys to the future, 25 per cent of the world's scientific manpower and 40 per cent of all research and development spending is engaged for military purposes."

(A/32/1, pp. 12 and 13)

There seems to be an inextricable link between development and disarmament. Disarmament and development are both tasks of the utmost urgency which have to be pursued simultaneously and vigorously. Substantial progress in the field of disarmament would promote the prospects of a better world for all and thus constitute a very important element in the search for a more just and equitable international economic order. The continued diversion of the world's scarce material and human resources to military ends is seriously threatening the attainment of the goals of development. The big Powers should realize that what the world needs is not weapons but better standards of living.

The world has watched and waited for too long in frustration without being able to see any truly meaningful progress towards genuine disarmament. Expectations have long remained unfulfilled and goals unattained. The special session, which in itself is a sign of disillusionment with existing disarmament machinery and accomplishments, is seen as a new source of hope which may light the path for a better future. It has been assiduously and scientifically prepared for; all indications point to a successful outcome for it. However, now as before the key is in the hands of the major military Powers. If they fail to live up to world expectations, the only outcome will be that the world will be plunged into gloom and disillusionment.

Mr. DE LAIGLESIA (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, as this is the first time that I have spoken in the First Committee, may I congratulate you sincerely on your election to the Chair for the thirty-second session of the General Assembly. May I likewise extend my congratulations to the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Hollai of Hungary and Ambassador Pastinen of Finland, as well as to the Rapporteur, Mr. Correa of Mexico.

I do not believe that it is worth while insisting once again on the importance of disarmament and matters related to it for the achievement of peace and well-being for mankind. Nevertheless, although recently some major results have been achieved which make it possible to entertain certain hopes in this field, undeniably the road before us is long and presents many Obstacles.

We are all agreed on the need to halt the arms race; nevertheless, despite that, new and increasingly deadly weapons are constantly being produced. The Spanish delegation believes that it is that aspect of disarmament to which the utmost attention must be paid, because unless positive results are achieved in this field, we shall be departing from our intention one day to achieve general and complete disarmament.

We have had an opportunity to note the efforts which are being made in the field of strategic arms limitation, and we hope that in the near future those negotiations will result in specific agreements. We also appreciate everything that is being done in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) to draft a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, which we also hope will be submitted to the international community in a form satisfactory to the majority of States members. In that respect, I should like to emphasize the interest of the international community in the results of the negotiations under way between the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union on the suspension of nuclear tests for a specific period.

With regard to chemical weapons, although this question apparently raises problems which it has not been possible to solve yet, we also hope that the CCD will be able to draft a satisfactory treaty on this subject in the near future.

(Mr. de Laiglesia, Spain)

My delegation considers of the utmost interest the question of the limitation of certain conventional weapons, including weapons which may be viewed as excessively cruel or having indiscriminate effect. We support the proposal to convene the conference referred to in resolution 22 (IV) of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, and my delegation offers its co-operation to the preparatory committee to be established for that purpose.

At present, the question of disarmament is going through a period which may be decisive for its future. Positive opportunities are offered by the special session of the General Assembly to be held in May 1978. In this regard it is fitting to recall the worth-while work which is being done by the Preparatory Committee under the wise chairmanship of Ambassador Ortíz de Rozas. The Spanish delegation is a member of that Committee and is striving to co-operate intensively in its work.

With reference to the agenda for that special session of the General Assembly, the Spanish delegation considers that the declaration of principles to be produced by the Assembly should be a very solemn declaration so that in the future it may be the basic document that will serve as a frame of reference throughout all the negotiations to bring about progress in this field. It would be desirable to include in that document an expression of the firm will of all countries which adopt the declaration to prevent the continuation of the arms race and of their determination to take every necessary step to ensure that a large part of military expenditure will be progressively transferred to sectors which contribute to the economic and social development of all members of the international community. We believe that if that document is suitably worded it may have a considerable impact on the future development of disarmament negotiations.

We believe that the programme of action should be concerned with the adoption of effective measures to improve systems of negotiation and in due course to establish means within the framework of the United Nations which will help to create an atmosphere favourable to progress in the disarmament field.

(Mr. de Laiglesia, Spain)

To that end, we believe that it would be desirable to revive the Disarmament Commission, which should meet regularly and in close contact with existing bodies to stimulate efforts for the achievement of general and complete disarmament.

In the opinion of my Government, the process leading to general and complete disarmament is dynamic and in that process the convening of a world disarmament conference is not to be considered an isolated event but rather part of that process, in which another step of special importance is the holding of the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. My delegation is participating enthusiastically in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, and we welcome the report prepared by that Committee and so brilliantly introduced a few days ago in this Committee by its Chairman, Ambassador Hoveyda of Iran, whom I now have the honour to congratulate.



(Mr. de Laiglesia, Spain)

The delegation of Spain wishes to emphasize the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations, since disarmament affects not merely a certain group of countries, but all mankind, because in the present circumstances it is impossible to foresee how far the escalation of any conflict may go. Indeed, we must recognize that so far this Organization has confined itself to providing the framework within which some negotiations have taken place. It is therefore of fundamental importance that it be given an active role which it at present lacks.

Accordingly, while recognizing the effectiveness of the work being done by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, we are compelled to conclude that both its method of work and its composition are unsatisfactory for a major part of the international community, since its work is carried out largely without the participation of most countries, whose opportunities of intervening are almost non-existent.

There have been successive enlargements of its composition to remedy its unrepresentative nature, which nevertheless remains largely unaltered. Its rules of procedure, which place guidance of the work in the hands of the two co-Chairmen, arouse a feeling of frustration which should be avoided by amending the rules of procedure so that the vast majority of States Members will no longer be mere spectators of the negotiations carried out within the framework of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. At present, all they can do with the results of the Conference is to secure a few cosmetic changes, to quote an ironical comment.

We believe that this problem should be discussed at the special session to be held next May, and it appears to fit into the agenda, since it covers establishment of the machinery needed to obtain positive results in the field of disarmament.

One aspect which must be emphasized because of its importance in discussing disarmament items is that of nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, the results obtained so far do not meet the hopes all States entertained some years ago. Both horizontal and vertical proliferation have continued, and the fact is that systems used to halt them have proved ineffective. This fact has been confirmed at several international gatherings whose results have been far from encouraging. Nevertheless, as regards the denuclearization of certain zones, the delegation of Spain considers that the path opened up by the Treaty of Tlatelolco is very worthwhile. In addition to hoping that it will be perfected in the near future, we hope that in other areas arrangements will be made, because, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain said in his statement in the general debate, referring to denuclearized zones,

(Mr. de Laiglesia, Spain)

"In this concept there is the chance of a gradual regional approach to general and complete disarmament and a real possibility of the concept's spreading through clearly defined regional zones." (A/32/PV.6, p. 68-70)

Faced with modern science's challenge to our civilization arising from the possibility of applying new discoveries to the manufacture of weapons capable of mass destruction, the Spanish delegation feels that our Organization cannot remain indifferent. Possibly it is premature to try to legislate on this subject, since we still do not know the scope of future scientific discoveries likely to be used for the manufacture of weapons of that kind, but our Organization cannot remain indifferent to this possibility, and should therefore propose measures intended to prevent the development of these techniques.

A reduction in military expenditures could also have a decisive influence upon disarmament. The known figures to which several speakers have referred in this debate for the sums devoted to the acquisition and manufacture of armaments are really staggering, and any measure to reduce them would undoubtedly have a very important effect upon the economic and social development of a large number of the countries of the international community.

My delegation supports the proposal by the Nordic countries that the United Nations should prepare a study centred on the basic conditions necessary for a successful redistribution of resources released as a result of disarmament measures.

Although disarmament represents a long-felt hope of mankind, and attempts to achieve it were made long before the San Francisco Charter was signed, it is clear that we now have the means to come progressively closer to that objective. Nevertheless, it lies in our own hands to achieve it, and to ensure that our efforts to prevent new and more bloodthirsty wars are successful. We remain convinced that the security of countries must not be based upon how many weapons they possess.

(Mr. de Laiglesia, Spain)

International security must be based on general and complete disarmament under effective international control rather than on the existence of powerful arsenals with which the major Powers, as well as the smaller countries of the international community, seek even more vigorously to acquire. Security and disarmament are, in our opinion, inseparable concepts; and the further we advance along the road to disarmament, the closer we shall be to achieving international peace and security, which is the primary objective of the United Nations Charter.

Mr. DOMOKOS (Hungary): In my statement today I wish to address myself first to the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons.

It is a contradiction of our age that the advance made in the technical and technological conditions for the production of material goods has quite a direct effect on the growth of the capacity to produce weapons and improve their quality. This holds true especially for the chemical industry which has shown a steady and rapid development, particularly in past decades. Therefore, the prohibition of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons has become a most pressing issue of disarmament talks, despite the fact that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 banning the military use of these types of weapons, has been acceded to by more than 100 countries, including nearly all States with a chemical warfare capability. Yet, chemical weapons are still being produced, with more and more chemical agents of high destructive power being added to the military arsenals of States. Consequently, chemical weapons present growing dangers of the poisoning of the human environment and the international atmosphere alike.

Keeping in mind the growing number of United Nations resolutions on the subject, the Committee on Disarmament, at its 1977 session, continued the consideration of this question, speeded up discussions on the draft treaties and working documents submitted to it earlier and during this year's session, and tried to move closer to the solution of the political, legal and technical aspects of this complex issue.

As in previous years, the discussions focused on two main questions, namely the scope of prohibition and the problem of verification.

(Mr. Domokos, Hungary)

Obviously, as a result of the work of the Committee on Disarmament, and of the parallel rounds of Soviet-American negotiations, it was possible to reach consensus on some technical and a few substantive matters.

The position of principle held by the socialist countries from the outset, and reflected also in their draft treaty submitted to the Committee on Disarmament in 1972, is to achieve a comprehensive ban. In order to increase the possibility of an agreement, the socialist countries and other members of the Committee have shown a willingness to ban, as a first step, the lethal means of warfare as an integral part of the process leading to a comprehensive prohibition. It is a positive sign that nearly all member States now seem to agree on the broadest possible ban on the development, manufacture, stockpiling and transfer of all these inhumane means of warfare.

A new step by the Soviet side to end the deadlock on the talks and to achieve progress constitutes a favourable development in the matter of verification. The possibility of additional international procedures being applied in the destruction of stockpiles holds out the prospect of advance on this much debated problem as well. The important development of technology which opens up new channels for the use of national means of verification raises hopes of an early solution being found to this pending issue.

The solution of this problem for a long time was hindered by the lack of political will on the part of some countries and then by the multitude and the extreme complexity of the technical matters involved. The ways and means of ensuring the safe destruction of existing stockpiles, meeting criteria for environmental protection, regulating conversion to peaceful purposes, controlling the activities of numerous and dispersed production units, preventing future production for military purposes, and elaborating procedures relating to binary and multipurpose chemical agents, called for prolonged and patient work and periodic consultations with experts even in the period when the emphasis was mainly on considering the political aspects of the question. The elaboration of a reliable agreement will require work of truly professional competence which we hope will be forthcoming in the near future. We draw a sense of optimism also from the statements made by representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States both in the Committee on Disarmament and here at the current General Assembly

(Mr. Domokos, Hungary)

session and from their ongoing negotiations. We believe it will be useful for the General Assembly at its present session to adopt a resolution designed to speed up talks, and we hope that such a resolution - which would be the tenth jubilee resolution to be adopted since the twenty-third session of the General Assembly - would give a final impetus to the conclusion of the debate on this subject.

The other issue I wish to deal with concerns agenda item 46, the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. The Committee on Disarmament discussed this question in its plenary meetings and in informal meetings held with the participation of experts. By making for further substantive advance, the revised version of the Soviet draft treaty responded to a number of comments made at previous official and informal meetings. The Soviet draft treaty on the comprehensive prohibition of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons does not exclude the possibility of establishing separate treaties covering certain specified types of weapons of mass destruction.

We feel it urgently necessary to ban the development and manufacture of any potential new types of weapons of mass destruction within the framework of a comprehensive agreement creating firm obligations. For lack of such an agreement, the danger would persist of new weapons of mass destruction appearing, with a continued threat of war and wastage of mankind's resources.

The most conclusive evidence of the pressing need for a settlement is provided by the horrible plans for the deployment of the neutron bomb. It is not by chance that the appearance of this inhuman and cruel concept has aroused vigorous indignation in the widest segments of progressive mankind. Although it has not yet entered the arsenals of the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, that weapon is already poisoning the international atmosphere, and represents a disturbing element in disarmament talks.

The neutron bomb increases the danger of nuclear war. A nuclear escalation would start from a lower threshold, and there is no guarantee that the eventual use of that weapon will not entail an all-out nuclear counterstrike.

(Mr. Domokos, Hungary)

The history of armaments gives clear proof that it is mere wishful thinking to suppose that, at the present levels of technical development and technological capabilities, any new weapon or new system of weapons is able to change the balance of forces in a lasting way. Nor, most certainly, would the neutron bomb remain the monopoly of one country or group of countries. Thus what purpose is served by wasting energy on the neutron bomb and the rest of the new weapons of mass destruction, other than to permit certain circles to disrupt the positive processes of international politics and create conditions favourable to the continuation of the arms race instead of to disarmament efforts? We condemn the neutron bomb and the drive for production of new weapons of mass destruction, and we believe that the General Assembly, by reaffirming its previous resolutions on the subject, should again request the CCD to work out urgently a comprehensive international agreement prohibiting the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

May I finally refer briefly to the activity of the Committee on Disarmament in 1977. In the assessment of my delegation, the Committee has accomplished useful work. Its members submitted several draft treaties and working papers and continued the examination of the technical aspects of disarmament matters with the participation of experts. The statements made and the lively debates held in the Committee helped towards the maturing of political will in the questions discussed and created the possibility of giving final shape to the agreements within a short period of time. The Committee had a favourable influence on the parallel bilateral and trilateral talks on disarmament, making a valuable contribution to progress in those forums. Several delegations made known their positions explicitly in order to have them taken into account in the bilateral and trilateral talks. It may be added, however, that those rounds of negotiations have not displaced the discussions conducted in the Committee on Disarmament, since in the forthcoming period it will be the Committee's task to prepare new agreements on disarmament.

(Mr. Domokos, Hungary)

As we can see, every disarmament forum has a special task that cannot be fulfilled any better by other forums. Consequently, we are convinced that the Committee on Disarmament has had and will have its own sphere of valuable activity that no other body can perform with any higher degree of efficiency. The experience accumulated in the Committee on Disarmament in the field of negotiations and of professional work may continue to offer a guarantee that the Committee will be able to work out, rapidly and with competence, international agreements on disarmament issues that are ripe for solution.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): I would like to begin, Sir, by saying that my delegation is truly gratified at what it considers to be a great achievement on the part of the Assembly to have appointed you to the chairmanship of this Committee. Your broad experience in international questions and your well-known competence in matters like those which appear on our agenda are a guarantee that you will be able to conduct our proceedings successfully. For similar reasons we were genuinely pleased to see Ambassadors Hollai and Pastinen appointed as Vice-Chairmen. Finally, the fact that Francisco Correa is a member of the Mexican delegation should not, it seems to me, prevent us from speaking on the matter - perhaps, on the contrary, it should permit us to do so, as we have a greater knowledge of the situation. So we would like to express our conviction that he will succeed in the office of Rapporteur to which he has been elected and will perform his tasks in an exemplary fashion.

As in previous years when I have spoken in the general debate on disarmament items, it is not my intention on this occasion to deal with the very many items on the agenda of the First Committee. We shall have occasion to express our views on many of them when we examine the relevant draft resolutions. For the time being, I shall confine myself to examining just two questions which, within the context of the present circumstances, seem to me particularly to warrant analysis and comment on the part of my delegation.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Firstly, I should like to recall that in resolution 31/68 of 10 December last year, the General Assembly called upon the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) to produce and adopt at its 1977 session:

"... a comprehensive programme dealing with all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) proclaiming the Disarmament Decade".

In view of the fact that towards the end of the session of the CCD, last August, it became clear that, for reasons which I shall not go into here, this body found it impossible to perform the task entrusted to it by the Assembly, the delegation of Mexico thought it appropriate to submit, as a modest contribution to the work which sooner or later would have to be done on the subject, a preliminary draft comprehensive programme of disarmament. About 80 per cent of that preliminary draft - the entire text of which can be consulted in the working document CCD/545 dated 23 August 1977 which is the last annex to the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament submitted at this session of the Assembly - is simply a reproduction of the provisions of the draft of the same title which was submitted in document A/8191 by the delegations of Ireland, Morocco, Pakistan, Sweden, Yugoslavia and Mexico to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session and which that body in its resolution 2661 C (XXV) of 7 December 1970 recommended should be taken into account by the CCD "in its further work and its negotiations". The remaining 20 per cent is made up almost entirely of an account of the most important of the relevant events which have occurred since the twenty-fifth session, namely the presentation of working documents by certain delegations, the adoption of certain resolutions by the General Assembly and the drafting and entry into force of new multilateral disarmament instruments.



(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

The most important change in the preliminary draft as compared with the previous document is undoubtedly that of the further breakdown of the disarmament measures specified in section III B into two subsections - the titles of which, as can be seen in the document, are "Measures for whose implementation the political will of the two principal nuclear-weapon States is essential" and "Measures for which the political will of the States directly concerned may be sufficient". This further breakdown I repeat is something we hope will serve to draw attention to the degree of responsibility incumbent, on the one hand, on the principal nuclear States represented in the CCD and which are usually known as the "super-Powers", and, on the other hand, on the non-nuclear Powers for the application of these measures. The tremendous disproportion between the quality, importance and effect of the measures to be found in the first of these two categories and the quality, importance and effects of those included in the second will appear obvious and incontestable to any objective observer.

To make this clear it will suffice if I mention that among the measures the application of which inevitably requires the assent of the two major nuclear Powers, there are the following: the total prohibition of all nuclear-weapons tests; the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the destruction of stockpiles of these weapons; the cessation of, or at least a moratorium on, the testing and deployment of new strategic nuclear-weapons systems; important qualitative limitations and substantial reductions in strategic systems of nuclear arms with a view to achieving the elimination of these systems; a ban on flight testing of delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons; the cessation of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes and the assignment of existing stocks to civilian uses; a freeze or limitation on the deployment of all types of nuclear weapons; a solution to the problem of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons or the threat to use such weapons; the total prohibition of all environmental modification techniques for military or any other hostile purposes; the prohibition of new types of weapons of mass destruction; further prohibitions of the use of the sea-bed and ocean floor and the subsoil thereof for military purposes; the setting of ceilings for the level and types of conventional armaments and for the numerical strength of armed forces; the elimination of foreign military bases and the creation of peace zones; the

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

limitation and regulation of the international transfer of conventional weapons; and the reduction of the military budgets of the States permanent members of the Security Council and of any other State with comparable military expenditure.

Compared with this broad and varied range of measures, those for which the political will of the States directly concerned may be sufficient, seem to be limited to the following: the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones; the convening, on the initiative of the States of the area, of regional conferences for the prevention and limitation of armaments; the conclusion of regional non-aggression, security and disarmament treaties on the initiative of the States concerned; and the reduction of military expenditures.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

The new classification introduced in the Mexican preliminary draft, apart from making crystal clear where we should seek the primary responsibility for the stand-still in disarmament, can serve as a stimulus to ensure that a response is finally given to the repeated exhortations of the Assembly with regard to those questions to which it has so often been recommended that we give the highest priority.

Before I conclude this brief examination of the subject, I think it would be appropriate to add that, although the preliminary draft comprehensive programme of disarmament submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament by the delegation of Mexico had to be, in terms of its substance, similar to the programme of action on disarmament which appears as the third of the main elements recommended by the Preparatory Committee for the principal document or documents of the special session devoted to disarmament, its structure and scope are almost certain to be different from that programme of action. Indeed the programme which the General Assembly asked the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to produce should be comprehensive and, therefore, general; the programme of action of the special session of the General Assembly, on the other hand - if we do not want it to be reduced to a mere repetition of more or less exhaustive lists of measures that have mostly been doomed to remain dead letters - should, it is agreed, be the result of a very careful selection, in that it should contain only those measures which, apart from their extreme urgency and particular importance, may be justifiably expected to be followed up either immediately or at an early date.

I turn now to the second of the two items which, as I said at the outset, are the subject of this statement - that is, the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be held next spring.

The representative of Argentina, Ambassador Carlos Ortiz de Rosas, who has conducted the proceedings of the Preparatory Committee for the special session with such masterly skill, has explained the contents of the Committee's report with a lucidity and conciseness that bear comparison with the lucidity and conciseness of that document itself. To avoid repetition and redundancy, my

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

statement will be limited - after I have expressed my gratitude to the United Nations Centre for Disarmament for the diligence and effectiveness with which it has prepared the working documents for which we have asked - to an explanation of Mexico's position on the final paragraph of the report, which bears the number 33 and to which we had the privilege of contributing a few ideas and suggestions.

The first of those ideas was that the results of the work of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament should, in order to avoid dispersion, be concentrated in a single final document containing a very small number of sections.

Even though, as we see in paragraph 33 of the report, it was agreed that "this question should be decided at a later stage" (A/32/41 and Corr.1, para. 33), the same paragraph indicates that "there was a trend in the Committee in favour of one final document" (ibid.). I would add that, if my memory serves me well, none of the speakers in the debate in the Committee expressed any contrary opinion.

We hope that the Preparatory Committee can definitely confirm at its next session the marked preference which has been manifested. Among other things, it would help to stress the need to avoid unnecessarily fragmenting the decisions of the Assembly and to prevent its work from becoming a mere repetition of the debate on disarmament held each year in this First Committee. Similarly, many convergent views have been expressed, both in writing and orally, to the effect that the session now being prepared would not be an appropriate forum for attempting to draft treaties; of course, that does not mean that, if circumstances permit, there should not be opened to signature on that occasion any instrument which, thanks to prior negotiations, was generally acceptable.

Furthermore, there would appear to be a consensus that the special session devoted to disarmament should serve two basic purposes. Those two purposes are, indeed, closely interlinked; one might even claim that they constitute a single whole. On the one hand, there should be a debate on disarmament in which all States Members of the United Nations would participate, a debate that should be broad and detailed and at the highest level of representation,

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as warranted by the importance of the subject. On the other hand, the final document of the session should lay the bases for what could be called a new disarmament strategy and should provide a decisive stimulus for negotiations on this vital problem which has been bogged down for so long now.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

The same final paragraph of that report enumerates the four sections which the Preparatory Committee agreed, in principle, should comprise the main elements of the final document of the special session: introduction or preamble; declaration on disarmament; programme of action; machinery for disarmament negotiations.

I shall try now to indicate what we believe should be the content of these four sections.

With regard to the introduction, we believe that it should be designed to give a synoptic view of the current situation of the arms race and disarmament. Among those aspects which should be particularly emphasized in this regard should be the incalculable destructive power of accumulated nuclear arsenals and the tremendous squandering of resources entailed by the arms race. Estimates covering the past five years for the two super-Powers above put the destructive power of nuclear arsenals at the equivalent of 1 million bombs of the type which destroyed Hiroshima in 1945, or about 20,000 megatons, which means the capacity to destroy 100,000 million human beings - 25 times the total population of the earth.

The introduction could also include, taking into account the very human tendency to attempt to overlook disagreeable things, some of the assessments made by experts who in 1967 prepared a report on the effects of the possible use of nuclear weapons. For example, if a 20-megaton bomb were exploded in the air, the heat released would be sufficiently intense to cause fires within an area of 30 kilometres from the point of the explosion and could endanger the life of people within a radius of almost 60 kilometres. Indeed, if such a bomb were to be exploded over Manhattan, it would probably cause the death of 6 million of the inhabitants of New York City, and if the bomb were not exploded in the air but at ground level, it would cause a crater measuring 75 to 90 metres in depth and 80 metres in diameter.

With regard to the wastage of resources, we would have to begin by quoting the astronomical figures which are spent for military purposes in the world, and which for the year 1976 were estimated at more than \$350 billion.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

To get a better idea of what is meant by this wastage, we could add some global data together with some comparisons. For example - and this is from a recent yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) - it could be stated that in the last 30 years following the Second World War the world has spent for military purposes more than \$6,000 billion, that is to say, more than \$6,000,000 million, a figure which is really inconceivable and which is roughly equal to the gross national product of the whole world in 1975 and more than five times the gross national product of all the developing countries.

It would also be appropriate to indicate some facts such as those contained in the last report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, where it is stated that

"... the World Health Organization has spent about \$83 million over 10 years to eradicate smallpox in the world - a sum insufficient to buy one modern supersonic bomber. That organization's programme for eradicating malaria at an estimated cost of \$450 million - half of what is spent daily for military purposes - is dragging for lack of funds." (A/32/1, pp. 12 and 13)

Similarly, it would be highly appropriate to emphasize the fact that "In a world where scientific and technological capability is one of the keys to the future, 25 per cent of the world's scientific manpower and 40 per cent of all research and development spending is engaged for military purposes." (Ibid., p. 13)

Apart from the material which I have just very briefly indicated, the purpose of which would be to underline the urgent need to remedy the existing serious situation by the adoption of genuine disarmament measures, it would seem appropriate for the introduction to explain, with the suitable conciseness, the content and purposes of the other three sections of the document.

With regard to the declaration on disarmament, which, as recommended by the Preparatory Committee, would constitute the second section, the delegation of Mexico submitted to the Preparatory Committee as a working paper

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

so that it could be considered for eventual inclusion in the declaration on disarmament, a series of 25 principles and norms which we believe to be fundamental. Since they are all to be found in the Committee's document A/AC.187/56, which can easily be consulted, I shall confine myself to reading out here by way of illustration a selection of these principles and norms, beginning with the first two which appear in our working paper:

"All the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the outcome of disarmament negotiations;

"General and complete disarmament under effective international control should be the final objective of mankind;

...

"A progressive reduction of nuclear weapons with a view to their total elimination should have the highest priority among such measures;

"The international transfer of conventional weapons should be limited and regulated;

"The creation of nuclear-free zones and zones of peace constitutes one of the most effective disarmament measures within the reach of those States which do not possess nuclear weapons;

"Nuclear-weapon States must fulfil faithfully the obligations which, in accordance with the definition approved by the General Assembly, they have with regard to the nuclear-free zones and the States which comprise such zones;

"There is a close relationship between disarmament and international peace and security, on the one hand, and disarmament and development on the other. Nevertheless, progress in one of those spheres must not be deemed subordinate to progress in the other or vice versa;

"It is necessary to have an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations for nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States;

"Conditions should be established for the utilization of nuclear energy for peaceful uses, for it would help to narrow the gap between the developed and developing countries;

"In accordance with its Charter and innumerable resolutions of the General Assembly, the United Nations has a primordial role and responsibility in the sphere of disarmament." (A/AC.187/56)

Those are some of the principles contained in the working paper which we submitted to the Preparatory Committee.



(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

With regard to the programme of action, as I have pointed out, we believe that it should not be too ambitious but, rather, based upon a strict process of selection and negotiation, and on that basis it would include only measures which are considered possible to carry out in the three years following the Special Session of the General Assembly. That would avoid the discouraging and profoundly disillusioning effect of failure to implement the innumerable proposals and promises which are common in the sphere of deliberations on disarmament. However, the realistic modesty of this approach should be offset - and we consider this to be an indispensable condition - by the inclusion in the programme of action itself of three provisions designed to ensure its implementation, and to ensure the preparation of a comprehensive disarmament programme, whose final goal would remain general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The first of these three provisions would be designed to bring about the inclusion in the programmes of the thirty-third, thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions of the General Assembly of an item permitting examination - in a form similar to that used during the years which followed the holding of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States in 1968 - of the extent to which the programme of action of the first Special Session of the General Assembly on disarmament was being carried out.

The second of the three proposals would embody a decision to convene a second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament in May-June 1981.

Finally, the third of the provisions to which I have referred would entrust, either to a subsidiary ad hoc body to be created by the General Assembly itself for this purpose, or - and this seems preferable to my delegation - to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, provided that the necessary changes were first made to permit the participation of France and China, the task of preparing a comprehensive disarmament programme which would be complete and exhaustive and would embrace in particular all the measures necessary, as I said a moment ago, to enable us to attain what should remain the final goal of the negotiations in this area, namely, general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

It does not seem to us to be too much to ask that this draft programme should be ready for transmittal to Governments in sufficient time to be considered by the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in 1981.

With respect to the section in the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament for which the Preparatory Committee has proposed the title of "Machinery for disarmament negotiations", I should like to recall that Mexico is an original member of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, since it was among the 18 States which became members of the Committee when it was created by the Assembly in 1961. It is precisely for that reason that the Government of my country has repeatedly demonstrated by its actions its wish to strengthen this body, most recently at the beginning of this year when it set up a Permanent Delegation to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva.

For the same reason, we have always been frank in our assessments and criticisms of the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD). We believe that it would be doing poor service to the Committee if we pretended to disregard the growing impatience provoked by the paucity of results of its work, which is undoubtedly due largely to its defects of organization and procedure. As the old aphorism goes, "Amicus Plato sed magis amica veritas". It is precisely because we are concerned about the fate of the CCD that we want it to be able to appear at the special session of the General Assembly in circumstances very different from those in which it finds itself at present.

Among the different measures which we have suggested so often for this purpose, both in Geneva and here, pride of place should go to the proposal to replace what we have called on several occasions the "extraordinary institution" of co-chairmanship with a system which is more in accordance with the representational practice of the United Nations.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Of course, this would have the merit of being a reflection of the fundamental principle of the sovereign equality of States. But what should be decisive for the modification we have been suggesting for years now is the unquestionable need for the other two nuclear Powers, France and the People's Republic of China, which have so far been absent from the CCD, to participate in its work. This appears obvious to us, as does the fact that as long as the system of co-chairmanship by the two super-Powers is continued there will not exist the slightest possibility of achieving that participation - and that is not surprising since, I am sure, the situation would be the same if France and China were the co-chairmen and the United States and the Soviet Union were outside the CCD.

My delegation has in the past suggested various options that might be resorted to in order to achieve the end we have in view. We believe the one to be chosen from among them should be that which has the most chance of being acceptable to all five nuclear Powers.

According to the reactions I have been able to cull this year, it seems to me that perhaps the procedure that would best answer this purpose would be the monthly rotation of the chairmanship among all the States that do not possess nuclear weapons and are members of CCD. Indeed, such a system would be closest to that applied in the case of the Security Council, a system which from the very beginning has won the consent of its permanent members, that is, the five States possessing nuclear weapons.

We are convinced that relinquishing the co-chairmanship in a gracious and co-operative way which I am sure is how the relinquishing of the posts by the two co-chairmen would be interpreted, would in no way prejudice either the prerogatives or the legitimate interests of the United States or the Soviet Union, least of all in a body like the CCD, in which decisions must necessarily be taken on the basis of consensus. Quite the contrary; the moral stature of the super-Powers would grow considerably in the eyes of all the Members of the United Nations, and even from the purely practical point of view their representatives would benefit in quite an important way because they would be freed from the many and arduous duties entailed in the post they have been occupying jointly, and they could use their time to much greater advantage by stepping up the pace of their bilateral negotiations, the slowness

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

of which is, we must confess, frequently discouraging.

I have now concluded consideration of the two questions on which I said at the outset I intended to comment. However, as a rider, I should like to add some incidental comments relating to two other items, one of which, the prohibition of nuclear arms tests, appears as a separate item on the Assembly's agenda, and the other of which, the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, is included in the omnibus item on complete and general disarmament.

We all know the anecdote of how the legendary hero of the reconquest of Spain known as El Cid Campeador helped his armies to win battles even after he was dead. It might perhaps similarly be said that the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament is, even before it has been held, helping to win some disarmament battles in the two important fields I have just mentioned. Of course, it is not the only factor that has exerted a favourable influence. It would be wrong, for example, to pass over in silence the series of solemn consistent statements made by the President of the United States, Mr. Carter, the latest of which we heard just four weeks ago at the eighteenth plenary meeting of this session. The first of those statements was made a year and a half ago in this same building, the Headquarters of the United Nations, on 13 May 1976, when Mr. Carter was only one of the Democratic Party's candidates for the highest office in the land. At that time he said:

"I do not think we have the right to ask others to renounce such nuclear weapons indefinitely unless we show significant progress towards the goal of the control, reduction and, ultimately, the elimination of nuclear arsenals." Nor can we justifiably pass over in silence the instances of a conciliatory spirit which it would appear is beginning to be shown by the other super-Power. As an example, we might mention what was said at the eighth plenary meeting of this Assembly, on 27 September, in the statement of Foreign Minister Mr. Andrei Gromyko. He said:

"Today we are taking yet one more step forward: under an agreement with the United States and Great Britain we have consented to suspend underground nuclear-weapon tests for a certain period of time even before the other nuclear Powers accede to the future treaty. I repeat, even before the other nuclear Powers accede to the future treaty." (A/32/PV.8, p. 73-75)

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Without minimizing the value of statements of this kind we would venture to suggest that one of the decisive factors explaining the progress it is generally thought has been made in connexion with the two matters I have mentioned - the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks - is the nearness of the special session of the General Assembly to be held in May and June of 1978.

We trust that the favourable conditions which we have seen emerging for various reasons will permit a successful outcome, before the beginning of the special session, of the efforts that have been undertaken, first, to conclude the work on a treaty that would prohibit all nuclear-weapons testing - and for this, no doubt, the next meeting of the CCD, which is to begin on 31 January 1978, would be the most appropriate forum - and also to arrive at a second agreement in the SALT series, whereby, in accordance with the most reliable rumours, it appears that reductions in nuclear armaments, albeit perhaps purely symbolic, will for the first time be made.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

We would like to express, furthermore, the belief that, as the same rumours seem to suggest, there already exists agreement on the part of the two super-Powers that such reductions would serve as a point of departure so that in a third agreement in the context of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, negotiations for which will begin in the near future, a start can finally be made in observing and heeding the repeated exhortations of the General Assembly to the super-Powers to bring about what in its resolutions it has been describing as important qualitative limitations and substantial reductions of strategic systems of nuclear weapons.

Finally, we would like to express the hope that the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will be favoured by the two Governments participating in the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks by provision of the information so often sought from them in resolutions of regular sessions with regard to the progress and results of the negotiations.

Mr. PAPOULIAS (Greece): Mr. Chairman, as I am addressing this Committee for the first time, I wish to associate myself with previous speakers in extending to you my delegation's most warm and sincere congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee during the thirty-second session of the General Assembly. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau and to the Rapporteur. It is a real privilege and pleasure for me to work under your guidance, Sir.

If it has become - as we feel - increasingly difficult to deal with the problem of disarmament, this is undoubtedly due to the fact that it is not any more possible to examine the problem in its own specificity and, so to say, on its own merits, as was often done in the past. Indeed, we have all come to realize that disarmament cannot be treated otherwise than in close connexion with the vast complex of interrelated issues which have direct influence on both the present-day international scene and the very future of mankind. Whether we speak of international peace and security, or of economic progress, or of the North-South dialogue and the establishment of the new economic order, the protection of environment, the conservation of the limited natural and other resources, and so on, we cannot imagine any solution to any of those problems without directly or indirectly implicating disarmament. Herein lies the difficulty I spoke of.

(Mr. Papoulias, Greece)

We should, nevertheless, welcome this kind of difficulty no matter how onerous it is. For it shows that we may, after all, be cognizant of the fact that progress in disarmament is an imperative prerequisite for progress in other sectors.

For our part, we tend to see in that light the question of the arms race, the reduction of armaments and, ultimately, disarmament. Consequently, we hold the view that these problems have to be tackled in an integrated way encompassing all main elements, starting with the need to rebuild confidence among the peoples of the world in a system of security as provided by the Charter. Renunciation of the threat or use of force in international relations, and détente and co-operation among nations, irrespective of their political or economic systems, are, beyond doubt, important factors in the search for peace and disarmament.

In this general context, may I be permitted to say that Greece has consistently shown deep commitment to the cause of disarmament. We have never failed to encourage and support any initiative tending to strengthen collective security and any effort aiming at the reduction of armaments and the achievement of disarmament. In the same spirit, we voted in favour of resolution 31/189, which provides for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, as we have also voted for the holding of a world disarmament conference. We consider it of utmost importance that a first universal gathering ever convened to deal with disarmament matters will become a reality. It would be a tragic failure if the international community did not make full use of this unique opportunity in order to come to grips with the problem by taking concrete action to lay the basis on which the whole structure of peace, security and prosperity will be founded.

My delegation, fully conscious of the important role which the special session has to play, actively followed - although in an observer status - the three sessions of the Preparatory Committee. We are glad we can join those who have expressed their appreciation for the success of the work of the Committee. The Preparatory Committee succeeded - through the able guidance of

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Ambassador Carlos Ortiz de Rozas, to whom we owe a great debt, in drawing up the draft agenda of the special session in a positive and well-balanced manner reflecting, to the greatest possible extent, the main trends observed in the field of disarmament. Moreover, in the framework of the Preparatory Committee, many proposals were submitted - formally or informally - with respect to declaration of disarmament, which is an essential part of the task entrusted to the special session. Further, the Preparatory Committee solved in a satisfactory way the relevant organizational matters, such as the time and place of the special session of the General Assembly.

Allow me to revert briefly to the points I have just mentioned in order to give some indications of our own thinking concerning them.

The first point is, one of the major problems of the special session, as we said, is the adoption of a declaration on disarmament. My delegation does not attach great importance to the formal aspects of the document to be adopted by the special session. What we are concerned with is that this document, or documents, should include fundamental principles and guidelines of general acceptance, binding upon all States. These principles and guidelines should direct the endeavours of the international community towards the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, which, in turn, will enhance collective security and will contribute to the economic development of peoples, especially of the developing countries.

Consequently, the Declaration should set forth the following:

First, respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and implementation of the resolutions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations. Secondly, disarmament and arms control in a system of security to be an integral part of a new international order based on national independence and international co-operation. Thirdly, urgent priority to be given to both nuclear and conventional disarmament; the transfer of conventional armaments should be examined in the light both of its effects on international security and of its repercussions on the economy of various countries. Fourthly, the savings derived from the reduction of military expenditures should be devoted to promoting economic and social development, particularly in the developing countries.



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It is hardly necessary to stress that the mere drafting of a declaration on disarmament containing principles will not be enough. The declaration should not be vested with a platonic value. It should become a reality. Its principles and basic rules should be implemented and gradually become norms of the international order, and in relations among nations.

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The second point was that a programme of action should be drawn up. That programme must be comprehensive, well-balanced and pragmatic and its goal should be to strengthen international peace and security by achieving general and complete disarmament under effective international control, as we said.

In my delegation's view, that programme should include a number of practical steps leading to the fulfilment of the purposes of the declaration. More specifically, the programme of action should first provide for the means of ensuring respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter on the part of all Members of this Organization and the implementation of its resolutions and, especially, those adopted by the organs entrusted with the safeguarding of international peace and security.

Secondly, measures must be adopted that halt both the nuclear and the conventional arms race. The problems of nuclear and conventional armaments should be examined simultaneously because they each constitute an equal threat to international peace and security.

Thirdly, an effective international control system must be devised to ensure that all States will carry out the obligations they have assumed under the declaration of disarmament and other pertinent international instruments.

Fourthly, particular attention must be given to the non-proliferation of nuclear armaments, and the first step to this end should be the ratification of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by the greatest possible number of States. It is, however, indispensable that adequate guarantees be given to the non-nuclear States as regards both their security and the need for them not to be put at a disadvantage in the transfer and use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, particularly energy. These factors are bound to play an important - indeed, vital - role for the economies of all countries, particularly the developing ones and those lacking energy resources.

Lastly, with regard to the role of the United Nations and to the institutional machinery on disarmament, I should like to add a few words. We certainly appreciate the contribution that has been made over the years by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD). But we feel, without going

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into details at this stage, that future arrangements should provide for an organic link between the CCD and the United Nations. Further, we support the view that the United Nations should take a more expanded and active role on the issue of disarmament. This view is consistent with our position, which I described at the beginning of my statement, namely, that the problem of disarmament must be dealt with in an integrated manner entailing widened United Nations participation.

In this general frame, we favour the convening of a world disarmament conference as provided for in the draft agenda of the special session.

While dealing with the future work to be accomplished at the special session devoted to disarmament, we feel that there are a number of important activities related to the control and/or reduction of armaments which should not be passed over in silence. In this respect I should like to join those delegations that welcomed the recent unilateral declarations committing the United States of America and the Soviet Union not to resume the nuclear-arms race and to make every effort to achieve new agreements. We follow also with great interest the negotiations that are taking place in Vienna on the mutual and balanced reduction of armed forces in central Europe (MBFR).

Finally, may I assure the Committee that Greece will continue to give her full and unqualified support, however limited our capabilities may be, for the success of the great endeavour that is disarmament.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.