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FIRST COMMITTEE
6th meeting
held on
Friday, 19 October 1984
at 10.30 a.m.

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. de SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil)

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. McDonagh (Ireland)
Mr. Marinescu (Romania)
Mr. Petrovsky (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
Mr. Kapllani (Albania)

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 65 AND 142 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Ireland, who will speak on behalf of the ten member States of the European Community.

Mr. McDONAGH (Ireland): Sir, I have the honour to address the Committee on behalf of the ten member States of the European Community, on whose behalf I am happy to express to you our warmest congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. Your long experience in the field of disarmament and your skill as a chairman, so eloquently demonstrated last year when you presided with distinction over the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission, augur well for the progress of our work.

I also wish, through you, to convey our congratulations to the other members of the Committee.

Our Committee begins its work against a sombre international background. The process of arms control and disarmament, always a difficult one, has been made even more so by strains and mistrust in relations between East and West. The difficulties now existing in East-West relations and in the arms control and disarmament area are neither inevitable nor irreversible. The Ten are committed to working for improved East-West relations as well as for a reversal of the arms race. Effective measures of arms control and disarmament are so important that they should be vigorously pursued. The urgent need to take steps on the road to disarmament is underlined by the relentless growth in armaments, by certain potentially destabilizing technological advances in weaponry and by the expenditure on armaments of massive resources which could be better used to tackle the economic and social problems of all countries, particularly the poorest ones.

The ultimate goal is general and complete disarmament under effective international control. The Ten believe, however, that this goal can only be approached gradually. There are no quick or easy solutions to the problems of the nuclear age. Nor will rhetoric and declaratory resolutions shorten the road to that goal. They are an inadequate substitute for concrete and measureable action. The Ten seek therefore practical, concrete and verifiable steps towards disarmament - steps which preserve and, if possible, enhance the security of all States concerned. We believe that concerted international efforts should be

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directed at achieving stability at the lowest possible levels of armaments. To this end we need binding and adequately verifiable agreements providing for substantial and balanced reductions of arsenals, particularly of those weapons which are the most destabilizing.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole permanent multilateral negotiating body, has a particularly valuable role to play in the search for practical, concrete and verifiable steps towards disarmament. The Ten would like to see the effectiveness of the Conference enhanced.

In our time the international community is faced with the major challenge of bringing under control and reversing the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race. No one can view with complacency the possibility of a nuclear arms race being a permanent part of the international order. For the Ten therefore, nuclear arms control and disarmament is one of the highest priorities. Our common wish is to see the achievement of substantial and balanced reductions in the global level of nuclear weapons. It is because the United States and the Soviet Union are the possessors of by far the largest nuclear arsenals that the international community looks to them in the first instance for negotiated agreement on deep cuts in these arsenals. The two great Powers have a primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament and must give a lead.

The Ten profoundly regret that the closing months of 1983 saw the suspension of the negotiations between these countries on intercontinental strategic nuclear weapons and intermediate nuclear forces. The nuclear-arms race continues while the seats at the negotiating tables remain empty. If international security is not to suffer, it is crucial that the super-Powers should urgently resume these negotiations and pursue them actively with a view to reducing nuclear weapons to the lowest possible level.

Greater co-operation by all States is necessary to strengthen the present nuclear non-proliferation régime, which makes an important contribution to international security. Success in curbing and reversing the growth of nuclear arms would help strengthen the non-proliferation régime. As they have stated before, the Ten consider that the maintenance of an effective international non-proliferation régime is a significant element in the disarmament equation, provided that there is no violation of the inalienable right of all States to develop research on the production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination. The members of the European Community which are parties to

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the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will work for a successful third NPT review conference next year.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in certain parts of the world could contribute to stability in the areas concerned, to non-proliferation and to the disarmament process in general, provided that all States concerned are prepared to participate on the basis of agreements freely entered into and in keeping with internationally recognized principles. The fact that the Group of Experts charged with preparing an overall report on nuclear-weapon-free zones has made only limited progress so far is not altogether surprising given the political importance and complexity of this subject. The Ten support the continuation of this work.

If the nuclear-arms race requires urgent action by the international community, this also holds true for the conventional-arms race. The importance which the Ten attach to conventional disarmament as an integral and essential part of the overall disarmament process is borne out by the important study on conventional disarmament recently completed by the Group of Experts. The study rightly points out that while

"effective measures of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war have the highest priority ... conventional disarmament is, however, also a priority item as the conventional arms race contributes significantly to tensions and insecurity in the world, increases the risk of war - including nuclear war - and absorbs the greater part of global arms expenditures".

The Ten have consistently stressed the need for conventional disarmament, particularly in Europe, where the largest accumulation of weapons and forces in the world is to be found and where the need to achieve balance at substantially lower levels of forces is greatest. The experts' study also recommends that

"to turn the present conventional arms race towards the process of disarmament it is important that States should endeavour to reduce the problems posed by fear, distrust and misperception".

This is precisely what the Ten are seeking to achieve in Stockholm at the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. In conformity with the mandate agreed for the Conference we are seeking, in a first stage, negotiated agreement on a set of militarily significant and verifiable confidence- and security-building measures covering the whole of Europe and designed to diminish the risk of military confrontation there, thereby paving the way to a second stage of the Conference where the participating States would

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continue their efforts for security and disarmament in Europe, in particular by controlled reductions of armaments. We hope that our readiness to initiate substantive negotiations on concrete measures to make military behaviour more open and military intentions more calculable will soon be matched by all participating States. We hope too that the Conference in Stockholm will have tangible and solid results to report to the Vienna Review Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in 1986.

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Those of the Ten which take part in the negotiations in Vienna on mutual and balanced force reductions consider that progress in those negotiations would also represent a contribution to European security and to international security in general. They consider that the submission last April of a new proposal directed at resolving some of the most basic issues of the negotiations should permit real progress to be made towards agreement on conventional force reductions.

The Ten recognize the danger of an arms race in outer space, a matter of deep concern to all. Such a development would have serious implications for international peace and stability. The Ten are therefore of the view that verifiable steps to avert this danger should be the subject of negotiation, in particular between the United States and the USSR, with the aim of establishing a régime of mutual restraint.

Multilateral work by the Conference on Disarmament on questions relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space is also desirable. The proposals made recently at the Conference on Disarmament by several Member States of the Ten offer an important contribution towards further deliberations in this whole area.

The Ten regret that it has not so far proved possible at the Conference on Disarmament to achieve consensus on a mandate for an ad hoc working group. They hope that this will be achieved early in the next session.

The present situation shows an increasing reliance on space satellites for various military purposes. Many of these satellites have a stabilizing effect, as they contribute to crisis management, communications and control functions and the verification of arms control agreements. The existence and potential further development of anti-satellite systems pose, therefore, a problem of immediate concern.

Current research efforts in the field of anti-ballistic missile systems have also given rise to new questions about the long-term implications of an evolution of the relationship between offensive systems and ballistic missile defence technologies.

Against this background, the Ten regret that bilateral talks between the two leading space Powers have not yet taken place, and they hope that such talks will commence without delay. They have, however, been encouraged by recent statements by the leaders of those two Powers that both sides recognize that a dialogue to deal with this question is needed and that the two Powers believe that concrete

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commitments could facilitate the talks. In this connection, the Ten underline the continuing importance of compliance with the provisions of the 1972 anti-ballistic missile Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union.

A convention to prohibit chemical weapons is a very necessary disarmament measure. The Ten believe that three elements in particular are essential for a chemical weapons convention to be fully effective: first, a reaffirmation of the prohibition of the use of these weapons; secondly, provision for the destruction of existing stocks and production facilities and the prohibition of the future development and prohibition of such weapons; and thirdly, a reliable verification régime which ensures that these treaty commitments are being honoured. The international verification system should be balanced and reciprocal, with a degree of intrusiveness and a level of inspection commensurate with the requirements of effective implementation.

The horrible effects of these weapons were graphically demonstrated when they were used recently in the war between Iran and Iraq. All 10 members of the European Community have already taken measures to control the export of certain chemical substances which could be used for the production of chemical weapons. The Ten condemn the use of chemical weapons as a violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and urge those States which have not yet done so to affirm their condemnation of the use of these weapons by acceding to the Protocol.

Member States of the European Community have contributed actively to the work on a chemical weapons convention at the Conference on Disarmament, inter alia, through the submission of a number of important proposals. They welcome the fact that developments in this work this year have sustained the impetus which is needed to bring the work to a successful conclusion. The United States has submitted a complete draft convention to outlaw these weapons, and the Soviet Union has accepted the principle of continuous on-site inspection of destruction of stocks. These are positive developments which have enhanced the prospects for the negotiations. We hope that all parties will make the necessary efforts to overcome the important differences which remain to be resolved. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will so order its work programme as to permit the early conclusion of a chemical weapons convention.

The Disarmament Commission continues to undertake very useful work as a deliberative body in the field of disarmament. The Commission has made substantial

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progress in its work on confidence-building measures. This work demonstrated the priority which the majority of United Nations Members attach to militarily significant confidence-building measures involving concrete action which can be examined and assessed - for example, measures aimed at providing reliable information on military activities and intentions. The work so far accomplished will assist the future elaboration and implementation of confidence-building measures designed to reduce tension and thereby create favourable conditions for disarmament.

This year the Commission also considered the relationship between disarmament and development, and although the Commission did not succeed in presenting a unanimous report on this question it did agree that the world economy, and particularly that of developing countries, would benefit from appropriate international action that takes into account the close relationship between disarmament and development. This relationship is a complex one, and if it is to be given positive expression it will be necessary to consider carefully how this is to be done. A well-prepared discussion at an appropriate level might well give an impetus in this direction.

The achievement of a world-wide reduction of military expenditures would be one effective way of releasing additional resources for economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries. If real progress is to be registered in the Disarmament Commission's work on this matter, it is necessary that due acknowledgement be given to the importance of transparency, comparability and verifiability, based on regular availability of reliable data, in contributing towards the achievement of a global reduction in military spending. The Ten believe that the Secretary-General's standardized reporting instrument on military budgets provides the basis for establishing such transparency and comparability. They hope that a group of countries which are among the highest spenders on armaments and which have so far not taken part in this exercise will soon agree to do so.

The Ten welcome the fact that the Disarmament Commission made some real progress this year in considering the issue of South Africa's nuclear capability, even if, despite the efforts made at compromise, it did not prove possible to arrive at consensus recommendations.

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It is of considerable importance that the Commission has agreed on the essential objective: the refusal of any co-operation with South Africa which could contribute to a South African nuclear-weapons capability. The Ten are ready to continue working for consensus on this subject. The Ten also support efforts to bring about a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa.

I have earlier touched on some of the issues being considered by the Conference on Disarmament: the prevention of an arms race in outer space and a convention to prohibit chemical weapons. Notwithstanding the fact that the last year was a difficult one in international relations, in which the arms control process encountered new set-backs, the Conference, as the single multilateral negotiating forum, has continued its highly important work, to which Member States of the European Community have contributed constructively. It is disappointing that the work of the Conference has made little headway on questions other than a chemical weapons convention.

As regards the complete cessation of nuclear tests, the Ten recall the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament.

With regard to the agenda item of the Conference entitled "Prevention of nuclear war" and all related matters, members of the European Community have contributed to the search, so far unsuccessful, for a consensus on a mandate for an ad hoc subsidiary body which would permit consideration of the conditions and measures needed to reduce the danger of war, whether nuclear or conventional. The Ten hope that a solution will be reached at the next session of the Conference.

The work of the Conference on negative security assurances and on radiological weapons has not, in either case, yet reached a conclusive stage although it has contributed to a better understanding of the issues involved. Further work is obviously necessary in the search for agreement on effective international arrangements to protect non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of nuclear weapons. In the case of a radiological weapons treaty the Ten hope that it will prove possible to overcome the differences which remain in reaching agreement.

A number of studies on disarmament-related questions have been sent to this session of the General Assembly. Studies are not, of course, a substitute for disarmament measures, but they can be of real value. However, the growing difficulties encountered by many groups of experts warrant, in the opinion of the

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Ten, an in-depth consideration of ways to achieve a better use of the resources involved.

The study on conventional disarmament which I mentioned earlier is the first to discuss in broad terms, in a United Nations context, the nature, causes and effects of the conventional arms race. The conclusions and recommendations contained in the study are important and merit due attention and follow-up.

I wish also to express our appreciation of the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, which has achieved notable results with modest means. The Ten hope that the present session of the General Assembly will agree on a statute for the Institute.

I have presented the views of the Ten on a range of major disarmament issues. In conclusion, the Ten would like to express the sincere hope that in our approach to the work ahead of us in the Committee we will all demonstrate our willingness to contribute in a constructive spirit to furthering the goals of disarmament.

Mr. MARINESCU (Romania) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, it is a special pleasure for me to convey to you, in the name of the delegation of Romania, the warmest and sincerest congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee.

The active role played by Brazil in international relations, a country with which Romania has bonds of friendship, your qualities as a diplomat and negotiator, which have been vastly recognized, your vast experience in the area of multilateral diplomacy are the best auguries that under your chairmanship the work of the Committee will be fruitful.

I also wish to address these congratulations to the other officers of the Committee and to wish them every success in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Our Committee has just begun its work in international circumstances which are particularly complex and grave. We are witnesses to the deep and legitimate concern of peoples over the danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war which inevitably would lead to the destruction of mankind as a whole and of the very conditions for life on our planet. That is a real danger because the accumulation of enormous nuclear arsenals is taking place in a world-wide atmosphere where instability reigns and where there exist degrees of tension never encountered before. The policy of maintaining spheres of influence and domination and of

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dividing up new ones, the policy of force and the threat to resort to it are being intensified. Old conflicts among States have worsened and new ones have arisen; the manifestations of the present economic crisis, which affect practically all States and especially the developing countries, have become greater.

The assurances which we are given that nuclear weapons will not be used, despite the fact that there is feverish work going into their production and development, are not sufficient to reduce mankind's concern over the danger of its annihilation. Even if sincere, those statements could not bring peace to us since in present circumstances events could objectively take an irreversible turn towards nuclear catastrophe.

All those who wish to look at reality in the eye lucidly and responsibly cannot reach any other conclusion than that which has been repeatedly stressed by the President of Romania, namely, that the basic problem of our time is the cessation of the arms race and the accomplishment of substantial disarmament measures, and first of all nuclear disarmament, the preservation of the supreme law of nations and the right of peoples to existence, life, freedom, independence and peace.

More than ever before perhaps, the United Nations cannot adopt a passive wait-and-see attitude at this decisive turning point.

The nerve centre of tension in our contemporary world, of military competition, especially in the nuclear era, and of danger that a new war might break out is no doubt in Europe. That is where we find the most massive concentration of armaments, including nuclear armaments. That is where the two military blocs confront each other, leading to distrust and confrontation. The deployment by the United States of intermediate-range nuclear missiles in countries of Western Europe followed by the nuclear countermeasures announced by the Soviet Union have created a particularly serious situation in Europe. It is said that those measures are likely to strengthen the security of European States, but in fact they have led to a further increase in the danger of war and the destruction of the entire continent. No matter what the reasons adduced for deploying new types of nuclear missiles in Europe, in fact, they are not justified at all because the balance of forces and true stability in Europe and in the world do not depend on the accumulation of weapons but rather on their gradual reduction leading to their total elimination.

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Deeply concerned over the seriousness of that problem and its particularly negative implications for peace and security in Europe and in the world, Romania and its President have continuously worked to promote the Soviet-American negotiations in Geneva and to have them lead to positive results so as to prevent the deployment of new intermediate-range nuclear missiles and countermeasures and thus to reach appropriate agreements aimed at eliminating nuclear weapons in Europe. It is precisely to that end that Romania took the initiative at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly of raising the problem of the deployment of intermediate-range missiles, on which a lively debate took place.

We must note with deep regret that with regard to this crucial problem the General Assembly has not been able to address the two parties with a single voice - I am referring to the United States of America and the Soviet Union - as was the wish of the peoples, who are extremely interested in preventing a new stage in the arms race.

The reasons why Romania acted on the question of intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe continue to be valid and developments have fully confirmed the correctness of those reasons and have made them all the more topical.

The deployment of new nuclear missiles on the European continent, for whatever reason, cannot be viewed as a fait accompli and as an irreversible event, and we cannot accept views which tend to minimize the seriousness of the present situation.

Romania believes that nothing can justify those measures and that it is necessary for the United States to cease the deployment of nuclear missiles and then for the Soviet Union to stop taking nuclear countermeasures; the two major Powers should resume their talks with a view to the complete elimination of intermediate-range missiles in Europe, followed by the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The European countries on whose territory the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear missiles has begun or on which the emplacement of such weapons is envisaged bear a particular responsibility for the destiny of their peoples and for the fate of peace in Europe and in the world. At the same time, in the view of my country, it is necessary for all the States of the European continent and, first of all, the countries of the two military pacts, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty, to show a greater initiative and assume greater

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responsibility for defending the interests and the life of their peoples and of Europe and to participate actively in an appropriate manner in the conclusion of agreements and arrangements for the elimination of missiles in Europe and for the cessation of the race towards a nuclear cataclysm.

It is our firm conviction that in the very complex and difficult circumstances in Europe and throughout the world, it is now more than ever the duty of all Member States and of the United Nations to act with the greatest degree of responsibility to contribute to the quest for appropriate solutions in the interest of peoples, of détente and of stability throughout the world.

We are at a crucial moment in the efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament. We must fully realize that the failure of our actions, the maintenance and even the worsening of the situation with regard to weapons would be a historical mistake for which no one could escape responsibility. To allow that crossroad to pass would be tantamount to opening up a new and long phase of military competition, which would have unthinkable consequences for mankind as a whole.

Romania attaches the highest priority to nuclear disarmament, because in a future world war, in a nuclear war, there would be no victors and no vanquished; nuclear weapons will not take account of different social systems and will virtually destroy our planet.

My country is deeply concerned that while the Soviet-American negotiations on nuclear weapons have been interrupted and while the talks of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva are stalemated, vast programmes for perfecting nuclear weapons are being implemented, the militarization of outer space is on the way to becoming a reality and the spiral of military expenditures reaches levels which exceed anything one could have imagined a few years ago.

We have listened attentively to statements according to which the new weapons systems that are to be installed in outer space are intended to render nuclear weapons non-operational and obsolete. While at best one could attach a certain moral value to the intentions leading to such statements, one wonders why in order to arrive at that end one does not choose a simpler and less costly method, that is, to persevere with negotiations sincerely in order to end the production of nuclear weapons and thus gradually to reduce their numbers until they are totally eliminated.

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It seems to us that that would be the surest way to protect mankind from a nuclear cataclysm. That would be the surest way to maintain stability in the world and safeguard world peace and security.

We believe that it is absolutely essential to agree on concrete measures to prevent an arms race in outer space and to bring all States strictly to respect the obligations entered into under existing international agreements and to ensure the effective use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes in the interest of all mankind. In that connection, we support the proposal of the Soviet Union for the commencement of talks to prevent the militarization of outer space as well as other proposals which have been submitted by other States to the same end.

In circumstances where the immense quantity of nuclear weapons accumulated by the United States as well as by the Soviet Union can destroy mankind in its entirety at least 10 times over, the question cannot be presented as though a few hundred missiles more or less could make a difference in the power relationship between the two parties. There is therefore no justification for continuing to experiment and to produce new nuclear weapons.

That is why we believe that it is high time for the Soviet Union and the United States to resume talks in all areas concerning nuclear weapons and that those talks should lead to a conference at which all nuclear-weapon States would participate with a view to halting the production of new nuclear weapons and proceeding to their gradual reduction until they are completely eliminated.

We insist on those talks being held, especially since preparations for the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have already begun, a Conference which, in our view, will be a major political event within the framework of the concerns of States over the qualitative and quantitative developments in the military field.

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As is well known, the nuclear-weapon States, under article VI of that Treaty, have committed themselves to pursuing negotiations in good faith on effective measures for the cessation of the nuclear-arms race at an early date and for nuclear disarmament and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

The fact is that those obligations have never been fulfilled and that we are witnessing an unprecedented acceleration, quantitatively and qualitatively, in the nuclear-arms race, which is likely to affect the viability of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The deployment of missiles and of nuclear weapons in general on the territories of other States Parties to the Treaty constitutes in reality proliferation of nuclear weapons, a violation of the fundamental purposes of the Treaty, because the non-nuclear-weapon States on whose territories such weapons exist assume a certain role in their use and thus, even though indirectly, become nuclear-weapon States. It is necessary that the forthcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons undertake to a serious assessment of the new situation that has arisen, demand the withdrawal of all nuclear weapons which are on the territories of other States and adopt effective measures to give the non-nuclear-weapon States firm guarantees that they will never in any circumstances be victims of the use of nuclear weapons or the threat of their use or of force in general.

Any realistic approach to the complex problems of disarmament requires that there be a proper relationship between the questions of nuclear disarmament and those of the prohibition of other weapons of mass destruction and the reduction of conventional armaments.

We are in favour of speeding up negotiations within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva so as to arrive as soon as possible at a generally acceptable agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons. The proposals submitted at the Conference over the years offer a sound basis for attaining that objective without delay, and the agreement should be envisaged as an integral part of the efforts for the prohibition and elimination of all means of mass destruction.

As a European country, Romania attaches great importance to the work of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe and has decided to make every effort, in co-operation with all the other

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delegations, to ensure that that Conference contributes to strengthening confidence and security in Europe and thus fully responds to the hopes of the peoples for the achievement of disarmament, and first of all nuclear disarmament, so as to create a united Europe without nuclear weapons, a Europe of peace and co-operation among all States regardless of their social system.

In our view, the Vienna negotiations could be freed from the current impasse if there is action with responsibility, if there is the required political will to achieve tangible measures on the reduction of armaments and forces in central Europe. It would thus be demonstrated that it is possible to reverse the escalation of the arms race and move in the direction of the creation of a balance based not on an increase but on a reduction of forces and armaments.

Always working for the establishment of zones of peace free from nuclear weapons in Europe and in various parts of the world, Romania is striving for the development of co-operation with all the States of the Balkans, for increased confidence and co-operation among those countries and for the conversion of that region into a zone free from nuclear weapons and foreign military bases.

It is the view of Romania that a realistic way in which to achieve considerable progress towards disarmament would be the freezing and reduction of military expenditures by all States, and in the first place by the major countries, which are heavily armed, and the use of the funds thus released for the economic and social development of those countries, and to support the efforts of the developing countries.

We do not believe that anyone needs to be convinced of the fact, supported by the analysis of many studies and statistics, that the increase in military budgets to the abhorrent levels they have reached at present has adverse effects on the economic, political and social life of the peoples.

The policy of armament and increasing military expenditures adds to the mistrust and instability in the world, maintains violence and a feeling of uncertainty and fear and feeds a war psychosis. The hopes that the enormous military budgets and the manufacture of more and more sophisticated and costly weapons would bring a solution to the current economic and financial crisis are illusory.

It is easy to see that in a whole series of heavily armed States where the rate of growth in military expenditures in recent years has been among the highest,

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unemployment continues at a high level, as also does the public debt, while the renewal of economic activity continues to be uncertain.

If we insist on the need to freeze and reduce military budgets, we do so not only because of the positive effects such action would have at the political level but also because the tangible results thus obtained could have a most favourable impact on the settlement of other major questions which mankind is facing today. No other disarmament topic is perhaps so near to the heart of the two major problems of the contemporary world, disarmament and development.

On the basis of the necessity to put an end to that scourge, which saps the energies and resources of the peoples, Romania has repeatedly made specific proposals with the object of freezing and reducing military budgets. My country has, furthermore, decided to freeze its armament expenditures until 1985 at the 1982 level and has proposed that the States of the two military alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Treaty, agree jointly to reduce the military expenditures until 1985 by 20 per cent as compared with the 1982 levels.

We are pleased that more and more Governments are beginning to examine with greater attention the question of freezing and reducing military budgets. The views that have been expressed and the proposals that have been made, while based on different approaches, nevertheless reflect ultimately a concern which we find normal and inevitable in view of the harmful effects of those phenomena, to which sooner or later remedies will have to be found.

Furthermore, we are convinced that the efforts to harmonize the positions of States so as to facilitate specific negotiations on freezing and reducing nuclear budgets being made in the United Nations Disarmament Commission are more topical today than ever. In that context, I wish to reaffirm my country's determination to continue to work, together with other States, to speed up and conclude the process begun in 1981 for the identification and elaboration of principles governing negotiations among States with a view to the conclusion of international agreements on freezing and reducing military expenditures. In addition, the Romanian delegation intends to submit at this session, in concert with other delegations, a draft resolution which would ensure the political and procedural framework necessary for the attainment of that objective as soon as possible.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

No other problem faced by mankind today concerns all the States Members of the United Nations so directly as the problem of disarmament. The danger of war is so serious that there can be no justification for resigning oneself to the present situation. All States, without regard to size or military potential, that have deep feelings of human solidarity are participating actively in the attempts to settle this major question of international life. The situation is so serious that its solution cannot be left to a reduced number of States. We should therefore use to the maximum the multilateral democratic machinery for disarmament discussions and negotiations, machinery based on the principle of the equality of all States, as established by the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament, in 1978.

There are many causes for the totally unacceptable state of affairs within that machinery. We believe, however, that first and foremost among those causes is the unfortunate lack of sincere, firm and genuine political will, which all States should demonstrate during disarmament negotiations. It is precisely that fact that we must bear in mind in all efforts to organize on more efficient bases the activities of all the deliberative and negotiating bodies within the United Nations system. It must never be forgotten that no such efforts, no ideas designed to improve and rationalize the future activities of those bodies can be accepted in principle or be valid from a practical point of view if there is not complete observance of the right of each State to participation and direct expression, to unhindered exercise of its initiative.

While we have always recognized the importance of bilateral talks and of the role they play in the whole series of efforts designed to halt the armaments race and to reduce armaments, and first of all nuclear armaments, we cannot accept the automatic transmission of the difficulties or the impasse encountered in such bilateral talks to the multilateral negotiations. Nor can we allow the blocking of or a lack of flexibility in bilateral negotiations to inhibit the activities of the United Nations, whose central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament have been recognized. We wish very seriously to emphasize once again the need to observe the provisions of the Final Document of the General Assembly's first special session devoted to disarmament, under which disarmament negotiations,

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both bilateral and multilateral, must be mutually supportive and an organic part of the efforts to ensure the implementation of the joint goals established in the Programme of Action drafted and adopted by the first special session.

The only way to prevent the danger of a new world war, which would inevitably lead to nuclear catastrophe, is to proceed to effective negotiations on disarmament, and above all nuclear disarmament. To that end, we must not simply wait for the results of the talks between the two super-Powers. It is within the purview of the United Nations, of all Member States, of us all, to contribute by the decisions that we shall adopt to the resumption of these negotiations and to the conclusion of agreements that can end the present policy of tension and proceeds arms build-up, in order to ensure that disarmament, and in the first place nuclear disarmament, and that peace is maintained and that there is co-operation based on the principle of equality and independence.

That is the idea that governs the Romanian delegation's participation in the work of this Committee.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation has already had occasion to express its views on a number of major aspects of the prevention of nuclear war, including the prevention of the spread of the arms race to outer space. Today we should like to set forth our views on ways and means of eliminating the nuclear threat altogether.

The harsh truth of the current international situation is that this threat is indeed grave, and unfortunately it not only is far from diminishing - as some people try to claim - but is in fact continuing to grow.

If the potential for nuclear destruction that now exists in the world were to be unleashed, the human race would become extinct. Yet, as of today, this potential has not been reduced by a single missile or a single bomb; instead, it continues to increase steeply. And for this there is one obvious reason: the policy of the United States, which, with what amounts to an obsession, is seeking ever new areas for an arms build-up, in order to gain military superiority; and which, at the same time, refuses to consider any disarmament proposals, having in effect disrupted the entire process of arms limitation and reduction.

The destructive implications of a further build-up of military arsenals are obvious to all who soberly assess the realities of the nuclear missile age. Nuclear weapons have now been moved closer to their targets. The delivery time of

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these weapons has been reduced to a point where some irresponsible adventurers might be tempted to use them in a surprise move. The nuclear arms race is approaching that fateful Rubicon beyond which it would be far more difficult to stop that race than it is now.

An increasing build-up, greater sophistication and an expanded geographical range for the deployment of nuclear weapons are all increasing the risk of war as the result of accident or technical error. But the main danger today - and I stress this - lies in the fact that preparations for nuclear war are deliberate and calculated.

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New intercontinental MX and Midgetman missiles are being developed or even deployed, together with Trident nuclear submarines and missiles, new B-1B and Stealth strategic bombers and air-, sea- and land-based long-range cruise missiles. The United States nuclear arsenals are now filled to overflowing. What is more, the United States Administration is planning to bring its strategic potential to 20,000 nuclear warheads by 1990. At the same time it is modernizing forward-based nuclear systems. By deploying new missiles in Europe it is creating the so-called Eurostrategic nuclear arsenal to reduce the distance for a surprise attack. It has started full-scale production of neutron weapons - intended basically for Europe - and these weapons could become the detonator of a universal nuclear war.

Of course, the United States will not succeed in upsetting the existing balance of forces or gaining military superiority. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries will not allow this to happen. The balance will be restored, but at a higher level.

The qualitative characteristics of the latest nuclear weapons being deployed by the United States - such as accuracy, yield, flight time, targeting and retargeting speed - clearly show that the United States is preparing for a first nuclear strike. This is also clearly demonstrated by the vigorous efforts to develop a large-scale anti-ballistic missile defence system designed to provide an impenetrable shield and make it possible for the United States to deliver such a strike with impunity.

The United States would like, of course, to stay on the sidelines in a nuclear war and sit it out across the ocean. It is obvious, however, that, once unleashed, a nuclear war would become irreversible and quickly and inevitably develop into a global catastrophe. Whereas in the past - to use the words of Clausewitz, a major military authority of the nineteenth century - a policy could place "the forces of war" under its rational control and turn its "terrible fighting sword" into an "easily controllable rapier", nuclear war today has become a sword which, once drawn, cannot be sheathed. Only by ignoring the realities of our time can one fail to see that no matter how or where a nuclear tornado was created it would inevitably sweep across the entire planet. The first use of nuclear weapons - to put it figuratively - would be the crossing of the Rubicon and would inevitably jeopardize not only the existence of the guilty country but also the very survival of all mankind. The hope of winning a nuclear war is an utter illusion,

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whatever its type - global or limited, blitzkrieg or protracted. In such a war, instead of one side winning and the other losing, all mankind would be the loser.

World-renowned experts are unanimous in their authoritative view on the monstrous consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. According to International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, the use of one tenth of the nuclear weapons which figure in the United States plans for waging a nuclear war would claim 314 million victims of nuclear strikes in Europe alone - I stress that. The estimates of the authors of a World Health Organization report entitled "The Consequences of Nuclear War for Health and Health Services" are that over 2 billion people - about half the earth's population - would instantly fall victim to a total nuclear exchange, while the other half would succumb to its longer-term effects.

Academician Evgeny Chazov, an eminent Soviet scientist and Chairman of the Soviet Committee of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, points out that far too many things are still unknown about the devastating impact of the use of nuclear weapons on our planet. In this context he notes that almost 40 years had passed since the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki before scientists were able to discover yet another possible effect of nuclear war - the so-called nuclear winter, an abrupt and protracted period of cold which can spread throughout the entire world as a result of pollution of the atmosphere by a huge amount of dust and smoke.

That is why there can be no justification for any actions that push the world towards nuclear war, nor any justification for even thinking that the unleashing of nuclear war is permissible. Yet only recently the world heard a blood-chilling joke which proved that unfortunately there are people who still harbour such thoughts.

It was only natural that an overwhelming majority of the Members of the United Nations voted last year in favour of a declaration condemning nuclear war as the most monstrous crime against peoples, on the basis of an initiative of the Soviet Union. As a follow-up action, the socialist States have proposed that all States be recommended to consider the inclusion of provisions condemning nuclear war in appropriate unilateral and joint political statements or declarations.

The Soviet Union, for its part, is working to make sure that nuclear weapons are never employed and that the use of military force in general is excluded from relations between States. Our military doctrine is purely defensive, and we do not seek any military superiority.

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The USSR has assumed the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. This is not a mere declaration. In military terms this decision means that in building up armed forces more attention will be given to the objective of preventing armed conflicts involving conventional weapons turning into nuclear conflicts, thus necessitating the introduction of even stricter standards in the training of troops and military staffs, the establishment of the arms mix and the organization of stricter controls designed to rule out the unauthorized launching of nuclear weapons, whether tactical or strategic.

If those nuclear Powers that have not yet done so were finally to respond to the appeal of the General Assembly to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons, following the Soviet example, this would amount to the renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons altogether. This comparatively simple move would be a truly historic step that would strengthen international trust and make a practical - I stress "practical" - contribution to the prevention of nuclear war. Such an obligation could be unilaterally assumed by each nuclear-weapon State. This is the shortest way to the desired end, requiring no special negotiations or agreements. At the same time the Soviet Union would be willing to accept the proposal made at the last session by some non-aligned countries that the commitment of nuclear Powers not to be the first to use nuclear weapons be incorporated in a single international legal instrument, such as, for example, a convention. We are also ready to support the proposal of the non-aligned countries concerning the conclusion of a convention banning the use of nuclear weapons to which all nuclear Powers would be party.

We say to other nuclear Powers - let us together finally take specific, tangible action to save mankind from the threat of the use of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union believes that the possession of nuclear weapons confers no special rights or privileges on States, but rather places a special responsibility upon them.

Konstantin Chernenko, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, has noted:

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"Today, the possession of powerful nuclear capacity is an onerous burden. I am speaking of the burden of the very great responsibility that this places on statesmen, demanding of them a most serious attitude to the questions of war and peace and to conflict situations."

The desire to save mankind from the nuclear threat underlies the Soviet proposal that the conduct of nuclear-weapon States should be governed by certain rules, which they could agree to recognize and make binding. Our delegation expressed its views on this subject on 17 October. Today I wish to amplify them as follows.

The assumption by nuclear Powers of the proposed obligations - and they are obligations, not privileges - would not mean that those Powers would stand apart from the world community or would make up any kind of nuclear club. This would not only be in the best interests of the nuclear Powers themselves, but also in the security interest of all States without exception. Those obligations would make more concrete the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter specifically applicable to situations of the United Nations Charter involving the threat of nuclear war, with a view to its elimination.

Agreement on and the adoption of rules of conduct by nuclear-weapon States would also give effect to the provision in paragraph 58 of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which states that all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, should consider as soon as possible various proposals designed to secure the avoidance of the use of nuclear weapons and the prevention of nuclear war and should participate in efforts to bring about conditions in which a code of peaceful conduct of nations in international affairs could be agreed, thereby ensuring the survival of mankind.

As representatives know, all nuclear Powers supported the Final Document, therefore a legitimate question arises. Why are certain nuclear Powers now evading negotiations on the rules of conduct proposed by the Soviet Union? What has changed since the time of the adoption by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament of this extremely important document, which enjoys the assent of everyone here in this room?

While recognizing the special responsibility of nuclear Powers for the prevention of nuclear war, we believe that all States, nuclear or non-nuclear,

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non-aligned or members of military political groupings, must join in vigorous multilateral efforts. In our view, such collective efforts could produce tangible results at the Conference on Disarmament, where talks must begin without delay in order to reach agreement on practical measures to prevent nuclear war, as has repeatedly been called for by the General Assembly, the Chairman of our Committee, Mr. Souza e Silva and the representative of Mexico, Mr. Garcia Robles. Our specific ideas on this subject are reflected in the working paper on the prevention of nuclear war that was submitted by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in late March 1983 at the Conference on Disarmament.

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We share the view expressed by many delegations at this session of the General Assembly that the interests of preventing nuclear war would be served by the normalization of Soviet-American relations and by the resumption of constructive dialogue and talks between the Soviet Union and the United States. We are constantly aware of the responsibility borne by our two countries. The Soviet Union needs no convincing of the usefulness of dialogue and negotiation; that is our policy, a policy not dictated by expediency, but rather by the interests of preventing nuclear war and securing universal peace. We have always been ready for serious and businesslike talks, and we have said so more than once. If Washington shows true interest - I stress "true" interest - in solving the urgent problems of the day and, above all, in curbing the arms race, we shall not be found wanting.

It is clear, however, that mere professions of peace and declarations of readiness for dialogue are not enough. Formal gestures towards negotiation are not worth much. Words about readiness for dialogue not matched by practical deeds have a hollow ring. In this connection I should like to recall the words of the founder of our State, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, words which have taken on particular urgency and relevancy today. He said that what is needed in matters of war and peace is:

"... a minimum of general assurances, solemn promises and grandiloquent formulas, and the greatest possible number of the simplest and most obvious decisions and measures that would certainly lead to peace, if not to complete elimination of the danger of war".

We are profoundly convinced that it is precisely such decisions and practical measures that can lead to removing the threat of annihilation from mankind.

Negotiations are not like art for art's sake. They must be aimed at achieving concrete results. Therefore, we are against negotiations for negotiations' sake; we are against their being a mere backdrop for an arms build-up. Negotiations must lead to specific agreements on the number-one issue of modern international politics: that of nuclear armaments and of limiting and narrowing the material basis of nuclear war.

In the light of the above, the USSR has favoured and continues to favour negotiations on the limitation of nuclear arms, both strategic and medium-range, on the basis of the principle of equality and equal security. But these negotiations should be businesslike and serious. The Soviet Union will not negotiate so long as new United States missiles being deployed in Europe are targeted against Soviet

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territory, that is to say, under conditions that are tantamount to an ultimatum. The United States must remove the obstacles to negotiations which it has created.

It has often been asked whether, since it is difficult for the time being to arrive at a radical solution to the problem of nuclear weapons, it would not be possible to take steps to facilitate progress towards this goal and to create a more propitious atmosphere for reaching it.

Our answer is a very clear and simple one: such steps are both possible and necessary. We have already spoken of the significance that the prevention of the militarization of outer space would have in this regard. In the matter of limiting the nuclear arms race, an effective measure of this kind would be a global freeze on these weapons, with effect from a given date.

We note with satisfaction that last year's proposal by the Soviet Union on this subject met with the understanding and support of the majority of the Members of our Organization. This is also the thrust of the joint declaration by the Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania, addressed to all nuclear States. A number of other States from various regions have also joined in sponsoring that declaration. All this shows that everyone is keenly aware of the need for a nuclear arms freeze. All nuclear Powers should, of course, participate in the implementation of such a measure, because there is a need to call a halt to the nuclear arms race once and for all. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union is prepared to agree that the obligation to freeze nuclear arms would apply first to the Soviet Union and the United States. The White House still has before it our official proposal that the USSR and the United States should first agree between themselves to freeze their nuclear arsenals, thereby setting an example for the other nuclear Powers.

At present, there exists a favourable basis for initiating a nuclear arms freeze, namely the military parity between the Soviet Union and the United States, the existence of which has been repeatedly recognized by the General Assembly. Its resolutions 37/100 B and 38/73 E clearly state that the USSR and the United States are now equivalent in nuclear military power and that there exists between them an overall rough parity. It is clear that, with a rough parity in military potential, agreement to halt the modernization and build-up of nuclear weapons could not prejudice anyone's security.

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In the face of the current highly dangerous military and political confrontation it is vitally important not to miss the opportunity to reach such an agreement. This would demonstrate the renunciation of plans to achieve military superiority, would put an end to the further build-up and development of nuclear weapons, and would strengthen the existing military and strategic parity, above all that between the Soviet Union and the United States, which is an important factor for peace and strategic stability. As a result, the threat of a nuclear conflict would be significantly reduced. Accordingly, the degree of trust between nuclear-weapon States would sharply increase and the general atmosphere in the world would take a decisive turn for the better.

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Aware of the fact that the threat of nuclear war also exists at the present level of military confrontation, the Soviet Union does not, of course, consider a nuclear-weapons freeze to be an end in itself. But by halting the nuclear-arms race, such a step would be decisive in facilitating subsequent agreements on the reduction of such weapons until they are completely eliminated.

A general and complete ban on nuclear-weapons testing could become a substantial impediment to the nuclear arms race; for if there were no such tests, then these weapons would not be perfected and improved. Thus a barrier would have been erected against the further development and manufacture of ever newer types and systems of nuclear weapons and their modifications and stockpiling, against their quantitative accumulation and, consequently, against the continuing escalation of the nuclear threat. Material on which to build such an agreement already exists; it is contained in the Soviet draft treaty submitted as long ago as the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. That draft treaty takes into account the degree of agreement reached during the discussion of this problem at the trilateral talks in recent years, as well as the views and suggestions expressed by many States, including views on the question of verification. In order to create more propitious conditions for producing such a treaty - which, in our view, is something on which the Conference on Disarmament should start work immediately - the Soviet Union has proposed that all nuclear-weapon States should declare a moratorium on all nuclear explosions with effect from a date to be agreed upon among them and pending the conclusion of a treaty.

We are in favour of an immediate resumption of the trilateral talks between the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban - talks which the United States broke off unilaterally in 1980.

The Soviet Union is also ready to ratify at any time - I stress "at any time" - on a reciprocal basis, the treaties it has concluded with the United States on the limitation of underground nuclear-weapon tests and on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

The Soviet Union believes that the prevention of nuclear proliferation is a major area of activity for ensuring peace and international security, a kind of "second front" in the struggle against the threat of nuclear war.

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Preparations for the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in 1985, are of the utmost importance. We believe this Conference should be prepared in such a way that it will become a new stage on the road towards strengthening the non-proliferation régime. One of the major areas of activity for the strengthening of the international non-proliferation régime continues to be expanding evermore widely the number of States adhering to the Treaty. The spread of nuclear weapons throughout the globe, their emergence in high-risk areas of military conflict would lead to the drastic destabilization of the world situation, an increasing of the risk of nuclear war and an escalating nuclear arms race. Within this context, the nuclear ambitions of such countries as South Africa, Israel and Pakistan are a source of grave concern.

Of great importance for the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation régime is providing security guarantees for non-nuclear States. We believe that the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States which have no such weapons on their territory should be recognized by nuclear States as a rule of conduct which should be made binding on them. The Soviet Union, as is well known, has already assumed unilaterally such an obligation. I should also like to recall in this regard our proposal for the conclusion of a convention which would ensure non-nuclear-weapon States having no nuclear weapons on their territories that there would be no use of nuclear weapons against them. The Soviet Union - and the Soviet delegation is authorized to state this today - is also prepared to conclude appropriate bilateral agreements with any such State.

We share the view expressed by many States at this session that an important element in the struggle for strengthening international security and strengthening the non-proliferation régime is the establishment of nuclear-free zones. Such zones are not Utopian, as is shown by the conclusion of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, namely, the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Efforts in this area have thus already produced results. These efforts have to be redoubled in all areas, step by step sweeping off the face of the Earth this nuclear smallpox.

In this regard I should like to reaffirm that the USSR has always consistently advocated the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world - in particular in Northern Europe, in the Balkans, in the Middle East and in

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Africa - and is in favour of a proposal by Sweden to create in Europe a zone free of battlefield nuclear weapons on both sides of the line between the Warsaw Treaty and the NATO States. A suggestion by some countries to establish a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific deserves positive consideration.

Of course, as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, the possibility of a nuclear catastrophe will continue to exist. Therefore, a policy of reducing nuclear weapons of all types until they are completely eliminated in all their aspects and varieties should also become, and even as of today, a rule of conduct for nuclear-weapon States.

One such weapon is the nuclear neutron weapon. For many years now in the Conference on Disarmament the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have been raising the question of drafting a convention on the prohibition of the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of these weapons. We should like to see the Conference finally embarking on negotiations with a view to the early solution of this problem.

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The way leading towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, in our view, must pass through the formulation of a programme of step by step disarmament which would envisage the gradual reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons until they are completely eliminated, and the achievement within that framework of agreements calling a halt to the development of new systems of nuclear weapons, the manufacture of fissionable material for the purpose of creating various types of such weapons, and the cessation of the production of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems.

One of the first steps in implementing a nuclear disarmament programme could be to prohibit the manufacture of fissionable material for weapons purposes. However, that measure cannot be isolated from other nuclear disarmament measures. There is here a need for a comprehensive approach, so that each and every measure would fit organically into the entire nuclear disarmament programme.

In formulating nuclear disarmament measures, it is necessary to negotiate appropriate verification procedures and modalities which would satisfy all parties concerned and would promote effective implementation of the existing agreements.

For the purposes of verification of certain nuclear disarmament measures, use could be made, in particular, of the experience of the control procedures of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as well as its resources in this field.

The Soviet Union is ready to participate in all activities connected with the negotiation of nuclear disarmament measures. Now the ball is in the court of the other nuclear Powers, primarily the United States, which is responsible for the fact that so far no negotiations on this subject have begun at the Conference on Disarmament. In our view, the General Assembly would be acting correctly if it were to issue another urgent appeal to the Conference on Disarmament to start immediately negotiations on the drafting of a nuclear disarmament programme.

Next year will mark the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, born in the crucible of the most bloody and destructive war ever known to mankind. The lessons of that war are enduring. One of the most important lessons is that war must be resisted before it has begun. The experience of history teaches us that in order to defend peace there must be the concerted and vigorous efforts of all peace-loving forces.

It was precisely through the united efforts of those forces that forty years ago an end was put to the horrors of the war unleashed by the forces of fascism and militarism. Today mankind - and we are profoundly convinced of this - must

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once again be reunited in the face of the threat of nuclear war. The risk of the total annihilation of mankind in that war cannot be compared to any other risk that mankind has ever had to face throughout its entire history. Since this danger is direct and unrelenting and affects each and every one of us, no State, large or small, has the right to stand apart from what is happening in the world in the supposition that the maintenance of international security is the business of the militarily significant Powers alone. These are issues which affect the vital interests of every people. Here there is no room for indifference. The crimes of the nuclear age can be committed only with the tacit agreement of the indifferent, who would themselves become the victims of those crimes.

However, this feeling of doom is alien to our view of the world. However difficult the world situation may be objectively, the present stage in the development of international relations is not insurmountable and no fatal inevitability of a catastrophe exists. It would be preposterous to believe that at the turn of the third millenium mankind, with all its wisdom and experience and with all its history of tragedy, could find itself unable to resolve the current urgent problems which now beset it.

Available accurate scientific data as to what the use of nuclear weapons involves make it impossible to shape policies on the basis of the worn out ideas that belong to the Middle Ages, as if differences in world views of States and nations can be solved by fire and sword. That is why in the nuclear missile age it is necessary to have a political mentality commensurate with the realities of the age, and where such concepts as strength, deterrence and superiority still prevail, they must be replaced by concepts of the non-use of force, trust, equality and mutual regard for security interests. In other words, we need to embark on a policy of realism, common sense and business-like co-operation in solving the problems facing mankind. We are firmly convinced that what is needed without any delay is to correct the present alarming tilt in international developments, to halt and reverse the arms race and to reduce and ultimately totally eliminate the threat of war. But that cannot happen by itself. Konstantin Chernenko, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, has emphasized:

"Now is the time for all peace-loving States, big or small, to do all they can to prevent a further escalation of the arms race and increasing war hysteria."
No one can free States from the obligation they assumed under the United Nations

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Charter to join forces "for the maintenance of international peace and security" so that a world without arms, a world without wars, would replace a world of arms.

I believe that the current session of the General Assembly could contribute to that end. In our view, by collective efforts it would be possible at this session to chart the routes on the road map leading to the halting and reversing of the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, and eliminating the threat of war.

For its part, the Soviet Union will co-operate fully with all States that are prepared to contribute to the prevention of nuclear war by concrete practical action. The Soviet Union will be on the side of those who do not just pay lip service to the nuclear threat, but who actually fight against it.

Mr. KAPLLANI (Albania): Sir, allow me at the outset to congratulate you warmly and sincerely upon your election as Chairman of the First Committee.

For a long time now the deafening noise about disarmament has occupied a considerable place in the propaganda arsenals of the two super-Powers. This fuss about disarmament has been intensified from year to year here in the United Nations too. For their part, the democratic and peace-loving countries and nations are deeply concerned about the aggressive policies of the super-Powers, their militaristic course and the unbridled arms race, which are leading the world towards new manslaughter. Mankind has gone through the horrible experience of two world wars, one more devastating than the other. Now mankind is approaching the end of this century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, but it would in no way wish to inaugurate this with a third world war, which would undoubtedly have catastrophic consequences.

Not a single day goes by without the super-Powers preaching and alleging that nothing is of greater concern to them than arms control and disarmament. In fact they have proceeded continuously and intensively with their arms race. New types of weapons of all kinds have been added to the existing nuclear arsenals, intermediate-range nuclear missiles and sophisticated conventional armaments.

A characteristic feature of the policies of the super-Powers in our day is their militaristic course. In the final analysis, the feverish arms race in which they are engaged is a concentrated expression of these policies. As in the past, this year a number of speakers have again, either before the General Assembly or in this Committee, pointed out the fact that the super-Powers and the other imperialist Powers are spending astronomical sums on the production of weapons which can only spell death and destruction for millions at a time when in many countries and regions of the world people are dying from hunger and disease, which are a direct consequence of economic backwardness and savage imperialist exploitation. Colossal material, financial and human resources are devoted to the strengthening and perfecting of their war machines.

As if all this were not enough, those who are working out their war plans complain that these expenditures are not sufficient and much more is needed. They are demanding this with greater force of their allies, on whom they are putting pressure to show greater readiness to take upon themselves heavier responsibilities and greater burdens of arms expenditure. It is they who decide what kind of weapons should be produced and when, how and where they are to be installed. This was particularly evident in the big fuss the super-Powers made and the feverish

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manner in which they acted during the deployment of Euromissiles. They did not fail to make mutual accusations and hold each other responsible for the upsetting and the re-establishment of the equilibrium, but in essence it all boiled down to this: they wished to deceive the European and world public and to impose their own will upon the allies through faits accomplis. The truth is that, regardless of the widely publicized Geneva talks - initially the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and later the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) - on both sides in Europe the Pershing-II cruise and SS-20 missiles were deployed. Thus the super-Powers imposed their will on the European peoples and countries.

The United States imperialists, by increasing and strengthening their military presence in Europe, hoped to aim a heavy blow at Western Europe's ambitions to be a force independent of the super-Powers. The Soviet social-imperialists, for their part, are also exploiting the deployment of SS-20 missiles in Eastern Europe as a means of tightening discipline and pulling on the reins of their allies. The deployment of intermediate-range missiles in Europe is aimed, among other things, at benumbing and paralysing the will of the European peoples and countries to defend their national independence and dignity, enhancing the dictatorship of the super-Powers over them and legalizing the Soviet-American monopoly in nuclear weapons and missiles, that is, maintaining the pressure these weapons exercise even when not fired.

The following question now arises. What became of the widely advertised talks, with such impressive names as "SALT", "START" and so on in Geneva and elsewhere? They proved incapable of halting the spiral of the arms race. As a matter of fact such institutionalized conferences are merely well-calculated structures whose façade serves to hide the real arms race. When talks on disarmament are held and some sort of agreement is reached, or when such talks break down, or even when no such talks are held, it is of little significance for the freedom-loving peoples and countries, since in spite of all this the arms race goes on unabated as before. Hence the peoples cannot trust to or pin their hopes on the "goodwill" of the super-Powers or the measures they allegedly are taking in the direction of arms control.

There is no doubt that the deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe marks a new escalation of the arms race, which is assuming ever greater, indeed unprecedented, proportions, reaching even outer space. While some years ago there

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"star wars" was the subject matter of science-fiction films, nowadays some speak of "star wars" in real terms and even act accordingly. All this means that we are witnessing an arms race which knows no limits on land, on sea, in the air, or even in outer space.

Although we note that the two super-Powers have so far avoided a direct confrontation with each other, knowing the terrible consequences it would entail, and although we admit the extremely serious threat nuclear weapons pose to mankind, this should in no way make us forget the fact that local wars have continued and are going on to this day with the use of conventional weapons. Moreover, the arms trade in weapons of such types has become today a most profitable business for the super-Powers and other imperialist Powers. The arms trade is not only an outlet for their old arsenals, which brings fat profits, but a cunning device by means of which they penetrate the countries that buy the arms and try to place them under their political control.

Viewed in all its aspects, the arms race is being used by the super-Powers also as a means of easing to some extent the consequences of the grave crisis which has them firmly in its grip. However, the pretence that jobs are being created and unemployment reduced by expansion of the war industry in no way means that unemployment and inflation are really being kept down; it does not mean that the consequences of the crisis have been overcome. The so-called economic recovery which the United States is publicizing far and wide is not real. There are signs that the economic crisis, manifested in high unemployment and inflation rates, in disturbances of the international financial and monetary system, in the budget deficit and, particularly, in the skyrocketing debts of the developing countries, may reappear in a new and more dangerous form.

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Parallel with their arms race, the super-Powers have elaborated a number of theories and doctrines which are designed to serve the purposes of the implementation of their expansionist policy. Through such doctrines they also try to justify the vicious circle they find themselves in and the further continuation of the arms race. Regardless of the labels they put on these doctrines - such as "flexible response", "first nuclear strike", "winning an all-out war" - and regardless of the demagogic slogans and pledges about "non-first-use" which accompany them, people can see that, in real terms, all of them lead to war. Therefore we have good reason to say that disarmament remains an empty word which exists merely on paper and in resolutions and which is frequently uttered in endless meetings and conferences, but that in reality the super-Powers act in accordance with their imperialist logic of war. In our times, to believe the bombastic pledges about the "non-first-use of nuclear weapons" is mere self-deception. For it may be only a fraction of a second between the first and the second strikes. And even if it were the case that this fraction of a second was detectable in our computer age, what use would that be to mankind, which would be plunged into holocaust?

Faced with this stark reality of super-Power rivalry for world hegemony, which has them caught up in an arms race that mankind has never before witnessed, the Albanian delegation feels duty bound to speak out the truth as it is: that in the field of disarmament no effective step forward has been taken. In our view, this is not against the logic of things, which proves that there may be a rise or a fall in the tension and the tone of the polemics between the United States imperialists and the Soviet social-imperialists, there may be a resumption of talks and the striking of different bargains between them; but there is no real disarmament. In our opinion, the agreements and accords they have reached in the past as well as those that they may eventually conclude on strategic arms limitation are but convenient deals between them. Life and reality have shown that the most they may agree to is to define the number or the limit of the strategic weapons which they deem necessary to possess for themselves. But what kind of security would this be for the rest of us who do not even possess such weapons? We have all the more

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reason for cynicism when we see that the super-Powers do not fail to state that a small part of their nuclear arsenal is capable of destroying our planet several times over. So the consolation which the super-Powers offer us is that they might agree to reduce their nuclear weapons to a level that would be sufficient to destroy the world not 10 times over but just two or three times over.

Is this not a mockery of the sincere sentiments of the peoples that aspire to real disarmament and peace? We, for our part, have no illusions whatsoever on this matter. We hold that today more than ever before sovereign peoples and States must increase their vigilance and resolutely oppose imperialist policies and the aggressive course followed by the super-Powers.

The Albanian delegation is of the opinion that the ABC of any real disarmament is to destroy the political-military blocs of the super-Powers - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Treaty - and to drive their troops out of Europe and other parts of the world and dismantle the military bases there.

In conclusion, the Albanian delegation would like to emphasize that a sincere and open debate, from an objective and realistic point of view, free from any kind of prejudice and illusion about the perpetrators of the arms race, would help - however little - to ensure the correct orientation of the discussion of the problem, and would thus make an initial contribution to the peoples' efforts and struggle for real disarmament.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.