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Chairman: Mr. de SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil)

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19 October 1984

ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 65 AND 142 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia): It gives me great pleasure to see you, Ambassador Souza e Silva, presiding over this Committee. You enjoy - and rightly so - great respect as a person dedicated to our common goal of a world at peace and free from the terror of self-destruction. Your wisdom and expertise have left a deep imprint on all international endeavours for disarmament, and your country, Brazil, is rightly proud of it. Needless to say, my delegation will be ready to co-operate with you in carrying out your significant and delicate tasks.

Our sincere appreciation goes to your predecessor, Ambassador Tom Vraalsen of Norway, who conducted the Committee's work during last year's session so systematically and efficiently and introduced valuable innovations.

Allow me also to congratulate our newly elected Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Henning Wegener of the Federal Republic of Germany and Ambassador Milos Vejvoda of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, whose experience will stand this Committee in good stead.

I wish also to congratulate our new Rapporteur, Mr. Ngare Kessely of Chad.

In the general debate in the plenary Assembly we had an opportunity to hear the views of Heads of State or Government, ministers for foreign affairs and heads of delegation on all crucial world problems. A voice of concern for peace and international security was heard from all regions, without exception. We feel it was the unanimous view that the acceleration of the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, posed the greatest threat to mankind's survival.

There was a general feeling that there was no progress in the field of disarmament, that yet another year had been lost for détente and that the world had become more insecure and more vulnerable. However, encouragement is to be found in resolute demands to reverse the dangerous trends and in the appeal of the people of the world to halt the arms race and launch disarmament. While there are different views as to the causes of the deteriorating international situation, the calls for improvement have become stronger. We see that as an obligation for all and it places a special responsibility on those who are making us lose the race for peace by running the race in arms.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

There was more stress on the need to negotiate and less stress on differences; let us keep it that way. Numerous proposals have been submitted and new initiatives launched; they deserve our attention and encourage us to seek agreements. Instead of confrontation, there is talk about negotiation. We would do well to encourage a greater degree of mutual tolerance and understanding.

Numerous meetings between statesmen at the beginning of this session strengthened our belief that mutual accusations cannot contribute to the solution of international problems and that that goal can be achieved only by building mutual understanding and trust and by developing universal détente.

The non-aligned countries, by commitment and tradition, are not passive onlookers from the sidelines; they have expressed their full readiness to contribute to the relaxation of tension. The other day, the ministers of non-aligned countries here in New York launched an exceptionally significant initiative for peace and negotiations. That was done against the background of the fact that, after considerable time, high-level talks had taken place between the super-Powers. It seems that a dialogue on a dialogue has finally begun.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

This at the same time implies that the two great Powers have assumed responsibility for entering into negotiations on the substantial issues of international relations and, above all, on disarmament.

We believe that this time they were not guided by tactical reasons or engaged in rhetoric. We would rather wish that they were guided by a positive and constructive commitment to substantial changes in opening global détente. While it is true that substantial progress can be achieved only after time and patience are invested in overcoming the existing differences and lack of mutual trust, it should be recalled that the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Paul Lusaka, in closing the general debate called upon us all to take small steps towards progress wherever and whenever possible.

There is no alternative to the resumption of dialogue and sustained negotiations. However, in their appeal for peace and negotiations the ministers of the non-aligned countries emphasized that dialogue must be sustained and lead to a general relaxation of tension, to universal détente covering all regions and addressing all issues, and be open to participation by all countries. In other words, dialogue is viable only if it leads to the democratization of international relations and on these bases to the solution of outstanding international problems.

By the same token, dialogue can be purposeful and enjoy undivided support if it corresponds to the genuine interests of the international community and enhances the role of the United Nations and the authority of the General Assembly and Security Council.

What we need is co-operation and not confrontation. Problems cannot be solved without a multilateral approach and joint efforts.

In this sense the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, wisely observed in his report that

"It is especially valuable in times of tension that a multilateral structure is available within which nations, despite their differences, can come together for dialogue and serious negotiations, whether in the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Geneva Conference on Disarmament."

(A/39/1, p. 7)

On this occasion it must be repeated that the security and prosperity of the world cannot be achieved through a balance of fear - namely, through nuclear deterrence between the two great Powers. Deterrence encourages the arms race.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

The arms race itself is the source of suspicion and anxiety for the opposing blocs and for the whole international community as well. It gives strength to the bloc division of the world, to bloc policies, to the use of force and to the policies of domination, hegemony and interference in internal affairs.

The world will become genuinely safe only when general and complete disarmament, one of the main tasks of the United Nations, is achieved.

In order to reach that goal, negotiations and the great potential of the existing negotiating mechanism on disarmament should be utilized. Whenever the need arises, new negotiations should be opened. Instruments for negotiations should be preserved and adapted to new situations. The malfunctioning of one channel of negotiations should not be allowed to contaminate others. If no political conditions are available to take a step forward in one negotiating forum, a developed system of negotiations should be continuously maintained in operation. A deadlock on one front can thus be compensated by progress on the other.

Let me make a brief retrospection. We feel that yet another year has passed and we are still another step away from the goals we have set for ourselves. Since the previous session of the General Assembly virtually nothing has happened that could be called progress in disarmament.

Negotiations on nuclear weapons have been interrupted; in the last five years the Geneva Conference on Disarmament did not submit a single draft document to the General Assembly; the United Nations Disarmament Commission has failed to adopt agreed recommendations; and for years the Vienna talks have remained barren.

At the same time, we are almost daily being told about the production or the planning of production of new systems of nuclear weapons, new and better aircraft and new, faster and bigger submarines.

The number of nuclear-weapon tests is increasing. Stocks of nuclear and chemical weapons are growing. The arms race is about to spread into outer space. Both nuclear-weapon-free and nuclear-weapon States are becoming more and more insecure.

Enormous resources are spent for military programmes. No serious and honest person doubts any longer the nuclear capability of the racist régime in Pretoria. The need to invest the monies now being wasted on armaments towards economic and social development, in particular of the developing countries, is of vital importance. The comprehensive programme of disarmament is more necessary than ever.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

Furthermore, the agreements reached on disarmament are being questioned.

The system provided by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) cannot be implemented or become universal unless all States parties consistently comply with all the obligations imposed by this Treaty. We have yet to see the implementation of the provision related to the halting of the nuclear-arms race and to nuclear disarmament, and of the provision related to free access by all to technology for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is high time that these provisions be implemented if the Treaty is to survive and to serve its purpose.

We in Yugoslavia attach great significance to the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament. Unfortunately, we must again note that the Conference continues to be drawn out in long and, we feel, futile discussions of a procedural nature. We consider - and I believe that others share our view - that the Conference should be continuous. It might be better for the agenda not to be adopted each year anew, but rather, if the need should arise, to be supplemented from time to time. It seems that it may be more practical for the ad hoc committees to work until the fulfilment of the mandates they have been given and not to reconsider their mandates every year. In other words, there is no need to repeat the same ritual every year as if the Conference had not existed the previous year.

Finally, we feel that the Conference should enter immediately into substantial negotiations on the priority issues of disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament.

My country attaches particular significance to the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and on Disarmament in Europe that is being held in Stockholm. This Conference is the best example of how, even at a time of deterioration in international relations, it is possible - and indispensable - for new channels of negotiation to be constantly sought and kept open. Together with neutral and non-aligned countries, we are doing our best to achieve an early launching of substantive negotiations at this Conference, and we believe that the much needed spirit of understanding will prevail in Stockholm and that the Conference will succeed.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

To speak about Europe and not to mention the Mediterranean, I feel, would be inappropriate. The recent ministerial meeting of Mediterranean non-aligned countries, held in Valletta in Malta, defined our common position and programme of action for strengthening peace, security and co-operation in the Mediterranean. That meeting represents a contribution to overall efforts reflected last year in the General Assembly resolution, which was adopted by consensus. It is logical that the non-aligned Mediterranean countries should participate on an equal footing in the consideration of all issues pertaining to the security of the Mediterranean.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission has for some time been hindered from making its contribution to negotiations on disarmament. The Commission is a universal forum dealing solely with disarmament and it is our duty to enhance the authority of that body by making it more effective and letting it do what it is supposed to do.

We feel it is indispensable that serious multilateral negotiations be held on nuclear disarmament. In that context, we consider unacceptable any delay in concluding a comprehensive treaty banning nuclear-weapon tests.

The urgent adoption of measures for the prevention of nuclear war and for a freeze on the development, production and deployment of nuclear weapons is imperative. In that context, it may well be recalled that renowned scientists recently pointed to the consequences of nuclear winter. Bleak but realistic prognoses, based on scientific analysis, represent an additional and forceful argument in favour of nuclear disarmament.

Major Powers should respond adequately to the numerous demands of a large number of countries to prevent the spread of the arms race into outer space. While the General Assembly adopted a recommendation on this issue last year, it is regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament has not yet begun substantial negotiations on this problem.

The prohibition of the production and use of chemical weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction is another matter of highest priority. There is no reason whatsoever for the delay in the elaboration of a comprehensive convention on chemical weapons. The Conference should immediately proceed to the drafting of such a convention.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

The issues of conventional disarmament deserve the highest attention. In the development of conventional weapons, of particular concern are high-technology weapons whose effects can sometimes hardly be distinguished from the effects of nuclear weapons. Their production should be stopped by resolute international action.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions would contribute to the creation of a more favourable political climate in which other measures for disarmament could be undertaken.

Regarding further development of the United Nations strategy in the field of disarmament, it is necessary urgently to elaborate and adopt a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament continues to retain its full validity. It laid the foundations for the strategy of the international community in the field of disarmament. Special sessions on disarmament offer a unique opportunity for all members of the international community directly to participate in defining the guidelines for further joint action in the field of disarmament. The third special session on disarmament should render a significant contribution to the further elaboration of the strategy of the international community.

The United Nations Department for Disarmament, directed by Under-Secretary-General Mr. Jan Martenson, is successfully developing the World Disarmament Campaign. We feel that the Campaign should be continued with the same determination in order that all peoples have adequate access to information on the causes and dangers of the arms race. The Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies has been instrumental in defining further activities in this field.

Finally, let me repeat again that there is no alternative to the demands of the non-aligned countries for negotiations.

The atmosphere at the beginning of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly has given us some hope. Let us build on this and not be left again with forlorn hopes.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, I want to extend to you my warmest congratulations upon your election as Chairman of this Committee and I pledge to you the full support of my delegation.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Freeze now or freeze the day after. This is a slogan. But it describes the harsh reality. We are faced with a choice: either we freeze the nuclear arsenals now, or we continue on the road towards the extinction of all life on earth during the nuclear winter which will follow a nuclear war. Biological life, in fact the whole ecological system, would be threatened. The survival of the human race would be at stake, and all this if just a fraction of the nuclear arsenals were to be used.

This is reality. It must be realized by everyone committed to a safe and secure world.

Nuclear war would affect all nations. All nations have a right to demand that these weapons of mass destruction never be used. The nuclear-weapon States cannot tell us that the nuclear arms race is not our business. Nuclear disarmament negotiations are a responsibility for all of us and nuclear disarmament must start now.

The relations between the two super-Powers are still severely strained. They suspect each other of violating agreements on arms control and disarmament. Their mutual distrust is profound. It stems from their deep ideological differences. It stems from different perceptions of security and refusal to recognize or understand each other's legitimate security concerns. The nuclear arms race is a reflection of this situation and adds to its aggravation.

Security in the nuclear age requires dialogue, détente, arms limitation and disarmament, but these objectives seem to guide the security efforts of the super-Powers less than ever before. Each fears that the other has an ambition to achieve strategic nuclear superiority and the capability for a first strike.

The tensions and risks created by the nuclear arms race afflict not only the super-Powers. Both sides now deploy additional nuclear arsenals close to each other's territories. New regions and countries are coming into the "firing line" and are drawn into the sphere of tension.

The United States and the Soviet Union are expanding their global maritime presence. Their capability for rapid military intervention in countries far from their home bases is being strengthened.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

A new destabilizing phase of the nuclear arms race has started with the deployment of medium-range missiles. The SS-20 missiles deployed by the Soviet Union have a range covering virtually the whole of Western Europe as well as large parts of Asia. The American Pershing II missiles under deployment in the Federal Republic of Germany, very accurate in targeting, can reach the Soviet Union within minutes.

This is briefly the situation less than one year before the Third Reviews Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. No negotiations are taking place today, at any level, aiming at a cessation of the nuclear arms race and at nuclear disarmament. At the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva it has not even been possible to establish a committee on the question of a nuclear-test ban.

The obligations of the nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty are clear. They have undertaken to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament. They have not complied with their obligations. On the other hand, the non-nuclear States Parties to the Treaty have fulfilled their undertakings. They have not acquired nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices.

The lack of implementation of the undertakings of the nuclear Powers gives cause for serious concern about the future of the non-proliferation régime as such. To avoid a failure, progress is urgently needed.

We need to conclude a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. We need a nuclear-weapons freeze. We need negotiations to prevent an arms race in outer space.

The General Assembly has year after year stressed the importance of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. But every attempt to conclude, or even negotiate, such a treaty has failed. Instead the tests continue - week after week, month after month, year after year. What is testing in reality? Nothing but a rehearsal for nuclear war. Every week a rehearsal for nuclear war. Who has given the nuclear-weapon States that right?

There are no insurmountable technical obstacles to verifying a comprehensive test-ban treaty. A State cannot use the alleged insufficient verification techniques as a pretext to refuse seriously to negotiate such a treaty. Peoples of all nations and over the whole world demand a halt to all nuclear testing.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Since the end of the Second World War, the United States and the Soviet Union have, in terms of explosive power, each produced the equivalent of one Hiroshima bomb every half hour, 24 hours a day for more than 39 years.

Peoples and Governments are deeply concerned about the accelerating nuclear-arms race. It is high time for a nuclear-arms freeze. This is the wish of the General Assembly. This was expressed in the Joint Declaration of six presidents and prime ministers of 22 May 1984.

The arms race does not seem to know any geographical limits. Its effects are felt by all countries, on all continents. It reaches the oceans and the Arctic ices. It also threatens to reach into outer space.

It is difficult to imagine where a new round of the arms race would have as grave consequences as in outer space. It touches indeed upon fundamental aspects of international security.

The costs involved with some of the more extreme proposals are astronomical. A report to the President of the United States has estimated the cost of a multilayered ballistic missile defence system at between \$250 and \$500 billion, over a period of 20 years.

Even less ambitious missile defence systems - and indeed already attempts to construct them - would only lead to increased instability and to an accelerated arms race. To overwhelm any such system, each side can be expected to deploy countermeasures, including an increase in the number of offensive weapons. Such a development would have profound effects on international relations and the security of all nations.

Satellites play an even more important role for the military planning of the major Powers. They also have crucial functions as a means of ensuring early warning against missile attacks. They have an important role in verifying disarmament agreements. Anti-satellite weapons would threaten the stabilizing functions of such satellites. Development, testing and deployment of space weapons must be banned and existing systems must be destroyed - before it is too late.

Security cannot be achieved through ABM systems, be they space-based, sea-based or land-based. The only way to reduce the nuclear threat is nuclear disarmament. This is how security can be achieved.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Last year, the General Assembly, with only one vote against, declared that outer space should not become an arena for the arms race. It also requested the Conference on Disarmament to consider, as a matter of priority, the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. We deplore the fact that the Conference on Disarmament has not yet started its work on this matter.

The issues involved concern the security of all nations. They should not be left to bilateral super-Power bargaining alone. Serious bilateral negotiations would be welcome. But only through multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament can the rights of the entire international community be fully protected.

It is imperative that the major Powers abstain from taking any action contrary to the objective of preventing an arms race in outer space.

I have listed a number of measures necessary for nuclear disarmament. They would also contribute to upholding the non-proliferation régime. Furthermore, as a way of facilitating disarmament agreements, I wish to draw attention to the opportunities for unilateral action.

Such action would be a sign of good faith and of a willingness to progress in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. A few examples of possible unilateral action are a moratorium on nuclear tests, a moratorium on the deployment of nuclear weapons, a moratorium on the development of space-weapons, and a moratorium on the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes.

Recent events have drawn our attention to the horrible effects of chemical warfare. The judgement of international public opinion and history falls heavily on Governments using chemical weapons and, thus, blatantly violating international law.

It is gratifying to note the progress made in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament aiming at the total prohibition of chemical weapons. The full and complete process of drafting a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction has now started. Important and constructive contributions have been made during the negotiations. We welcome them as signs of good faith and commitment to reaching an early agreement.

It is important that the momentum be maintained, and that the working process established be fully utilized.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Last year the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on radiological weapons had reached a certain impasse. In order to break this impasse and bring about serious negotiations on all aspects of the substance, Sweden in June this year put forward draft provisions of a treaty prohibiting radiological weapons and the release or dissemination of radioactive material for hostile purposes. Our proposed text addresses in particular one of the major outstanding issues, that of releasing radioactive material through attacks on nuclear facilities. The proposal prohibits all attacks on nuclear facilities which may give rise to mass destruction through radiation.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

We must come to grips with the military use of research and development. This is a key factor in the spiralling arms race. Many applications of military technology currently being tested are highly destabilizing. They are watched with growing apprehension around the globe. Military research and development is concentrated in a handful of industrialized countries. They account for all but a minute share of world military research and development. They set the rules of the military-technological competition. They determine its pace and direction.

In the past, disarmament efforts have been thwarted by developments in military research and development. More than once, the already slow process of disarmament negotiations have been frustrated and agreements eroded by rapid advances in military technology. Not only are such advances destabilizing and threatening in themselves, they also seriously complicate or undermine the efforts to halt the arms race.

However, given the political will, research and development can provide opportunities for confidence building and disarmament. A case in point is the global experiment in seismological monitoring of nuclear explosions to be conducted this fall under the auspices of the Conference on Disarmament.

Facing the technological arms race, other countries are left with a choice, either to opt out or follow suit, by replicating on their own the achievements of the major Powers or, more conveniently, by importing arms. The arms trade is a key vehicle for the global diffusion of military research results. It is of course no coincidence that the very countries which are leading in military research and development also have dominated international arms transfers. Limitations of and guidelines for international arms transfers are needed. Useful proposals are contained in the study on conventional disarmament, which is now before the General Assembly.

A new conventional arms race would have serious effects on international security. Limitation and gradual reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons should be resolutely pursued. A conventional balance should be achieved at a lower, not a higher, level.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones are increasingly discussed in many parts of the world. The main reason is of course the continuing nuclear arms race. Non-nuclear States and regions want to take their security and future in their own hands and disengage from a process for which they are not responsible.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Everyone recognized at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, agreed to by the States concerned, constitutes an important disarmament measure.

My Government is convinced that a Nordic nuclear-weapon-free zone would improve the security of the Nordic countries through reducing the nuclear threat in our part of the world.

Since the beginning of this year, Stockholm has been hosting the Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. It is a positive and significant fact that the participating States are now negotiating confidence- and security-building measures to promote détente in Europe and to prepare the ground for negotiations on disarmament. All States participating in the Conference would gain from a better political climate and from reduced armaments and military spending.

Political means are needed to turn the arms race into disarmament. In 1981 the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly a study on the relationship between disarmament and development. The study was prepared by a group of experts, chaired by my predecessor, Mrs. Inga Thorsson. This study recommended that all Governments should assess the nature and magnitude of the economic and social costs of their military preparations, so that the general public could be informed of them; identify and publish the benefits that would be derived from a reallocation of military resources to civilian use; make available to their populations and to the United Nations data on the military use of human and material resources; and make preparations and plans to facilitate a conversion of resources from the military sector to civilian purposes and inform the United Nations about this from time to time.

I am pleased to inform the Committee that Sweden has followed these recommendations and commissioned a report. This report, entitled "In pursuit of disarmament: conversion from military to civilian production in Sweden", has now been presented to the Government.

The Swedish Government commissioned this report following the recommendations of the General Assembly. If we want to reverse the arms race we must show how conversion from military to civilian production could be achieved. We must also show that it is economically and socially beneficial for society. The report is

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

now being translated into English. Later I will present it to the Committee, and I hope that other Governments will be inspired to make similar reports and to present them to the United Nations.

My Government is deeply concerned about the nuclear arms race and its consequences. A nuclear conflict between the super-Powers would affect every nation on this globe. No nation, large or small, could escape its consequences. Let us draw the political conclusions from these facts. Time is pressing. We have to choose: the arms race, or the human race.

Mr. TORNUDD (Finland): Mr. Chairman, it is an honour for me and for my delegation to congratulate you on your election to the high post of Chairman of the First Committee. Your experience as a participant and as chairman of many disarmament meetings will be highly valuable in our common efforts. We are pleased that you have decided to seek to improve the working methods of the Committee. You can count on the support of my delegation in this matter as well as in other aspects of your duties. Our congratulations go equally to the other officers of the Committee, whose eminent qualities will help to ensure that the First Committee will be able to work efficiently during this session.

Since the previous session of the General Assembly, the world has witnessed continued development and deployment of new weapons, while negotiations on the regulation and reduction of armaments have made only slow progress or have remained totally interrupted. This regrettable state of affairs reflects a deep lack of confidence between Governments as well as uncertainties regarding the security of States. If Governments feel so insecure, it is no wonder that the peoples themselves are concerned and fearful about the dangers of the present deadlock. This is particularly apparent in Europe today. However, a determined effort to define new confidence- and security-building measures is in progress in Stockholm among the participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). This effort should in our view lead to substantive negotiations on disarmament in Europe at a later stage.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

In fact, despite the fears and the frustrations, negotiations remain the only means at our disposal. Every agreement reached through negotiation, every step in a process of disarmament negotiations and even every preliminary initiative towards negotiation reflects a sense of common responsibility, of the need to deal with problems of security in partnership with other States. Here at the United Nations it is highly appropriate to remind ourselves of this common responsibility.

A special responsibility falls upon those States that possess nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. At least the nuclear peace has been kept in the lifetime of the United Nations, during the 39 years since the Charter came into force. This is much more a result of self-restraint or unilateral exercise of responsibility, or maybe of deterrence, than of agreed measures. Commitments to reduce nuclear weapons or limit the possibilities of their use, defined in freely concluded agreements, would give the Governments and the peoples much greater reassurance. We urge therefore a resumption of negotiations on the broad spectrum of problems in the field of nuclear disarmament.

If anything can be done to facilitate the resumption of such negotiations, whether by the nuclear-weapon States themselves, by the military alliances or by the world community as a whole, we should concentrate our efforts here at the United Nations on identifying such possibilities. In particular, my delegation believes that such steps should be taken as could help to build confidence between the nuclear-weapon States and reduce fears in the other States. That includes, for example, effective measures to prevent the use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances. As Finland has suggested previously, the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War, concluded in 1973 by the Soviet Union and the United States, could serve as a point of departure for the elaboration of a wider agreement - or even for a whole code of behaviour between nuclear-weapon States.

It is sometimes said that nuclear weapons are only political weapons, that in reality they can never be used. Unfortunately, this assertion is not at all convincing and realistic. The peoples of the world expect unambiguous commitments from the nuclear-weapon States not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons. It is true that some security assurances have been unilaterally given by the nuclear-weapon States, but those assurances are not comprehensive enough, they have not kept up with recent developments of nuclear technology, they are not legally binding, and they have not been defined and interpreted in the same way by all.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

The question of security assurances is only one among many unresolved matters on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, but it is one which could be dealt with now, without any linkage to other pending problems.

The exhausting arms race has shown beyond any doubt that increases of nuclear armaments, new types of nuclear weapons and deployments of nuclear weapons in new areas have not in the final analysis led to any improvement in the security of the States concerned. The end result has rather been the opposite one, particularly if the effects of counterdeployments and other counteractions are taken into account. Even more serious consequences, further complicating the resumption of negotiations on nuclear weapons, would follow from the appearance of new possessors of such weapons. The continued prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices therefore remains of utmost importance. The maintenance and strengthening of the régime created by the non-proliferation Treaty will accordingly remain a matter of priority for the Government of Finland. In fact, we regard it as one of the most valuable single achievements in the field of disarmament.

Next year the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will be reviewed for the third time. The review conference will have a major task in further strengthening the non-proliferation Treaty régime, and it is most important that all parties to the Treaty should do everything to make this conference a success. In particular, the review conference will be expected to point the way towards attracting new parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, towards even more effective and comprehensive methods for preventing proliferation and towards further improvements in the international co-operation regarding peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Under the non-proliferation Treaty, the nuclear-weapon States have undertaken to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament. The approaching review conference should give additional impetus to the still regrettably modest common efforts in this respect, efforts which in particular ought to include tangible progress towards a comprehensive nuclear test ban. A treaty effectively prohibiting all nuclear explosions would be a significant non-proliferation measure and promote the purposes of the non-proliferation Treaty.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

Last year the General Assembly adopted 27 resolutions dealing with nuclear weapons alone. Such a proliferation in the number of resolutions is not, in the opinion of my delegation, a valid measure of mankind's concern over the nuclear arms race, particularly if some of them are overlapping or even partly contradictory. Would it not be a good idea if this Committee could set an example by joining our forces to produce a simple message on nuclear weapons, in a few consolidated resolutions setting out some of the main concerns and principles on which there seems to be general agreement?

Although nuclear disarmament must remain the highest priority task, other domains of disarmament should receive attention as well. For the first time, a study on all aspects of the conventional arms race and on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces has been undertaken in the United Nations. Finland wishes to commend the report on the matter. This study, prepared by a group of qualified experts, discusses in broad terms the nature, causes and effects of the conventional arms race. It also addresses the principles, approaches and measures required for conventional arms limitation and disarmament. Its conclusions are manifold.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

The accumulation and increasing sophistication of conventional arms have varied implications for different regions of the world. The regional approach to disarmament therefore seems particularly relevant in this context. The prospects foreshadowed by advanced high technology seem likely to create new complications for disarmament in the field of conventional arms. My delegation agrees with the conclusion that the problem of the conventional arms race is urgent. We hope that the subjects identified by the study as possible objects for consultation and negotiation can be further discussed, either on a regional level or within the United Nations, with a view to arriving at effective measures of conventional arms limitation and disarmament.

We also share the hope that the leading great Powers will consider reopening their talks on the limitation of conventional arms transfers. At the same time, my delegation registers its satisfaction at the entry into force in December 1983 of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. We urge all Governments to become parties to this Convention as soon as possible.

The Conference on Disarmament has made only limited progress during the past year. Major disagreements persist on a number of items. In fact, it seems that only the work on chemical weapons has yielded some results. The report drawn up by the relevant Ad Hoc Committee includes a compilation of texts, partly written in treaty language. Some concepts have thus been clarified. Important proposals have been made, and detailed discussions have been held. We should like to regard these steps as a sign of the willingness of the Conference on Disarmament to embark upon real negotiations. The urgency of the subject-matter is recognized by the whole international community.

The question of verification remains one of the most difficult unresolved issues in negotiations on chemical weapons. There is no disagreement on the need to have full confidence in the compliance by all parties with the provisions of the future convention. This can be achieved only through a set of verification arrangements adapted to the various tasks embodied in the convention. It is hardly possible totally to eliminate all risks, but the vast majority can be removed and the remainder can be reduced to bring them within acceptable limits. We remain convinced that the objective can be reached through negotiation and a serious search for compromise.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

Although the difficulties faced in the negotiations on verification are mostly political by nature, modern monitoring techniques can to a certain extent contribute towards solutions in this domain. Last June Finland introduced in the Conference on Disarmament a new working document on verification, entitled "Technical Evaluation of Selected Scientific Methods for the Verification of Chemical Disarmament". This document is largely a summary of previous verification research done in Finland. Its purpose is to evaluate the potential of existing technical means for verification tasks requiring chemical expertise. We hope that the latest contribution by Finland can provide the Conference with useful data in its work on detailed verification requirements for a comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons.

Last year the General Assembly assigned to the Conference on Disarmament the task of addressing, as a matter of priority, the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The rapid development of technology for military use gives added urgency to the consideration of this issue. In the course of the current and previous sessions of the General Assembly many valuable, concrete proposals have been made and several plans for international arrangements have been devised. In other words, the material for actual negotiations is at hand.

We therefore learned with concern of the inability of the Conference on Disarmament to find a working format acceptable to all on this question. The Conference on Disarmament cannot evade its great responsibility in this respect, but it is equally important that negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union to stop the arms race in outer space be launched. The potential of outer space should be exploited for the benefit of all mankind. Outer space must not become a new domain for a dangerous arms race. No doubt the problem is most complex. Few would deny that the technical problems and complexities of arms control and disarmament in space become greater over the years. Space arms control efforts should at the same time be supplemented by resolute action to further international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

To sum up, I have tried to express Finland's concern regarding the dangers of the nuclear arms race, without forgetting chemical weapons, outer space and so-called conventional weapons in general. My country remains ready to do its part in all these fields, in accordance with our common responsibility for disarmament.

Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland): It gives me great pleasure, Sir, to associate the Polish delegation with the felicitations and good wishes already expressed to you on your election as Chairman of this prestigious Committee. With Ambassador Souza e Silva - a distinguished Brazilian diplomat and seasoned disarmament negotiator - in charge, I am confident that the important business dealt with in this organ of the General Assembly is in good hands.

As one who himself has had the honour of presiding over the Committee's work and who is, therefore, well familiar with its demands, I assure you, Sir, of the unflinching good will and constructive co-operation of my delegation in the discharge of your responsible functions.

My congratulations and good wishes also go to the other officers of the Committee. I have particular pleasure in welcoming the fact that my long-time friend Ambassador Milous Vejvoda, of fraternal Czechoslovakia, has been entrusted with the important position of Vice-Chairman.

Since our disarmament debate at the thirty-eighth session, Mr. Chairman, the difficult mandate which you and we all are vested with has grown in complexity, urgency and critical importance. To the dismay of people in my country, throughout Europe and the world at large, the goals of arms limitation and disarmament seem to have receded rather than to have come closer to being within our reach. The international horizon has further darkened as a direct result of the confrontational arms race policy pursued by the United States and some of its allies, a policy calculated to yield dividends in the form of supremacy and military preponderance over the Soviet Union and other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

That policy has most alarmingly manifested itself in the deployment, in utter disregard of massive popular protests, of new American middle-range nuclear missiles on the soil of three Western European States. The targeting against the East - and that means also against my country - of an offensive, first-strike weapons system had its additional, ominous consequences. It has encouraged revisionist and militarist ambitions as well as attempts at calling into question the existing territorial and political realities in Europe. These grave developments could not, of course, but compel the Soviet Union and its allies to take - as they formally had warned earlier that they would feel constrained to - appropriate countermeasures in order to offset the momentary military advantage of the other side, to restore the upset military balance.

The irresponsible policy of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), having thus patently failed to secure the goals expected, has also resulted in the interruption of the vitally important Soviet-American dialogue in Geneva on nuclear arms limitation in Europe and the talks on the limitation and reduction of strategic weapons.

For their part, undeterred by the critical course of the United States and NATO arms policy, the Soviet Union, Poland and other States of the socialist community have been coming forward time and again with specific and constructive proposals in order to avert the danger of nuclear war, to check and reverse the nuclear arms race, to promote measures of genuine and tangible disarmament. A broad-ranging and pragmatic programme in this regard - as is well known - has been set out in great detail in the Prague Declaration of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty of January 1983, which a few months later was reaffirmed in the Moscow Joint Statement of their leaders. The Soviet Union's determination to do its utmost to prevent the danger of a nuclear conflagration has since been restated by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Konstantin Chernenko, when he formulated the proposal to work out binding norms of conduct for all nuclear Powers. Poland lends its full support to that far-sighted initiative. We welcome also the latest proposals of Konstantin Chernenko as a new important example of the goodwill of the USSR.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

Over the past months, bearing out the sincerity of their motives and approach to disarmament negotiations, the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty have formally renewed to the NATO alliance, and to other States, specific proposals outlined in the Prague document. They included a proposed agreement on the non-use of military force and maintaining peaceful relations between States members of NATO and States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, an agreement open also to other States. They included offers to free Europe of chemical weapons, to freeze and subsequently reduce military expenditures and to prevent the arms race from making yet another qualitative jump - this time into outer space.

The States of the socialist community have always been dedicated and firm supporters of honest, constructive and worthwhile negotiations conducted in good faith, on the principled basis of equality and equal security of all States. We, therefore, find it regrettable and disappointing that the United States does not apparently entertain, at this time, the possibility of accepting these principles as a legitimate negotiating premise in an area directly affecting the most vital security interests of all States.

As our disarmament debate indicates, the prevention of nuclear war stands out today as the single most critical and pressing problem facing all of us, every nation, the whole of mankind and its civilization. The assessment of the challenge as well as suggestions concerning some of the steps necessary in order to succeed in checking the nuclear threat have been forcefully put forward by the leaders of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania in their joint declaration on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear freeze, which they addressed to the nuclear Powers. As is known, that message has evoked an early and positive response from at least one of them - the Soviet Union. It has also been welcomed with appreciation by public opinion in many other countries, including my own.

Time is indeed running out and it is imperative that meaningful steps be taken now to contain and eliminate the growing menace of nuclear confrontation. To succeed, it is necessary to provide both concrete material guarantees and strong moral and political barriers against war. While the former, in the area of disarmament, must be founded on the principles of parity and equal security at the lowest possible level of military force, the latter, addressing themselves to the minds of men, must aim at nipping in the bud any thought of war, whenever and wherever such a thought is first conceived. Let me enlarge on these two concepts in inverse order.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

The Charter of the United Nations is the first and basic document, of course, which enshrines the fundamental barriers, moral and political, against war. But there are also other documents which the international community saw fit to adopt in its quest for enduring peace. A more recent but important moral premise for preventing war is embodied in the United Nations Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, which the General Assembly adopted in 1978 at the initiative of my country. Its topical provisions go to the heart of disarmament issues. The periodic review of the implementation of the Declaration, included in the agenda of the current session, will serve its purpose if - in the context of the forthcoming International Year of Peace - it promotes greater awareness by statesmen, political leaders and civil leaders of the historic responsibility which they bear in the nuclear era for the fate and welfare of their nations. The Polish delegation intends to submit a draft resolution on this subject at the current session of the General Assembly.

By far the strongest moral judgement of war and of preparations for war can be found in another General Assembly document, the United Nations resolution on the condemnation of nuclear war, which was adopted last year. Its full moral impact may, however, dissipate unless all United Nations Members take firm steps towards its full implementation.

The heavy agenda before this Committee is explicit enough as to what, in the eyes of the international community, would represent the indispensable material guarantees against nuclear catastrophe. As far as the Polish delegation is concerned, they include the following in particular.

The first indispensable material guarantee is renunciation of first use of nuclear weapons by all nuclear Powers which have not yet done so. Had the three remaining Powers also made such a commitment, mankind could breathe more freely because, without the first use, there would be no retaliatory use and thereby a crucially important step towards avoiding nuclear cataclysm would have been made.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

The second guarantee is the prevention of militarization of outer space, which is now rapidly becoming a high-risk area of a technological arms race, fraught with potential for igniting a nuclear conflict. As proposed by the USSR, an immediate moratorium on anti-satellite weapons, followed by a treaty on a comprehensive prohibition of the use of force in, from and towards outer space, would represent a decisive step in scaling down the nuclear threat. Reserving outer space, the common heritage of mankind, for exclusively peaceful exploration and use would have tremendous significance for nations, especially the developing ones, which more than others could benefit from space technology applications. Those ideas are succinctly set out in the most recent comprehensive and topical proposal of the Soviet Union on the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind. Poland fully supports that proposal.

The third material guarantee is a qualitative and quantitative freeze of nuclear arsenals, in the first place those of the Soviet Union and the United States, which, inter alia, would ban the deployment of new kinds and types of nuclear weapons.

The fourth guarantee is the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

We hold the view, moreover, that the cause of a world free of the nuclear "sword of Damocles" would be advanced by such steps in the nuclear area as the further consolidation and universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; a formal and binding commitment by all nuclear Powers not to use nuclear weapons in any circumstances against non-nuclear States whose territory is free of such weapons; and finally the promotion of and encouragement for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Poland's disarmament priorities are not confined to the nuclear field, however. As will be recalled, we have for years consistently sought to make a meaningful contribution, both at the United Nations and in the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva, to the endeavours to eliminate chemical weapons. It is precisely for this reason that we particularly regret to see the slow but steady progress and promising prospects of agreement at Geneva all but destroyed by the unconstructive and inflexible attitude which the United States has taken in its draft convention with regard to some aspects of verification.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

The Polish delegation, for one, will not be discouraged by the unfavourable situation which has arisen as a result at the Conference on Disarmament. We shall continue in its subsidiary body, the Special Committee on Chemical Weapons, to work for an early agreement on the elimination of chemical weapons which will be acceptable to all States. Consequently we are confident that the General Assembly will not fail to adopt at its current session an appropriate resolution in order to impress on the Conference the imperative of an effective ban on chemical weapons.

Together with other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, we set great store by the proposal to freeze and subsequently to reduce military expenditures. The NATO alliance has yet to respond formally to the suggestion to open consultations in this regard. We believe that it would be in the interest of productive negotiations if States other than members of the two politico-military groupings were also to be invited to participate in such consultations.

In the Vienna negotiations we continue to seek an agreement on the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. Progress there is hampered, however, by the unconstructive approach of the NATO participants.

The cause of global peace and security will be well served if due importance is attached by the international community to the practical implementation of the concept of zones of peace and co-operation, especially in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. We believe, in particular, that the early implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace would effectively prevent that region from becoming another arena for global strategic confrontation. We firmly support the holding of a Conference in Colombo for that purpose, as planned, in the first half of 1985. At the same time we find deplorable the efforts of certain States which, by again voicing their standard pre-conditions, confirm not only a total lack of political will to hold the Conference but in fact their determination effectively to prevent its ever taking place.

Poland holds the view that the limitation and reduction of naval armaments and the extension of confidence-building measures to the seas and oceans would facilitate the establishment of zones of peace in the Indian Ocean, in the Mediterranean and elsewhere.

In sum, we fully share the view of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, expressed in his latest report on the work of the Organization:

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

"The fact is that progress on the issues included in the agenda of the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, and especially on those currently before the Conference on Disarmament, could help to restore confidence and improve the critical bilateral relationship on which the international political climate so heavily depends." (A/39/1, p. 7)

That climate will improve if, among other things, material and human resources are urgently diverted from military to peaceful pursuits, if they are reallocated to meet the growing social and economic development needs rather than allowed to continue to fuel the arms race. Poland's detailed views on the question of the relationship between disarmament and development are reflected in the report of the Secretary-General. We believe, and so we have said in the reply of the Polish Government to the Secretary-General's note in this regard, that the development goals can be effectively promoted only if development funds result from genuine disarmament. The alternative approach, a fund based on an armaments-related tax, could well, in our view, defeat the crucial assumption of the relationship instead of contributing to disarmament, as it should.

Incidentally, my delegation is of the opinion that the adoption of specific confidence-building measures in international economic relations, a concept which it has had the honour to expound at the current session of the General Assembly, would go a long way towards responding to the immediate development needs of every State.

The Polish delegation stands persuaded that the General Assembly could effectively bring its great moral authority to bear in order to ease the tense international situation. Above all, it could play a positive role in creating premises for the reduction and total elimination of the danger of a nuclear conflict. There are definite possibilities in that regard. What is necessary in order to translate that possibility into reality is to isolate and neutralize the dangerous manifestations of the international misbehaviour of certain States.

We are confident that the General Assembly will discharge its mandate in that respect in a manner commensurate with the trust placed in the United Nations by the peoples of the world.

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

Poland, in concert with its allies, will spare no efforts to make a constructive contribution towards preventing the threat of a nuclear catastrophe, halting and reversing the arms race and fostering equitable and fruitful international co-operation, for as Prime Minister Wojciech Jaruzelski stressed in his statement in the Polish Parliament on 21 July of this year, marking the fortieth anniversary of People's Poland:

"... our national interest is clearly on one side and one side only - the side of the peaceful coexistence of nations."

We are confident that the same concern for peaceful coexistence and for international peace and security will be manifested by other States, not in words only but in deeds as well.

Mr. CANALES (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me, at the outset, to add my voice to the expressions of satisfaction by other delegations at seeing you, Mr. Chairman, presiding over our Committee's work. Your experience as a diplomat, particularly in matters relating to disarmament, constitutes a guarantee of success for our work.

I should like also to congratulate the other officers of our Committee, as well as the new Committee Secretary.

The First Committee is beginning its work in a climate of international tension marked by a lack of progress in the field of disarmament and arms limitation, the danger of nuclear confrontation, violence and a widespread economic crisis.

Unfortunately, and as stated by the Secretary-General in his last report, in the post-war period there was

"... a certain over-confidence in the capacity of international institutions, born of a desperate desire to build a new and better world." (A/39/L, p. 3)

Experience has shown that the application of the system of collective security laid down in the Charter has not been utilized in the manner contemplated by our representatives in San Francisco. If that scheme were applied effectively we could remove the main obstacles to disarmament and arms limitation.

In various international forums we have been hearing, as a litany, about the urgent need to ensure the application of the principles and provisions of the Charter. We are aware of the fact that the choice is one between the use of force and the threat of the use of force, with the ensuing risks of a nuclear holocaust, and the path of co-operation set out in the Charter.

The advent of nuclear weapons brought about a structural change in the main concepts embodied in international relations, and the doctrine of security based on nuclear deterrence constitutes an element whose development was not visualized in all its magnitude by the founding fathers of this Organization.

The fact that mankind's security may hinge on the state of relations between the nuclear-weapon States seems to be politically and morally unacceptable. Far from contributing to the preservation of peace and security, the existence of doctrines which irretrievably involve the use of nuclear weapons qualitatively and quantitatively aggravates the nuclear arms race and leads to insecurity and instability in international relations.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

In addition to the nuclear factor, today we witness a trend towards the exacerbation of nationalism and sensitivities relating to national security reflected in the numerous local conflicts, many of which have an ideological element. Likewise, we note with indignation how some States insist on placing the use of force at the service of expansionist or imperialist foreign policies and do not hesitate to violate the most sacred obligations entered into under the United Nations Charter. That is accompanied by a process of excluding the United Nations as the framework for negotiation of political compromises or problems of such vital importance to the survival of mankind as those related to disarmament and international security.

The lack of significant progress in the work of deliberative bodies dealing with that area and, particularly, the Conference on Disarmament, the main multilateral negotiating body in this field, constitutes eloquent proof of this critical state of affairs.

Disarmament negotiations between the super-Powers are virtually at a standstill. Vertical nuclear proliferation - undoubtedly the most widespread proliferation today - continues without any negotiations designed effectively to reduce or limit it. Chile, a non-nuclear-weapon State, is distressed to see how the major Powers have difficulty even in starting talks designed to reduce this frenzied race, which, obviously, endangers not only those responsible for it but all mankind.

One paradox of contemporary international relations is the fact that a majority of countries are affected by decisions made by the major Powers that can lead to a nuclear holocaust that will annihilate civilization. And yet that great majority of States have no influence or power whatever to control those decisions, whose ominous consequences affect them directly. Hence, it would seem indispensable to insist on the need to have effective and unconditional negative security guarantees in order to eliminate the possibility of non-nuclear-weapon States being the target of a nuclear attack.

Is it not logical that countries which have renounced nuclear weapons in order to preserve international stability should at least have the guarantee that they will not be victims of those weapons?

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

My delegation would like to appeal to the nuclear-weapon States to rethink their positions in order to arrive at a formula that will be satisfactory, not only for their own national security, but also for mankind as a whole from a political, juridical and technical standpoint.

In this area we see that there is another flaw in the Non-Proliferation Treaty and we trust that the Third Review Conference on this instrument will strive to solve some of the gaps and imbalances which create obstacles for a number of countries in their desire to support this legal document and obtain appropriate nuclear co-operation. On this question, I should like to refer to the statement that you, Mr. Chairman, made in the Conference on Disarmament on 26 July this year.

No doubt there is growing and universal anxiety in the face of the deadlock in the main negotiations in the field of disarmament. This anxiety is further exacerbated in the face of the deterioration of relations between the principal nuclear-weapon States and the alliances they head with the ensuing destabilizing repercussions for international peace and security.

In this connection, the concept of confidence-building measures is particularly important. Many statements in this Assembly expressed regret over the alarming loss of confidence in State relations, specifically in the East-West framework, but also in many parts of the third world.

It is a process, started in Helsinki, which should not be confined to the European stage alone, but rather should find expression in other regions also as a means for easing the global situation and creating a more positive atmosphere for the application of paragraph 109 of the Final Document, which was unanimously reaffirmed at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and which states that general and complete disarmament remains the ultimate goal of all efforts exerted in the field of disarmament, an objective which my country unconditionally supports.

Within the complex political set of problems involved in the disarmament process, the complete cessation of nuclear tests is an issue that has been under consideration in this Organization for more than two decades, as was stated in paragraph 39 of the report of the Conference on Disarmament to this Assembly.

The technical and scientific aspects are sufficiently well developed. The issue here is a problem of political will to achieve the implementation of resolution 38/62 and forthwith to begin negotiations to achieve the signing of a treaty banning all nuclear-weapons tests.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

Chile, as a State bordering on the South Pacific, the geographic area selected for nuclear testing, wishes to reiterate here the position of the States members of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific contained in document A/39/343, namely, to protest vigorously against nuclear explosions in this geographic area, where they constitute a serious threat to the marine environment and its natural resources.

We would like to appeal to the nuclear-weapon States to abandon the dubious advantages offered by such tests having doubtful results and without resorting to any procedural excuses to begin substantive negotiations so as to contribute to the implementation of paragraph 50 of the Final Document on non-proliferation and the promotion of international trust.

The Conference on Disarmament must, as a matter of urgency, arrive at an arrangement on the mandate of the subsidiary body that is to take up this item. There is no excuse for a group of States once again to jeopardize the future and stability of all mankind merely by virtue of the fact that they possess nuclear weapons.

Chile attaches special interest to problems related to the peaceful uses of outer space. A decade ago, we stated in this Committee an interest in these issues and we have been promoting regional co-operation in order to preserve outer space as the common heritage of mankind and in order to consolidate regional co-operation in the sphere of space technology at the service of economic and social development.

It is precisely because of this interest that my country views with concern the alarming intensification of the arms race in outer space and the impossibility of achieving a political compromise that would make it possible to undertake negotiations towards some kind of agreement at the Conference on Disarmament. More specifically, with respect to this problem we have been able once again to see the practical scope of the consensus rule in the multilateral process when there is no political will.

In beginning these comments we said that one of the most critical issues of the present international situation is economic in nature. Problems of disarmament and development are very closely interrelated. To try to achieve peace in the midst of poverty is an exercise in futility. We deem it indispensable to revitalize the process of co-operation in this field in order to achieve universal and lasting peace.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

A rational course seems to be the only one that may lead to some hope for the great majority of mankind, which does not benefit from scientific and technological progress.

Here my delegation would like to restate its support for the conclusions of the group of government experts working on this question. We believe that the technical options have been sufficiently worked out and that our efforts should focus on seeking a political consensus to channel initiatives in this field.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

In this connection, my delegation has spoken out in favour of this question being taken up by the Commission on Disarmament and encouraged action to seek East-West and North-South understanding in this area. The holding of an international conference could in these conditions contribute to a pragmatic consideration of this problem.

This year we commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty, which established the first demilitarized and denuclearized zone of peace in the world. The Treaty, which was concluded in a very difficult international situation, like that which we are experiencing today, is an example of international co-operation between countries with different political systems.

My delegation understands that in any pragmatic consideration of this question in the Commission with pragmatism the juridical and political interests of all parties concerned must be combined, with a view to expanding into knowledge of the frozen continent without this however being tantamount to undermining its basic institutions. My delegation will refer to this matter in more specific terms when we take up agenda item 66.

The purpose of my comments has been to reflect the legitimate concerns of a country which, because it is a developing country, is more of an observer than an actor with regard to the difficulties being experienced in the disarmament process. We believe that the survival of mankind is an objective which goes beyond national interests and transcends the ideological framework and the political and strategic perceptions of power. It is indispensable for the great Powers to make a positive effort to achieve political dialogue, with a view to negotiating commitments involving well-balanced reductions and moratoriums as an important step towards general and complete disarmament under appropriate international control. To the extent to which this political will exists, the exercise we are now embarked upon will be meaningful.

In concluding my statement, I should like to refer to a fact that is conducive to optimism. It involves two South American countries, Chile and Argentina. This morning the Secretary of State of the Vatican, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, announced that our two countries had agreed upon the text of an accord arrived at for the settlement of the dispute which existed in the southern area. This makes us very proud, and there is cause for rejoicing by the peoples of Chile and Argentina, for it represents in practice the dedication and devotion of our

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

countries to the principles of the United Nations and the great importance they attach to peace.

Mr. CARSALES (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, the friendship which has existed between us for many years is good reason for the satisfaction we felt on seeing you elevated to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I take it for granted that you will perform your duties with the efficiency and brilliance which you have shown in previous posts, and in the Disarmament Commission in particular in 1983. At the same time, I was most delighted to hear of the elections as Vice Chairmen of the Committee of two of my Geneva colleagues, Ambassador Wegener and Ambassador Vejvoda, with whom we have had ample opportunities for co-operation, which will certainly continue in this Committee.

We also wish to congratulate our Rapporteur, the representative of Chad. I cannot fail to pay tribute to the excellent job done last year by the Chairman, Ambassador Vraalsen of Norway, whose persistent and effective work we greatly valued.

In keeping with the terms of Articles 10 and 11 of the Charter, the General Assembly and more particularly the First Committee annually review the prevalent situation in the field of disarmament and the maintenance of international security.

This must not be in any sense a routine exercise because it is the fulfilment of the most important responsibility, since the survival of mankind - which is what is really at stake - is clearly the item of business of the greatest importance and highest priority.

The greater the possibilities of reducing the risk of a nuclear conflagration, the greater the confidence and tranquillity with which one can look to the future.

Unfortunately, the negative picture we have seen over the last few years has become even worse since the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. There is hardly any need to embark upon a repetitive listing of all the signs of the total stagnation and even regression existing in this sphere. Bilateral negotiations have come to a halt and multilateral negotiations are marred by obstructionism and paralysis.

The role of protagonist in this field belongs to a small number of States whose responsibility for what is happening - or rather, what is not happening - would be impossible to exaggerate. Never before in history has the fate of mankind

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

in its true sense, and not as a mere figure of speech, been in the hands of so few Governments or even individuals. The weight of this responsibility must be overwhelming; none the less, there are practically no positive moves whereas policies and actions which complicate and aggravate tension continue unabated.

The great majority of the international community, Governments and peoples are dismayed witnesses of an unprecedented arms build-up, the geographical spread of nuclear weapons and their increasing sophistication, and a lack of dialogue on questions of vital interest that cannot be allowed to go on.

In such a situation, a passive attitude is inexcusable. Mankind cannot remain impassive while its future is at the mercy of narrow circles that do not seem to hear the clamour for peace coming from all corners of the globe. Public opinion has reacted energetically to the growing threat of total destruction. I still vividly remember the massive demonstration of almost one million people that took place two years ago in this city of New York on the occasion of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. With each passing day in the world there are new expressions of this popular feeling which cannot come to terms with actions leading to insecurity and instability, daily increasing the prospect of a nuclear holocaust.

Governments have also reacted. It is not only their duty but also their right to do so, for what is at stake affects them directly, regardless of their relative power or their geographical location. The future of their own peoples is at stake and, given their duty to protect their peoples, there can be no room for mere meditation or selfishness.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

The non-aligned countries have on repeated occasions made public their thinking and their concern with regard to the prevailing situation. The seventh non-aligned summit meeting in New Delhi last year was categorical on this matter. Its appeal, however, was not heeded.

The most recent manifestation of this profoundly justified and widespread concern was the Joint Declaration of 22 May 1984 made by the Heads of State and Government of six countries from five continents, including my own country, which stated:

"We come from different parts of the globe, with differences in religion, culture and political systems. But we are united in the conviction that there must not be another world war. On this, the most crucial of all issues, we have resolved to make a common effort in the interests of peace."

(A/39/277, p. 4)

That joint effort proved to be necessary because, as the initial paragraph of the Joint Declaration states:

"Today the survival of mankind is in jeopardy. The escalating arms race, the rise in international tensions and the lack of constructive dialogue among the nuclear-weapons States has increased the risk of nuclear war."

(A/39/277, p. 4)

Six political leaders signed the Declaration, but there can be no doubt that they expressed the feelings of the overwhelming majority of the international community, both rulers and ruled. Their recent joint effort will no doubt be renewed and developed until the situation shows favourable changes and until their appeals and demands are heeded.

One of the signatories of the Declaration, Argentine President Raul Alfonsín, expressed this point clearly when he recently addressed the General Assembly. He said:

"... we shall continue our anguished clamour, because we know that our voice must be raised unceasingly in defence of peace." (A/39/PV.5, p. 6)

It is well known that appeals and exhortations very often do not make very much of a dent on rigid attitudes which disregard the interests of mankind. It is possible that policies leading to self-destruction will continue essentially unchanged, at least over the short term. But the day cannot be far off when the voice of all men on Earth will become a unanimous deafening roar, emphasizing a

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

single word, namely, "Enough". It is time to stop. We have had enough of being allowed to drift towards collective suicide; enough of nuclear-weapon tests that seek increasingly to perfect those apocalyptic weapons of mass destruction. We have had enough deployment of nuclear weapons on all continents, on all seas and on all oceans. We have had enough of squandering of precious human and material resources on colossal military outlays when the majority of mankind goes to bed hungry every night, remains without benefit of health and education and spends its unjustly brief life on this Earth in nothing less than the same conditions as those of their ancestors perhaps some 2,000 to 3,000 years ago, left totally outside the progress achieved by scientific and technological development.

When that voice of mankind is eventually heard with the tremendous weight of which it is capable - and that day cannot be far off - we shall wonder whether those responsible for making major decisions can continue with impunity and undaunted on the path towards the abyss. Those who lack power also have something to say about their future, and they will not shirk their duty or forfeit their right to do so.

The organized international community, as represented by the United Nations, has two specialized forums for debating and negotiating the various problems and issues which are often encompassed in a single word: disarmament. Those forums are known, respectively, as the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament.

My country has been taking an active part in the work of both those organs this year. Of course, it is idle and tiresome to repeat what is already well known: nothing concrete has emerged from the sessions of the Disarmament Commission and practically the same can be said of the work of the Conference. I said "practically" because in the sphere of chemical weapons, true negotiations were held, as indeed should be the case on all the items on the agenda of the Conference. A draft convention was submitted by the Government of the United States, which has been added to other documents previously and later submitted, constituting a broad body of documentation consistent with the special difficulties of this topic. The progress achieved was less than had been hoped for, but at least negotiations did take place.

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It cannot be forgotten, however, that on the vast majority of other topics the situation has been quite different. There are two cases in which the outcome is particularly disappointing. The complete banning of nuclear-weapon tests has been receiving considerable international attention for several decades, and if there is one subject which is now quite ripe for the conclusion of a treaty, it is certainly the banning of nuclear-weapon tests. Two draft conventions, one submitted by Sweden and the other by the Soviet Union, have still not been given the slightest consideration by the Conference, which is permanently prevented from embarking upon a substantive consideration of this question. Meanwhile, nuclear tests are going ahead in an ominous series without interruption, which promises ever more sophisticated and destructive nuclear weapons for the future.

Another highly disappointing aspect was the attitude of a few countries which made it impossible to establish within the Conference on Disarmament an ad hoc committee on the simple preliminary consideration of the question of the prevention of nuclear war. The non-aligned and neutral countries which make up the Group of 21 and which have always shown that they attach the highest priority to the consideration of this question - the broadest topic which in a sense encompasses all the others - made it clear during the arduous and lengthy talks to make a start on this subject that they were prepared to show the greatest flexibility in order to overcome the difficulties and apprehensions, sometimes inexplicable, held by some delegations on the matter.

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Notwithstanding these widely recognized efforts, it has not been possible to take any concrete steps at all. Such a highly disappointing outcome leads one to wonder whether the time has not come to seek other ways to give this highly important topic the consideration it deserves.

In 1984 the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space acquired special relevance. The Conference on Disarmament has had this matter on its agenda since 1982. Late last year the General Assembly adopted resolution 38/70 on the subject, which received extraordinarily wide support for a topic of this kind. Nevertheless, it has been added to the series of frustrations characterizing the work of the Conference.

Let it be quite clear that the responsibility for this repeated failure is not due to structural defects inherent in the Conference or to the lack of will of the great majority of its members. On the contrary, there is a general desire - certainly on the part of the vast majority - to enter fully into the substantive consideration of all agenda items, regardless of the positions taken by each delegation subsequently during the negotiations, which is, of course, only logical and natural. But in certain sectors there remains an unyielding distrust of the multilateral disarmament process, which on some occasions seems to extend even to the principle of disarmament itself. It is not necessary to elaborate further on this really unfavourable situation, which is quite well known, except to express the hope that recent positive manifestations will eventually lead to concrete action.

In the matter of outer space there was an unsuccessful attempt to initiate a bilateral dialogue. In this respect, I stated in the Conference - and I now repeat - that bilateral efforts in this field, while they can be useful, should contribute to the multilateral process and not develop outside this process, let alone impede it or render it null and void.

It would be redundant if I were to continue giving a detailed account of the various signs of stagnation and paralysis reflected in the work of the Conference on Disarmament now characterizing the multilateral negotiating efforts in the field of disarmament, which had given rise to so much hope at the time of the first special session on disarmament. There can be no doubt that this state of affairs cannot go on indefinitely and that 1985 must necessarily witness positive changes which will reverse a situation which, albeit well known, is none the less distressing.

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AS I recalled a moment ago, the Disarmament Commission held a totally unproductive session in 1984. But I believe that in that case, besides the unfavourable international climate, there were other reasons which made that outcome inevitable. The Disarmament Commission is the deliberative multilateral organ of the United Nations and it therefore follows that its essential function is deliberation - to consider certain disarmament questions in order to get a more thorough knowledge of the specific item and of the views and positions of countries on it, that is to say, the type of thorough consideration which it is not possible to have in the First Committee. If, as a result of that consideration, the Disarmament Commission can reach agreement on certain general conclusions, so much the better. But turning the Disarmament Commission - as is now happening - into a negotiating body on documents dealing with generally controversial issues and acting on the basis of a consensus - that is to say, unanimity - guarantees that it will be futile and in the long run will have a highly counter-productive effect because it leads to nothing practical and helps generate disillusionment and distrust in the multilateral disarmament forums.

Since the disarmament field is vast, it lends itself to the continued examination of its various aspects and manifestations. The geographical deployment of fleets equipped with the most modern arsenals - primarily nuclear weapons - is receiving consideration from a Group of Experts, which, we hope, will examine this question in all its political and security dimensions. The current situation is a relatively recent phenomenon which has introduced new elements into a traditional pattern, radically altering it. These are new facts which must be carefully examined.

In this context, it cannot overlook

"... the presence of a military force equipped with the most sophisticated armaments in the South Atlantic threatening the interests and stability of the entire area and constituting a dangerous intrusion of the East-West conflict into the region." (A/39/PV.5, p. 13-15)

This situation runs counter to the desire for peace which is categorically expressed by the Argentine Government, the most recent expression of which is the agreement arrived at with the sister Republic of Chile to resolve the dispute

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between us. The Government of Argentina will continue to draw on the ethical values of democracy, as has been emphasized by its Head of State in the General Assembly that ethical resurgence is a vital undertaking for our civilization, inasmuch as

"... the fact that the world order is increasingly defined by the arms race and financial greed is an ethical confusion." (A/39/PV.5, p. 17-20)

These will be the ideals inspiring the Argentine delegation at this session of the Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.