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FIRST COMMITTEE  
7th meeting  
held on  
Friday, 19 October 1984  
at 3 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. de SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil)

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**GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)**

Statements were made by:

Miss Dever (Belgium)  
Mr. Mansfield (New Zealand)  
Mr. Sucre Figarella (Venezuela)  
Mr. Vongsay (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

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Distr. GENERAL  
A/C.1/39/PV.7  
19 October 1984

ENGLISH

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

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 65 AND 142 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Miss DEVER (Belgium) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, as other speakers before me, I welcome you as a particularly clear-sighted and well-informed pilot, aware of all the pitfalls threatening the work of the First Committee and able to find us sure passage. In expressing my best wishes for success, I also express my conviction that you will succeed in your task.

The statement of the representative of Ireland as the current President of the European Community reflects the general feeling of uneasiness caused by the deterioration of East-West relations and by the present absence of any substantial dialogue, an essential instrument for understanding and rapprochement. That statement also indicates the few glimmers of hope that have recently appeared.

It is in the same spirit of trusting realism that I propose to develop some thoughts about the present state of the international discussion on questions of disarmament and the prospects it holds.

First of all, I wish to take up the work of the Conference on Disarmament, which is feeling the effect of the blocking of the talks on strategic weapons as a result of a unilateral decision by one of the parties.

The bilateral uneasiness also affects multilateral negotiations, in the field of both nuclear weapons and conventional weapons, including the process of improving confidence and security.

I shall not dwell on the various nuclear subjects that are dealt with within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament such as the prohibition of nuclear tests, the prevention of nuclear war and the cessation of the nuclear-arms race. The list of disappointments and frustrations would be long.

Nevertheless, Belgium reacted favourably to a new Japanese approach which could solve the thorny question of the threshold of detectability, an important element in verifying the complete prohibition of nuclear tests. In this connection, we believe that the most useful work of the group of scientific experts in seismology should be encouraged. The exercise involving the international exchange of data, planned to take place before the end of the year, will contribute to solving some of the technical problems.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

Although it is true that the debate on disarmament issues has made hardly any progress since the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, I should like nevertheless to warn against excessive pessimism leading to over-reaction.

Thus we do not believe that hard, intransigent General Assembly resolutions, particularly in the nuclear field, can improve the atmosphere for negotiations in Geneva.

The same is true for the functioning of the Conference in general. We must resist the temptation to turn the General Assembly into a court of appeal to examine and judge the failures of the Conference on Disarmament.

The principle of consensus must remain the very foundation of the Conference. Only that principle can ensure acceptable and lasting results for the whole international community and respect for the sovereignty of every participant.

The Conference on Disarmament remains the best multilateral instrument for drawing up valid disarmament agreements. Its work programme should not be overloaded. We should perhaps even eliminate certain secondary topics that the General Assembly traditionally requests it to deal with.

One objective that deserves high priority and which enjoys a broad consensus is the total prohibition of chemical weapons. Very serious efforts have been made along these lines since the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The United States has put forward a very detailed and substantial treaty, the first of its kind from a national Government. That draft - which is open for discussion and will enable us to carry out an in-depth analysis of it - covers all the aspects of a global prohibition of chemical weapons.

Other more limited but nevertheless valid initiatives have come to light, particularly with respect to the verification of the destruction of stockpiles. As is known, Belgium, like its partners in the European Community, recently established controls over the export of certain sensitive chemical substances, particularly key precursors.

In the light of this favourable trend, would it not be desirable to speed up the work of the ad hoc Committee on chemical weapons?

To conclude these brief comments on the Conference on Disarmament, I wish to refer once again to the question of its enlargement by co-opting four new members. As Belgium benefited from a similar enlargement, the continuation of such a process is of the highest importance.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

The choice of candidates whose devotion to peace and international co-operation is unquestionable would contribute to a successful continuation of the Conference on Disarmament and to the enrichment of its work.

The consideration of several international instruments affecting disarmament is most topical. Belgium is pleased that the Review Conference on the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques has demonstrated that there are still areas where confrontation can be avoided and where constructive dialogue remains possible.

The Review Conference on the Convention on the Prohibition of Bacteriological Weapons, for which preparations have already begun and which could be held in 1986, should make it possible to preserve this positive climate.

A third review conference will take place in the not-too-distant future. This will be on the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The second preparatory meeting has just completed an important stage, which we think augurs well for the holding of the Conference itself.

My Government remains profoundly wedded to the principle of non-proliferation and to the Treaty enshrining it. We believe that generalized acceptance of the discipline it imposes would diminish the danger of the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, such an acceptance would in our view increase international confidence and constitute a genuine guarantee for all those that wish to develop their scientific and energy resources.

Of course, Belgium remains aware of the special obligations of the nuclear-weapon States with respect to vertical proliferation.

A subject that for some years now has held the attention of the Belgian Government and which appears once again on the agenda of this General Assembly is that of the regional approach to disarmament. The usefulness of this no longer needs to be demonstrated. It has been amply corroborated by the facts since a considerable number of agreements already signed and negotiations under way have an undeniable regional impact.

The international community has subscribed to the concept of a regional approach to disarmament. I recall in this connection that all the relevant resolutions have met with very representative support and have been adopted without a vote or by consensus.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

In requesting the Secretary-General to submit a further report on the regional approach to disarmament to the forty-second session of the General Assembly, Belgium was seeking to pursue various objectives: to honour the moral mandate entrusted to it by the international community; to summarize the work accomplished pursuant to resolution 38/73 I and those which preceded it; to space out in time the reports requested from the Secretary-General in the hope that this will enable further substance to be given to the process of education, reflection and international awareness with respect to the regional approach to disarmament.

Allow me to conclude by stressing the importance that my delegation attaches to the concept of the transparency of basic data.

A large number of draft papers on disarmament attach fundamental importance to this concept. As examples I mention the reduction of military budgets, disarmament and development, the balanced reduction of forces and measures intended to increase confidence and security.

We note with regret that transparency itself has become a subject of polemics. Some regard this as an attempt to interfere in the national affairs of others. They enter this reservation as a pretext for leaving data and any discussion of their contents out of any exchange, even multilateral ones.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

In the case of Belgium, and many other countries, transparency remains a sine qua non condition for political credibility and responsibility, both in dialogue between Governments and their public and in international relations. The field of the limitation of armaments and disarmament, including verification, requires a strict application of this criterion of transparency.

The path to general and complete disarmament undoubtedly will be long and painful. Nevertheless, it will be dangerous to give up all hope. On the contrary, the difficulties facing us should encourage us to do everything in our power to draw closer gradually, but without delay, to this final goal by demonstrating as far as possible imagination and an open mind.

Belgium, for its part, will spare no effort to contribute to the achievement of this objective, to which all our peoples aspire.

Mr. MANSFIELD (New Zealand): Mr. Chairman, I should like first to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. Your skill and experience in the disarmament field are well known to us and were demonstrated particularly in your expert handling of the Disarmament Commission last year. We take heart from the commitment you have given to developing further the process of reforming the working methods of this Committee and assure you of the New Zealand delegation's co-operation and support.

May I also, through you, extend our congratulations to the other officers of the Committee on their election.

When my Prime Minister addressed the General Assembly last month he devoted a good deal of his statement to disarmament questions, which have in recent times assumed an increasing prominence in public debate in New Zealand. Mr. Lange set out clearly the major concerns of New Zealanders, particularly the grave worry of people in all sectors of the community about nuclear weapons and the continuing and deadly competition in their production, their refinement and their deployment.

As the Prime Minister noted, New Zealand is fortunate in its position in the world. We are remote. We live in a peaceful part of the world. We are neither occupied, nor threatened, nor beholden to another country. We have excellent relations with all our neighbours. For the longer term, our security is maintained through our membership in the Western alliance. New Zealand is a committed member of that alliance, as expressed through the ANZUS Treaty, which has linked Australia, New Zealand and the United States for the past 33 years and contributed to peace and security in our part of the world.

(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

Nevertheless, New Zealand knows that its future well-being, like that of all other countries, is threatened by the continuing accumulation of nuclear weapons. The growth in nuclear stockpiles has reached the point where all countries stand exposed to the most appalling consequences in the event of a nuclear war. Scientists now tell us that the global climatic and long-term biological consequences could be severe for all parts of the world, however remote, even if only a small percentage of the weapons in the present stockpiles was used.

This information serves further to convince New Zealand of its responsibility to do all it can to encourage an end to the arms race and the achievement of massive reductions in nuclear arsenals. Like other small countries, New Zealand knows that there are limits to what it can do. We depend primarily on the nuclear-weapon States and, in particular, on the Soviet Union and the United States for real progress. Like many others we have been frustrated that at a time when the need for serious negotiations between the major nuclear-weapon States has never been greater, we have seen a situation of an almost total impasse. New Zealand deeply regretted the decision of the Soviet Union last year to suspend its participation in the Geneva negotiations. We had hoped that the talks that had been scheduled to take place in Vienna last month might have provided a starting point for a resumption of negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, but so far there is no guarantee that these will occur.

My Prime Minister urged the Soviet Union and the United States to take a long hard look at the course of developments in the nuclear arms race. He said:

"It is clearly in their own interests and in the interests of all of us to make a new and very much more determined attempt to reach agreements that will enable them to change direction. None of us underestimates the complexities involved in reaching agreements that will permit a mutual, balanced, verifiable - and very large - reduction in existing levels of nuclear weapons. We are aware that it will not be easy to manage safely the transition to a more secure world where, as a stage in the road to their elimination, the number of nuclear weapons is drastically reduced and where innovations in weaponry, if they are to occur at all, are not of a kind that cause instability. That process will require trust and good will. It is also likely to require the taking of risks. But the most dangerous risk of all is to do nothing: to allow compulsive competitiveness to continue indefinitely." (A/39/PV.7 p.6)

(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

In the past few weeks there have been signs that give us hope. We are encouraged by the proposals made by President Reagan in his address to the Assembly and hope that these ideas might prepare the way for serious discussions leading to reductions in nuclear armaments.

New Zealand also hopes that the professed willingness of both the United States and the Soviet Union to enter into negotiations on outer space will be followed up and will lead to an agreement that will enhance the security and stability of all countries. We have been greatly concerned at the signs that the military competition between these two countries may in the years ahead move into the new environment of outer space. For the past 25 years, the activities carried out in outer space have held out a promise of an exciting future for all mankind. That promise, as well as the gains that have been achieved in the limited test-ban Treaty, the outer space Treaty and the anti-ballistic missile Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States, should not be jeopardized by an extension of the arms race into outer space.

If small countries are unable directly to hasten the pace of arms reductions, they are able to argue the case for particular measures that might lead to concrete steps to halt and reverse the arms race. For many years New Zealand's major effort in the disarmament field has been its advocacy of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty continues to be a primary goal for the New Zealand Government. We remain convinced that there is no clearer step that the nuclear-weapon States can take to demonstrate their commitment to the reduction of their nuclear arsenals than a treaty, with appropriate verification procedures, for the permanent banning of all nuclear tests in all environments for all time. Last year New Zealand, in conjunction with Australia, again put forward a resolution for the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. That resolution was adopted by a very large majority and had no negative votes recorded against it. We believe that it represented the highest level of agreement that could be reached at that time and held out the best prospects for practical progress towards the accepted goal of ending nuclear tests.



(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

The ideas contained in the resolution were taken up this year in Geneva in the context of assigning a mandate to an ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament to deal with the "Nuclear-test ban" item. Those ideas were accepted by a wide range of members of the Conference on Disarmament. It is disappointing, therefore, that despite the best efforts of many delegations to promote a pragmatic and realistic approach to the issue, the Conference on Disarmament was unable to break the procedural deadlock over the establishment of an ad hoc committee. Together with Australia, we shall again be putting forward at this Assembly a resolution that builds on the agreement that was evident last year in this Committee and at the Conference on Disarmament this year and which, we hope, will speed up work on the test ban.

My Prime Minister explained to the Assembly that New Zealand's advocacy of a comprehensive test ban does not stem solely from the fact that one of the nuclear-weapon States continues to test its weapons in the South Pacific. We want all nuclear testing, wherever it occurs, to end quickly, not simply French testing. France should, however, have no doubt that its nuclear tests in the South Pacific are a central concern to all Governments in the region. It should not think that, because many countries in our region are small and vulnerable, their repeated requests for those tests to stop can be ignored. At their meeting in Tuvalu in August, the heads of Government of the countries comprising the South Pacific Forum reiterated their strong opposition to that testing. New Zealand's opposition is not motivated solely or even primarily by environmental concerns. We object to the use of a relatively peaceful part of the world for developing and refining the instruments of nuclear war. We welcomed the practical assistance which France extended to the scientific fact-finding mission which visited the test site to assess the impact of testing on the atoll and its surrounding environment. The mission's conclusions may allay some of the public concern about possible health hazards and about radioactive waste management procedures in the short term. But they do not provide any basis for saying that the test programme is safe or that it should be allowed to continue. We are determined that nuclear tests in our region should stop.

As the New Zealand Permanent Representative said in the Special Political Committee two weeks ago, it was with dismay that we heard media reports from the test site at Mururoa reporting that it was France's intention to continue its testing programme in the Pacific for at least another 15 years - that is, to the end of this century - in order to perfect its nuclear strike force. When those

(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

reports came out, the Acting Prime Minister of New Zealand made it clear that if the reports are correct, the people of the South Pacific will regard this as a bitter blow to their hopes of seeing an early end to testing of weapons of mass destruction in their part of the world. My Government has protested vigorously to France and will continue to work with its South Pacific neighbours here at the United Nations and in other international bodies to ensure that the continued testing predicted in the news media reports does not come to pass.

New Zealand sees the conclusion of a test ban as a major step in controlling the further spread of nuclear weapons to other countries. We attach as much importance to the control of the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons as we do to ending the continuing accumulation of these weapons by the nuclear Powers. For this reason we see the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as fundamental to world security and we would like to see that Treaty more widely accepted. We intend to participate fully in the Third Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and we reaffirm our strong hope that the conference will lead to a strengthening of the Treaty and of the safeguard systems on which it depends.

My Prime Minister in his address to the Assembly noted the importance that regional initiatives can play in alleviating the nuclear threat. The Treaty of Tlatelolco is an example of one significant regional advance. Another is the Antarctic Treaty to which New Zealand is fully committed and will vigorously defend. That Treaty demilitarized a whole continent to the south of New Zealand and provides the only fully functioning and verifiable nuclear-free zone in the world today.

Recently the South Pacific Forum has taken up the proposal made by Australia for the establishment of a South Pacific nuclear-free zone. That proposal commands the full support of the New Zealand Government. At their meeting in August the heads of Government of Forum countries spelt out the principles that will be applied in constructing the zone: there should be no use, testing or stationing of nuclear devices in the South Pacific; no South Pacific country would develop, manufacture, receive, acquire or test any nuclear explosive device; nuclear activities in the South Pacific would be conducted in accordance with applicable international principles and treaties, notably the Non-Proliferation Treaty; the zone would respect the principles of freedom of navigation and over-flight; South Pacific countries would retain their unqualified sovereign rights to decide for themselves, consistent with their support for the objectives of the zone, their security arrangements and such questions as the access to their ports and airfields by vessels or aircraft of another country.

(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

In restating those principles to the Assembly, my Prime Minister said that, while a zone would not spare us from the consequences of nuclear war, it will significantly strengthen the existing measures, both global and regional, to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. It will convey a clear signal that countries of the South Pacific do not want their region to become an arena for rivalry involving nuclear weapons. New Zealand hopes to be in a position to report to the Assembly next year, and before that to the Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty, that good progress has been made in creating the South Pacific nuclear-free zone. New Zealand and other countries in the region naturally expect that when the necessary work has been done within the region, all the nuclear-weapon States will co-operate with us to ensure that the zone becomes a reality.

It is inevitable and understandable that nuclear weapons remain the major concern of Members of the United Nations, but it must also be remembered that there are other techniques of modern warfare that are not much less horrifying. The Biological Weapons Convention has outlawed one such class of weapons. The Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (ENMOD) has placed curbs on another shocking method of waging war. Those agreements are important milestones in the disarmament process, but we believe that their provisions should be kept under review. New Zealand supports the proposal put forward by Norway that a review conference of the biological weapons Convention should be held in 1986. New Zealand acceded to the ENMOD Convention in September this year and participated in the recently concluded Review Conference in Geneva. We did so despite the reservations that we have had about the manner in which that Convention was negotiated and about the scope of its provisions. The issues that most concern us were given a reasonable hearing at the Review Conference but we shall continue to work with other countries to broaden the coverage of the Treaty.

The international community is still waiting for the conclusion of a comprehensive convention to ban the production, stock-piling, deployment and use of chemical weapons. There were some signs of movement at the Conference on Disarmament this year that can only be welcomed from a session that was otherwise remarkable primarily for the lack of progress on nearly all of the items on its agenda.

(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

If the results of the negotiations were less than we might have hoped for, we can still take encouragement from the willingness of some of the major participants to take a more flexible approach. One of the most significant developments at the session was the presentation of a draft convention by the United States. We know that some of the provisions of that draft convention are not acceptable to all members of the Conference on Disarmament but we believe that as a whole the draft, together with the other proposals that have been submitted, should make possible further progress in dealing with an issue that is of increasing concern to everyone.

Events over the past year, which are highlighted by the Secretary-General's report on the allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Middle East, have brought home to all the urgency with which the negotiations at Geneva must be pursued. New Zealand fully supports the efforts that have been made by the Assembly to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning the use of chemical weapons in warfare until a more comprehensive convention has been adopted. It is fitting that at this session we have before us the report of the Group of Experts set up under paragraph 7 of resolution 37/98 D on the establishment of procedures for investigating alleged uses of chemical weapons. We congratulate the Group of Experts on the competent manner in which they have discharged their task. We look forward to the adoption by the Assembly of the necessary steps recommended by the experts to enable the Secretary-General to carry out the mandate assigned to him in any investigation into alleged uses of chemical weapons.

I have concentrated in this statement on those issues that are of particular concern to New Zealand. It should not be thought, however, that New Zealand attaches no importance to the other items on our agenda. Clearly the United Nations has a long way to go in dealing with the problem of conventional disarmament. As we are often reminded, by far the largest proportion of moneys spent on weaponry today goes to conventional weapons. This is a shocking diversion of resources that could be channelled into more productive activities. With this latter point in mind, New Zealand supports the initiative put forward by France last year on disarmament and development. We hope that the Assembly will agree on steps that will advance this initiative beyond the point at which it was held during this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. We also hope that the Assembly will find a way to bring to a successful conclusion the work undertaken in

(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

the Commission on confidence-building measures. It was disappointing that, despite the best efforts of a wide range of delegations, the Commission was not able to complete its work within the time-frame set by the Assembly.

Confidence and trust go to the heart of any agreement designed to curb the arms race. Earlier in my statement I recalled the words of my Prime Minister that the disarmament process will require trust and goodwill and that it is also likely to require the taking of risks. For such risks to be acceptable, the parties to the negotiations - particularly the nuclear-weapon States - must have a reasonable assurance that the measures to which they commit themselves can be adequately verified. It seems to us that what this requires is on the one hand a greater degree of openness in providing information and on the other a greater flexibility in considering verification proposals.

Trust and goodwill must also guide the deliberations of this Committee and the other institutions in the United Nations system devoted to disarmament issues. If we are frustrated at the lack of progress in the bilateral negotiations between the major nuclear Powers, the sessions this year of the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament give scant cause for satisfaction at the way the multilateral disarmament process is working. Too often these bodies have become bogged down in sterile procedural disputes. Too often the single-minded pursuit of preferred positions and of political point-scoring have prevented the practical progress that should have been possible. In this Committee we made a start last year in improving the manner in which we conducted our work, but at the end of the day we still passed more resolutions than ever before and with little practical result.

In concluding his address to the Assembly, my Prime Minister reaffirmed his faith in the United Nations and in the contribution that it can make towards bringing the nuclear arms race under control. In our view, it is only by concentrating on proposals that offer a realistic prospect of advancement and by avoiding resolutions whose real purpose is propaganda, not progress, that this body can satisfactorily discharge the responsibilities with which it has been entrusted by the international community. The New Zealand delegation will, for its part, do its best to make a constructive contribution to the debates at this session.

Mr. SUCRE FIGARELLA (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish):

Mr. Chairman, I have pleasure in congratulating you on your election to preside over the First Committee, a task you are carrying out with the wisdom and skill you have acquired during the years in which you have given such devoted attention to the important and complex subject of disarmament. As a Latin American I am particularly pleased to see a fellow Latin American assuming this important responsibility.

I should like also to express my gratitude to Mr. Vraalsen, Ambassador of Norway, whose exercise of the responsibilities of Chairman during the preceding session made a major contribution to ensuring that we gave responsible consideration to all the questions of disarmament.

My delegation feels more than ever before that this is indeed a fundamental responsibility. Those who live in our present civilization have talked more than any others about taking measures to avoid war. This Organization has adopted many resolutions along those lines, as so aptly recalled by Mr. Garcia Robles, the representative of Mexico. Yet, no other civilization has been so helpless and so threatened with total destruction. This paradox of the absurd should influence our deliberations and provide specific substance for our commitments.

We recall that the poet, Paul Valéry, said that all civilizations were mortal; but we might add that this is more true of our civilization than of any other, particularly since the political and economical climate of the present international situation, is unfavourable to negotiations on disarmament and development, which have been the main concerns of the United Nations since its establishment. In view of the increased confrontation between East and West and the threat posed to the world by the new spiral in the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, we must emphasize the triangular relationship that exists between disarmament, development and security. It is clear that no progress can be made in negotiations on disarmament or on the establishment of a new international economic order as long as there is no recognition of this fundamental equation, the interdependence of these three concepts. Furthermore, the security of each and every State will not be increased, but reduced.

The recognition of that interdependence led the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues - the Palme Commission - to develop the concept of common security. In this nuclear age, Venezuela considers this contribution to be most valuable and is at present participating in the work of the Group of Experts established in accordance with resolution 38/188 H to analyse security concepts, just as it participated earlier in the preparation of the study on the relationship between disarmament and development.

(Mr. Sucre Figarella,  
Venezuela)

In this connection, my delegation has studied with interest the report (A/39/229) prepared by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/84 of 9 December 1982. This report relates to the establishment of an international disarmament fund for development, on the basis of the most recent proposal by France on this issue, and to the beginning of diplomatic efforts designed to establish an institutional link between disarmament and development, constituting political recognition by the United Nations and all the members of the international community of the conceptual relationship between disarmament and development. As the report states, the effects of the establishment of this fund would be the following. First, it would give concrete form to the relationship between disarmament and development, recognizing the complementarity of the efforts being made for disarmament and for development. Secondly, it would set in motion a process for the transfer to development of resources now being used for armament; the fund could therefore be viewed as a "catalyst" for providing a new impetus to disarmament and development and hence for enhancing international security. Thirdly, it could have a positive influence on the climate of international relations, giving tangible expression to the idea of solidarity and widening the range of international co-operation.

Venezuela is in favour of the creation of this fund. If the creation of the fund is to lead to the results set out in the report which I have just mentioned, and if it is to be possible to convene a preparatory conference, followed by a conference of the whole in which all the States Members of the United Nations would participate, we must take into account the following criteria. First, the convening of one or several conferences to spell out the relationship between disarmament and development must not be an excuse for the perpetuation of the stalemate in the negotiations being conducted separately, in the competent United Nations forums, on disarmament and on development. Secondly, with regard to disarmament, we must bear in mind the priorities set out in paragraph 45 of the Programme of Action of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament. Thirdly, as regards the fund itself, even if at the beginning the method of voluntary contributions is adopted for the determination of the resources, it is absolutely necessary that ultimately the only

(Mr. Sucre Figarella,  
Venezuela)

method should be to assign the funds freed by disarmament to development purposes; that would be fully in keeping with the purposes of the creation of the fund - that is, the use for development purposes of resources that today are devoted to armament. Fourthly, it is obvious that the contributions to this fund must come for the most part from States that have the greatest responsibilities in the sphere of disarmament, particularly the nuclear Powers and, above all, the two super-Powers, which at present are continuing an arms race that is quite out of proportion with their security needs and that, on the contrary, contributes to the deterioration of international peace and security. Fifthly, the resources of the fund should in no way replace other sources of assistance for development; rather, they should supplement the commitments already entered into.

This leads me to take up a second subject - namely, nuclear disarmament and the present paralysis in the multilateral negotiating body, the Conference on Disarmament. Not only have the bilateral negotiations on strategic nuclear weapons and intermediate-range nuclear weapons reached their very lowest point, but there is not the slightest willingness on the part of some nuclear-weapon States to give the Geneva Conference on Disarmament a chance to begin its work, including negotiations on the question of the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and the achievement of nuclear disarmament, as well as the prevention of nuclear war - subjects to which the General Assembly has assigned the highest priority.

Venezuela, as a member of the Group of 21 in the Conference on Disarmament, unreservedly welcomes the statements by the Group on this issue. In particular, we support the suggestion that a wide negotiating mandate be given to the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear-Test Ban, as recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 38/63; that an ad hoc committee be established to give effect to paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament, which relates to the achievement of nuclear disarmament; and that the Conference on Disarmament urgently begin negotiations that could lead to the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as the case may be, to prevent the arms race, in all its aspects, from spreading to outer space.

An alarming sign that, in the opinion of the nuclear Powers and their allies, disarmament is not included in the "art of the possible", much less of the



(Mr. Sucre Figarella,  
Venezuela)

"probable", is the very theory of nuclear deterrence and the concomitant strategic theories on the express reservation they grant themselves in regard to the first use of nuclear weapons; and their reluctance to give the non-nuclear-weapon States genuine guarantees that they will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons. It is necessary and appropriate to point out here that such guarantees given by the nuclear-weapon Powers to States parties to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, the Treaty of Tlatelolco - guarantees contained in the only legal instrument that exists on this item, which is Additional Protocol II to the Treaty - are for all practical purposes cancelled out because the "qualifications" concerning acts of aggression carried out with the support of any nuclear-weapon State seem to be left to the judgement of the nuclear Powers.

Finally, the syndrome of the "hypothesis" of disarmament is confirmed by the fact that today there are some countries that do not speak of "disarmament" or even of "control of armaments"; they speak, purely and simply, of "confidence-building measures". Thus, the work of the Conference on Disarmament on nuclear disarmament and its responsibilities in this sphere are limited to the study of confidence-building measures designed, for instance, to avoid a nuclear war. Moreover, the only negotiating body at present doing any work in this field is the Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe - that is, the Stockholm Conference - which has devoted its first stage to a study of confidence-building measures, particularly in the military sphere, in accordance with the limited mandate given to in the final document of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, held in Madrid. We must emphasize that it is not that we do not attach importance to the establishment of confidence-building measures, especially in such a sensitive region as Europe. On the contrary, one of the objectives of the Contadora Group, in which Venezuela, as is known, is participating actively, has been the adoption in Central America of measures that will strengthen confidence or reduce distrust between the countries of the region. But we have taken into account the fact that a reduction of the levels of armaments in the region would be a factor conducive to confidence and security.

(Mr. Sucre Figarella, Venezuela)

That is why the negotiation of measures to promote confidence in the nuclear field must go hand in hand with an effective armaments reduction programme. We cannot conceive of the possibility of the control of nuclear weapons, a concept based on the idea of balance and parity in military power between the two military alliances, being the best way to create a genuine climate of international security. This situation leads me to recall that the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will be held in 1985, and that in the course of the current year there have been two meetings, in which Venezuela took part, of the Preparatory Committee for that Conference. As a State Party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco we cannot but share the concern expressed by the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (OPANAL) in its memorandum prepared for the Preparatory Committee for the Third Review Conference. In the light of the evaluation of the results of the two previous Review Conferences, recognizing that the failure of those Conferences compels us to consider the whole question of nuclear disarmament again at the world level, the document states that it is clear that, in order in future to secure more than the limited results obtained at the two earlier Conferences on the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the nuclear Powers will have to accede to the request so often made by the developing countries that in return for their agreeing not to have nuclear weapons they should receive technical, scientific, economic and financial assistance to develop the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The document also states that:

"The nuclear Powers will have to take fully into account the provisions of article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which establishes the obligation of the nuclear-weapon States to take measures for nuclear disarmament."

The memorandum concludes that:

"Recent international events, the deterioration in relations between East and West and between North and South and the acceleration of the nuclear arms race of the two super-Powers unfortunately lead us to the conclusion that the prospects for the success of the 1985 Conference are not very encouraging, unless the present situation changes considerably."

To conclude, I shall refer to the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the study that was to have been submitted to the General Assembly at this session by the Group of Experts established for that purpose. In recent years certain

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events have caused us to have doubts about the viability of nuclear-weapon-free zones as disarmament measures and, in particular, non-proliferation measures, as well as their primary objective for the States concerned - the strengthening of their security. In fact, so far - and it would seem for an indefinite period - the only nuclear-weapon-free zone in an inhabited region is that created in Latin America by the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Therefore, my delegation wishes to make the following comments.

First, it is clear that two types of commitments are needed in order to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone. One is a commitment by the States of the area not to possess, deploy or use nuclear weapons. The other is a commitment by the nuclear-weapon Powers - by definition, Powers outside the area - to respect the nuclear-free status of the area, not to commit any kind of act contravening that status and not to threaten to use or use such arms against the States of the zone. I have already mentioned the last point in the context of the so-called negative guarantees.

In this context, however, I wish to refer to the point put by two Latin American States which are not yet full parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, to the effect that it is not possible to verify compliance by the nuclear-weapon States with their commitments to those States that have accepted nuclear-free status and have submitted themselves to a strict system of control, including acceptance of a system of safeguards implemented by the International Atomic Energy Agency and monitoring by the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. Aware of this limitation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, my delegation has decided, for reasons of principle, to support with renewed vigour the establishment of an international control satellite body, although we recognize that it will not resolve the basic juridical problem and that it is no substitute for on-site inspection.

Secondly, the geographical proliferation and growing mobility of nuclear weapons in all mediums, but particularly in the seas and oceans, once again, in the context of the recent South Atlantic conflict, raises the problem of the transport and transit of nuclear weapons in the area covered by the Treaty. Neither the transit nor the transport of nuclear weapons is mentioned in the Treaty of Tlatelolco among the activities prohibited, on the assumption that, first, the granting of the right of transit is within the powers of the territorial State,

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and, secondly, given the drafting of article 1 on the obligations of the States Parties, transport is included in the prohibitions also applied to the nuclear Powers under article 2 of Additional Protocol II.

Thirdly, and finally, I must express our concern that the 21 members of the Group of Experts that was to have drawn up the report on nuclear-weapon-free zones were unable to prepare that report for the General Assembly because of profound disagreement among them. With regard to this matter, in order to end on a constructive note, I suggest that, if the General Assembly extends the Group's mandate, it should also consider enlarging its membership, bearing in mind in particular the experience that could be contributed by other countries that are parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Mr. WONGSAY (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): First, Sir, it is my pleasant duty on behalf of the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to congratulate you on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. My congratulations also go to the other officers of the Committee on their election to their respective posts. In wishing you, Sir, and all of them every possible success, my delegation assures you of its complete co-operation.

The international climate remains tense, the danger of military confrontation is growing and the already precarious foundations of peace are thus seriously threatened. Driven by their overweening ambition for world hegemony, those in imperialist circles are sparing no effort in redoubling and intensifying their military preparations. Scorning the noble purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, they have ignited fresh hotbeds of tension in various parts of the world and have even dared to intervene directly in certain regional conflicts. The armed intervention in Grenada and the aggressive intrigues against independent States of Central America, particularly Nicaragua, are outstanding examples.

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It goes without saying that this policy of aggression pursued by imperialist circles, headed by the Government of the United States and its allies and accomplices, can only lead to an arms race and hence to a deterioration of the process of détente.

During the post-War years, and especially during the period of détente, co-operation among States with differing social systems proved fruitful, and international relations on the whole remained sound. The world was enthusiastic in its welcome of this victory of the peoples and did everything in its power to safeguard it. Unfortunately, however, a group of imperialist States - for purely selfish reasons and paying no heed to the longing of the international community to establish a climate of peace and détente - worked actively to sabotage this hard-won achievement. Because of the aggressive nature of their policies, these imperialist States have gone all out to bring the world to the brink of a nuclear abyss. They have not hesitated to preach demented and odious doctrines, including the doctrines of "the admissibility of nuclear war", of "first nuclear strike", and of "the possibility of winning a limited or prolonged nuclear war". Even worse, they have acted on their hegemonistic intentions by going forward with the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles - the quintessential first-strike weapons - in certain countries of Western Europe, in the face of strong, and growing, opposition by the forces of peace, both in the countries involved and throughout the world. This is a bizarre and paradoxically dangerous way of trying to protect Europe from weapons of mass destruction.

We must conclude that those who defend these apocalyptic doctrines have no wish to live in peace and harmony with the other nations of the world. They deny this vigorously and, of course, claim to be working with all their strength for international peace and security. But their conception of peace - or rather the means by which they propose to achieve it - are unorthodox and baffling. The aggressive circles of imperialism dream of a peace based on strength, or built on a position of strength. This explains their obsessive commitment to an unbridled arms race, both in the quantitative and the qualitative spheres.

As a small, peace-loving State, the Lao People's Democratic Republic categorically rejects the use of force in international relations. That is why, following the aggression of which it was recently the victim, and concerned for the

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strict application of the Charter principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, my country decided twice to send a governmental delegation to Thailand to negotiate a settlement of the question of the occupation since 6 June last of three Lao villages by the Thai army. But this yielded no result owing to a lack of good will and sincerity on the other side. This prompted us to bring the matter to the United Nations. By so doing, my country is defending both the fundamental principles of the Charter and the principle of the inviolability of the boundaries inherited from the colonial era, a principle which our neighbour Thailand has attempted to call into question, not hesitating to use force to do so.

In keeping with its unchanging policy of peaceful coexistence, my country asks only for the re-establishment of normal relations with Thailand, provided that that country respects the principle of the inviolability of colonial boundaries - that is, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Laos. If that principle is jettisoned, the entire third world - especially Africa, which incorporated it into the charter of the Organization of African Unity - will pay the price. This violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of which my peaceful country was the victim is a casus belli and therefore is a grave threat to the peace and stability of our region.

The world is at present much concerned by the danger of nuclear war. At their seventh summit Conference, held at New Delhi, the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries voiced their grave concern at the fresh twofold escalation of the nuclear-arms race in its quantitative and its qualitative aspects, and urged Powers which possess these weapons to agree to curb that arms race.

In a world where such great resources and expenditures are devoted to the manufacture of all kinds of weapons, to the detriment of development efforts, we consider as valid the initiative of the Soviet Union aimed at reaching agreement on a freeze on nuclear weapons as a first step towards their ultimate reduction. In the present circumstances, the ambition to achieve military or nuclear superiority seems to us to be a vain one. It is equally vain to hope to win a thermo-nuclear war. Eminent scientists throughout the world agree that, if such a war were to break out it would leave no trace of life on our planet.

Certain warlike circles have already made plans for the militarization of outer space, in anticipation, it seems, of the "Star Wars" already gloomily

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foreshadowed by many television programmes. In the years to come, hundreds of billions of dollars are to be allocated to this. This is an extremely reckless plan which threatens the very future of mankind.

The international community is duty-bound to take all necessary steps to avert this grave danger. In this context, my delegation cannot but welcome the inclusion on our agenda of an item proposed by the Soviet Union, entitled "Use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind". It is our earnest hope that this timely proposal will be followed up and, to that end, we shall support it vigorously.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply, I should like to bring the following procedure to the attention of members of the Committee: in accordance with established practice, delegations should exercise the right of reply at the end of the day whenever two meetings are devoted to the consideration of the same item. The number of interventions in exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at any given meeting should be limited to two per item. The first intervention in exercise of the right of reply for any delegation and on any item at any given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes, and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes.

Those are the ground-rules. I shall read them out every time I think it advisable to do so.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, the French delegation will be offering its congratulations and good wishes on another occasion. I asked to speak now only to say that my delegation does not intend to comment today on the statement of the representative of New Zealand, in which he questioned French nuclear tests in the Pacific; we reserve our right to make an appropriate response in due course.

Mr. MAZARI (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, we will have the opportunity later during the course of this general debate to congratulate you in a formal manner on your well-deserved election to the post that you now occupy. Meanwhile, we should merely like to state how happy we are to see you, the representative of a country with which Pakistan maintains friendly relations, presiding over the deliberations of this Committee.

We have been constrained to speak at this time because the representative of the Soviet Union, in his statement this morning, thought it fit to mention Pakistan as a source of grave concern in the context of the danger of nuclear weapons proliferation. Ambassador Petrovsky made similar remarks during the general debate in this Committee last year. Our delegation at that time gave a suitable reply which we hoped would allay the apprehensions of the Soviet representative. It seems this was not the case. We are therefore compelled to set the record straight by speaking at this juncture.

Pakistan's dedication to the objective of nuclear non-proliferation needs no reiteration. Pakistan has repeatedly made categorical statements at the highest level, which are a matter of public record, to the effect that it would not exercise the nuclear weapon option. More recently, our abiding commitment to nuclear non-proliferation was reaffirmed by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan while addressing the General Assembly at its current session on 2 October 1984.

It is well known that Pakistan has extended active support to the proposals for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world. Pakistan's initiative for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia has received the support of the General Assembly for the past several years. Pakistan would not have taken such an initiative had it any nuclear ambitions as alleged by the Soviet representative.

May I also draw the attention of the Soviet representative to the active role Pakistan has played in various international forums, in particular in the Conference on Disarmament and in the efforts towards the elimination of the nuclear weapons threat in all its aspects.

In view of the foregoing, we regret that the Soviet representative should have once again considered it fit to make the uncalled-for reference to Pakistan in his statement this morning.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to remind representatives that the list of speakers for the general debate on all disarmament agenda items will be closed today at 6 p.m.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.