



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Chairman: SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil)

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

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

AGENDA ITEMS 45 to 65 and 142 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. RACZ (Hungary): Permit me to say first of all, Sir, how much the Hungarian delegation is pleased to see you in the Chair of the First Committee. Your well-known diplomatic skill and experience in disarmament issues are indisputable guarantees for the effective guidance of our deliberations. I pledge the full support of my delegation to this end.

The Hungarian delegation is satisfied to note that the problems of disarmament, including the prevention of a nuclear war, have received great emphasis in the general debate of the General Assembly. This fact is indicative of a constant increase in the number of countries and communities that are aware of the utmost urgency of solving the main problems of our age.

At the same time, the Hungarian delegation cannot but state with regret and deep concern that the past year has seen no improvement in the tense international situation. On the contrary, the military-political situation has continued to worsen, contrary to the desire of peoples for peace, a desire which was reflected, inter alia, in the more than 60 resolutions on different aspects of disarmament adopted by the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The imperialist circles, with a vested interest in the arms race, have persisted in their policy of obtaining military superiority. That policy has been directly instrumental in the growth of military and political confrontations, with the "side effect" that the balance of forces has been established at ever increasing levels of armaments.

My Government is shaping its policy in full awareness of this reality while emphasizing that in order to eliminate the threats to the world once and for all, we must concentrate all our efforts on ensuring that such balance is maintained at the lowest possible level of armaments and effective disarmament is finally achieved.

Prevention of nuclear war is accorded top priority in the foreign policy of the Hungarian Government. Any serious evaluation of the objectives of an eventual nuclear war - or even the mere threat of it - proves that such a war can serve no rational purpose whatsoever, whether political, military, economic or other. Considering that a single thermonuclear bomb can have a destructive power greater than that of all the explosives used in all wars combined since gunpowder was

(Mr. Racz, Hungary)

invented, and bearing in mind that the use of such weapons would endanger not only presumed military targets but even the very existence of the human race as a whole, we feel that there is and there can be no task more urgent for mankind than the prevention of nuclear war by taking appropriate measures and creating the necessary political and legal environment to that effect.

Analysing the array of possible measures to be taken, in view of the two most important criteria, namely, absolute urgency and relative feasibility, my Government gives special priority to the following measures, and I would emphasize that even their order of enumeration is not accidental:

First, an unconditional commitment by all nuclear-weapon Powers not to be the first to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances. The Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China have set an example. Now it is the turn of other nuclear-weapon Powers to follow suit. We are deeply convinced that such a set of obligations, especially if embodied in an international legal contractual framework, could be a major step towards the attainment of our common goal.

(Mr. Racz, Hungary)

The second measure is a legally binding arrangement to prevent the militarization of outer space. By this my Government means to avert the deployment of ABM defence systems in outer space and to ban anti-satellite weapons. Failure to do so would, in our opinion, drastically destabilize the situation, and, coupled with the possession of nuclear weapons, could trigger off a nuclear catastrophe.

The third is a moratorium on nuclear weapons tests, which would naturally be an intermediate measure until effective measures on nuclear disarmament are put into force, but which would detract nothing from its confidence-building character and would not diminish its significance in halting the development of nuclear weaponry and preventing the emergence of new types of weapons. In this context, I should like to say also that my Government devotes equally great attention to the prevention of the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Our delegation was guided by this spirit in participating in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and we are endeavouring to have the non-proliferation régime strengthened by the Review Conference.

The fourth is the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. We have to note with regret that to date there exists only one denuclearized zone in the world, although the establishment of such zones, not upsetting the military balance and thus not prejudicing the interests of any party, would greatly increase the feeling of security and would thereby represent a step towards restoring the atmosphere of mutual trust. My Government considers it particularly urgent to establish such a zone along the geographically adjacent areas of the two military alliances.

My Government and the Hungarian people are deeply concerned at certain developments of recent years. I refer in particular to the deployment of American medium-range nuclear missiles in some Western European countries; the acceleration of the arms race; the increasing imperialist attempts from the outside to disrupt the internal social and political order of sovereign States; and attempts by the United States to extend the arms race to outer space.

Concerning the continued deployment of American medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe, my Government holds the well-considered view, which is shared by the Governments of other Warsaw Treaty Member States, that there are no irreversible

(Mr. Racz, Hungary)

processes in this field. This is why they call for the discontinuance of deployment of American medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe and have announced their readiness, among others, at the meeting in Prague on 11 and 12 July last, to revoke their countermeasures parallel to the withdrawal of the missiles already deployed. Should that occur, it would also create the basis for the resumption of talks, which, given the political will as well, could result in freeing Europe from both medium-range and theatre nuclear weapons.

As regards the attempts to extend the arms race to outer space, I would mention at this juncture only that this year the Soviet Union put forward another important proposal when presenting a draft resolution on the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, for the benefit of mankind. My delegation will seize the opportunity to deal with this issue in a more detailed manner at a later stage of our deliberations. At this moment I would limit myself to expressing the full support of the Hungarian delegation for this endeavour.

My delegation is of the view that a most important task in averting the danger of war and consolidating world peace is to strengthen security in Europe. This conviction is rooted not only in the fact that my country is located in Europe. The main source of this conviction is that the European continent is the site of an enormous concentration of weapons, both nuclear and conventional, and is the area of direct contact between the armed forces of the two major political and military alliances. That is why Hungary, together with other socialist countries, considers it as its main task to prevent a new spiral of the arms race, both nuclear and conventional, in Europe and to achieve a limitation and reduction of weapons there.

As I have already mentioned, the Hungarian Government maintains that the unfavourable tendencies in international life are not irreversible. This justifies our conclusion that that dialogue between the countries of the world should be maintained and widened, all the more so since in our nuclear age there is no reasonable alternative to the peaceful coexistence of States having different social systems. This, however, calls for a tangible manifestation of political will by all parties concerned, a serious study of proposals seeking to reduce tension and a substantive, concrete response to such proposals.

(Mr. Racz, Hungary)

Last April my country had the privilege to host the meeting of the Committee of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. The communiqué issued on that occasion expresses the firm conviction of the participants that there are no issues that could not be solved through talks if conducted under a constructive approach and with the political will to attain positive results, with due regard for the vital interests of the peoples, for the interests of peace and international security. It also confirms their readiness to conduct such talks on all issues relating to the preservation of peace, talks which can be expected to succeed only if based on the principles of equality and equal security.

In May 1984 an appeal by the Warsaw Treaty Member States was handed over to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member States concerning the conclusion of a treaty on the mutual renunciation of the use of armed force and on the maintenance of peaceful relations. The States members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization proposed to the NATO member States to undertake a mutual commitment in the form of a treaty not to be the first to use either nuclear or conventional weapons against each other and therefore not to be the first to use any military force at all against each other. Such a commitment would apply to the territories of all the States parties to the treaty as well as to their military and civil personnel, seagoing craft, aircraft and spacecraft and other installations belonging to them, wherever they may be located.

(Mr. Racz, Hungary)

A positive reaction by the NATO countries to that proposal of the socialist countries, which in our opinion takes into account the rightful security interests of all parties, would be of particular importance.

While laying special emphasis on nuclear disarmament, we deem it necessary to speed up negotiations on the prohibition of such weapons of mass destruction as chemical and radiological and to conclude them successfully as soon as possible. I should like to note on this score that we see a possibility for real progress in this field provided the Western negotiating parties stop putting forward obviously unacceptable proposals.

In international forums, including the United Nations, the socialist countries and other peace-loving States have been exerting considerable efforts towards disarmament. Unfortunately, their endeavours have not been crowned with success. This, however, should not discourage the international community from redoubling disarmament efforts in all possible forums, including, of course, those of the United Nations system. In this context we attach great importance also to the activities of the United Nations regarding the World Disarmament Campaign, launched by the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, as a means of increasing public awareness everywhere of the dangers of a nuclear holocaust.

The international community is facing the most serious challenge since the Second World War. The efforts to meet it will not be hopeless if States cease to put forward routine counter-arguments opposing real and meaningful solutions. This is no easy task to accomplish, but if we succeed the results will justify our endeavours.

Mr. BUCCI (Italy): The representative of Ireland, in his capacity as current Chairman of the European Community, has already expressed the views of the 10 member States on the main issues which are on the agenda of this Committee. My Government fully supports those views. My remarks today are just intended to complement his comprehensive review.

The General Assembly is meeting this year at a time when major disarmament negotiations are either suspended or interrupted, while no significant progress is being made in those which are still under way. This situation is a source of deep

(Mr. Bucci, Italy)

concern. My country has traditionally been committed to the goal of general and complete disarmament, to be pursued gradually through equitable, balanced and verifiable agreements on the reduction of existing levels of armaments. We believe that progress in this direction - which must be achieved without prejudice to the legitimate security requirements of all those involved in the process of arms control - is even more important today, since we live in a world where the amount of resources assigned to development is already insufficient to meet the most basic needs of a large part of mankind, while the financial burden of military expenses is constantly increasing. May I express in this regard the appreciation and support of my authorities for the initiative on the issue of disarmament and development in the General Assembly. This issue has been raised at a time when the problems of development are particularly acute. The debates which took place last May within the United Nations Disarmament Commission were an important and constructive contribution to a thorough analysis of the many aspects of this complex subject.

My Government does not believe that it would be useful to indulge here either in recriminations or in a search for responsibility for the current lack of progress in disarmament negotiations. The events which led to the suspension of the most important of them, namely, those aimed at the reduction of nuclear weapons, are well known. It is highly regrettable that the resumption of the talks continues to be made conditional upon the acceptance of requests which would perpetuate a highly destabilizing imbalance of nuclear forces in the European region. We find it difficult, for our part, to understand how negotiating positions the purpose of which is to establish a balance of intermediate-range nuclear forces at the lowest level, and possibly at zero level, can be rejected on the grounds that they do not ensure equality or equal security. In our view, equality is a synonym for a balance of nuclear forces between the two major Powers, and equal security must derive from such an objective balance rather than from subjective perceptions. The real issue at stake, both in the Geneva negotiations and now, is whether a nuclear Power should be entitled to keep non-nuclear Western European countries under the threat of a huge nuclear missile force aimed solely at them and, at the same time, claim immunity for its territory as a pre-condition of attending the talks.

We continue to consider this claim to be unsustainable.

(Mr. Bucci, Italy)

It is clear that a better understanding of reciprocal intentions and concerns is of the greatest importance at this stage. The Italian Government is convinced of the need for an early resumption of nuclear disarmament talks but it also believes that a careful preparation of the ground for such a resumption is no less important than timing, since a new failure would have ominous effects on international relations and security. My Government has therefore actively worked to promote an improved East-West climate and has been encouraged by the recent high-level contacts between the Soviet Union and the United States. We think that these meetings have achieved at least one important result: the recognition by the two major Powers of the need to consider specific problems within a global context, bearing in mind their objective interdependence. We hope that this development will facilitate a resumption of the dialogue between the two major Powers and that it will result in a more sober approach to issues which are vital for the future of mankind as a whole.

Such a balanced and realistic approach to disarmament problems is clearly needed also on the part of the General Assembly. The complexity of these problems is increased by superficial or propagandist handling of the issues involved.

(Mr. Bucci, Italy)

In a situation like the present one it is disturbing to see the prominence which is routinely given in this forum to declaratory measures. What the world really needs is not declaratory measures, however attractive they may sound. It needs deep and balanced reductions of armaments, to be achieved through negotiations conducted in good faith and without preconditions. The sooner this elementary truth is perceived and the sooner the General Assembly, for its part, concentrates its efforts in this direction, the better it will be for us all.

Italy believes that there is much which could be done by this body in order to help fill the gap between positions which have so far proved irreconcilable. I have mentioned the considerable difficulties met during disarmament negotiations in defining an objective and generally acceptable notion of a balance of forces which would ensure undiminished security to all the parties involved in the talks.

Another area in which both the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament could make a significant contribution to the disarmament process would be the consideration of some basic but still controversial requirements for the effective verification of the implementation of arms control agreements. These are, in the first instance, the need for transparency and for adequately intrusive verification measures within the context of a system which should effectively work without undue interference in the sphere of the domestic affairs of States, but also without prejudice to the crucial security interests of the parties to disarmament agreements. The search for viable solutions to these problems is urgent and requires the active involvement of the international community as well as all the expertise available, including that of the scientific community.

Significant change is necessary also in the approach to the problem of the prevention of war. The danger of nuclear war is a matter of common and deep concern for all of us. At the same time, however, it should not be forgotten that a nuclear war would most probably originate from the escalation of a conventional conflict. In the nuclear age, more than ever, the real goal to be pursued is the preservation of international peace and security and the prevention of war as such. Efforts should be concentrated in this direction rather than towards measures which in fact would do little to strengthen effectively international security. In the nuclear age, the impossibility of drawing a dividing line between conventional conflicts and nuclear war should lead in the first instance to

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assessing the validity of military doctrines on the basis of their defensive character and of their proven capacity to prevent war. Moreover, since balanced and verifiable arms reductions are the only effective way to ensure true stability and security, conventional disarmament should not continue to be relegated to the rank of a secondary issue and its importance should be fully recognized.

Conventional disarmament, particularly in a region like Europe where there is the greatest concentration of armaments in the world, has always been the condition for truly significant reductions of nuclear weapons, since the need for nuclear weapons is essentially related to an existing serious imbalance in conventional forces. The interrelation between nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament must be adequately recognized if progress is to be achieved in the various areas. It is therefore important to refrain from attempts to dissect the comprehensive context of the prevention of war and of disarmament in ways which can only complicate an already difficult and unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Recognition that the various areas of arms control and disarmament are interrelated is also important for a constructive discussion on how stability and security can be enhanced through limitations on the military use of outer space. The attention of Governments and of the public has recently focused on research programmes undertaken by the two major space Powers in the field of strategic defence systems. Concern has frequently been expressed at the potentially destabilizing effects of an unrestrained development and deployment of such systems. We very much share this concern, although it sounds less credible when voiced by countries which miss no opportunity to criticize strongly the strategy of deterrence, which is and will continue for a long time to be the only viable alternative to defensive systems.

We recognize, however, that there are potential risks for strategic stability involved in the programmes and we believe that talks should be initiated at the earliest possible moment in order to ensure that technological advances in the military use of outer space do not take place in a context which would endanger international security and stability.

My Government therefore deeply regrets that the Soviet Union and the United States have been unable, to date, to agree on an appropriate agenda for talks on these issues. We sincerely hope that the September appointment in Vienna has not

(Mr. Bucci, Italy)

been cancelled but merely postponed. The major space Powers cannot miss this opportunity without bearing a heavy responsibility towards mankind as a whole. The need to give appropriate consideration to offensive nuclear systems within the context of talks on strategic defence programmes is too obvious and too deeply rooted in the most elementary logic either to be denied or to offer a valid justification for holding back on the proposed talks. Consideration of the issue of the future use of space must not in any case become a way of diverting attention from the urgent need to reduce offensive nuclear arsenals which are already in place.

The Italian Government believes that the goal to be pursued in both bilateral and multilateral talks is to enhance stability through appropriate limitations on the military use of outer space. We do not think, therefore, that broad and comprehensive formulations of the scope of such talks would be helpful. It is widely recognized that many military activities in outer space make an essential contribution to security and stability. Moreover, we believe that priority should be given to the search for mutually acceptable negotiating approaches on the limitation of those systems which are already operational or which are being developed as the anti-satellite systems (ASAT). In fact - bearing in mind both the uncertainty surrounding the results of ongoing research programmes and the long time which the deployment of defensive systems will require anyhow - we think that bilateral talks on space and related issues should be allowed to develop somehow spontaneously, rather than be constricted from the very start within ambitious frameworks which could negatively affect their outcome.

A gradual approach to this complex problem is in our view the most constructive one. This is also true with regard to the Conference on Disarmament. While regretting that the Conference has been unable to agree on a mandate for an Ad Hoc Committee, we do not think that this should be a cause of frustration or discouragement. The Conference is debating how to start its consideration of what is de facto new ground in the field of arms control. It is not surprising, therefore, that it meets difficulties and obstacles in its work.

In our opinion, a clearer definition of the objectives to be pursued and the selection of a gradual approach to that end would greatly facilitate the work of the Conference. Bilateral and multilateral talks on space issues are bound to be complementary and, it is to be hoped, to be conducted in an appropriately

(Mr. Bucci, Italy)

co-ordinated way; therefore, the Conference should consider with priority those issues which could pave the way to substantive agreements on limitations of the military use of space in ways which would enhance stability. We believe that such a gradual and realistic approach would greatly help in promoting the consensus on the nature of the future work of the Conference which has not been reached so far in Geneva.

I should like to say a final word on the most important issue of the ban on the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, currently under negotiation in Geneva. My Government welcomes as highly positive developments the presentation of a draft treaty by the United States Government and the Soviet Union's acceptance of the principle of on-site international inspections on the destruction of stocks. We are also encouraged by the progress, however limited, achieved on this complex issue during the last session of the Conference on Disarmament. We are fully aware of the difficulties which lie ahead, particularly in the search for an agreement on an effective system of verification of the implementation of a treaty.

(Mr. Bucci, Italy)

We think, however, that negotiations on a ban on chemical weapons is a challenge for the Conference and an opportunity to demonstrate that it can find viable and generally acceptable solutions to the more complex problems. We therefore very much hope that the discussions which will take place from January of next year within the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference will lead to positive and concrete results, thus paving the way to a successful conclusion of the negotiations.

May I close these remarks by complimenting you, Mr. Chairman - along with the other officers of the Committee - on your unanimous election. Your task is a most important one, since this is a time when the international situation requires the active and constructive involvement of the world community. We are confident that your well-known experience and diplomatic skill will greatly help the work of this Committee, and I wish to assure you of my delegation's full co-operation.

Mr. FROYSNES (Norway): First of all, may I offer you, Sir, my warm congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. We are confident that under your able guidance we shall deal with all the pressing issues before us in an expeditious and constructive manner.

As we start this year's deliberations on arms control and disarmament in the General Assembly, the international situation is marked by the continued absence of the concrete results we are seeking. We regret that the crucial negotiations on nuclear arms have been suspended. This situation is untenable and must be remedied without further delay. No country's security stands to gain as long as the arms build-up continues while serious efforts to restrain this development are lacking. Arms control and disarmament are as vital and important to the security of nations as the maintenance of adequate military defence measures. Continued absence of progress in arms control and disarmament, therefore, will upset this delicate balance and result in a more unstable situation.

The tasks facing the community of nations and, consequently, this Committee in the field of arms control and disarmament are momentous. I believe that our challenges this year are primarily twofold: we must, first, seek to establish genuine dialogue and, secondly, ensure that the Committee's role as a catalyst in arms control and disarmament negotiations is fully utilized.

(Mr. Froyshes, Norway)

We should like to see this Committee - and, indeed, our world Organization as a whole - more directly and concretely lay the foundations for consistent and solid international co-operative relations in the field of security and disarmament. We should like to see the United Nations contribute to narrowing existing differences.

That is particularly needed on nuclear issues. There is no use hiding the fact that this Committee is divided in its views on what course to take as we seek the elimination of the danger of nuclear war, and in fact the prevention of all wars.

The realities of the nuclear world in which we live force us to establish a meaningful dialogue on these issues. We welcome, therefore, the recent high-level contacts between the United States and the Soviet Union. In our view, it is imperative that such contacts be further developed and deepened, especially in the nuclear field.

In the view of my Government, it is essential that we do not miss existing opportunities to further arms control and disarmament. We must make sure that no weapon system is omitted from the agenda. In particular, it is important to include new technology in the negotiations so that technological advances do not upset stability in the military field. Thus, my Government attaches the greatest importance to statements made by the President of the United States that everything is on the table, and we hope that that will also be the position of the Soviet Union. We consider it particularly important that the negotiations must deal also with the nuclear arms most directly affecting the security of Europe, where the largest military forces are confronting each other.

Norway, for its part, is fully committed to making every effort to promote negotiations on arms control and disarmament. At the same time we recognize the importance of adequate military defence. But our forces are a threat to no one but aggressors. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance attaches the utmost importance to peace and security, and Norway must take issue with those - be it in this or other forums - who question our commitment to arms control and disarmament. This commitment is as fundamental a pillar in allied security as in Norway's. The implications of the solemn Bonn Declaration of 1982 by all the countries of the NATO alliance should be fully understood. The NATO countries then stated - and it has been repeated on many occasions since - that NATO weapons, be they conventional or nuclear, shall never be used except in response to attack.

(Mr. Froyenes, Norway)

We must endeavour to prevent all wars, including nuclear war. For this reason Western countries have been pressing for concrete results in a number of forums, not only in those dealing with nuclear issues. In Vienna, proposals have been made to break the deadlock concerning mutual and balanced force reductions in Central Europe. In Stockholm, a set of concrete proposals has been presented to create greater security and confidence in Europe while agreeing to enter into discussion of proposals made by others, including the non-use of force.

Such proposals have been supplemented by unilateral measures from the Western side. In an effort to reduce the nuclear arsenals and dependence on such weapons, last year NATO countries made a unilateral decision on withdrawal of a great number of battlefield nuclear weapons from Europe over the next few years. It is in this broader perspective that it would have a significant bearing on future developments should this Committee be able actively and concretely to encourage an early resumption of the nuclear talks between the United States and the Soviet Union. In the present impasse we recognize the need for flexibility. Any serious initiative that may serve to reopen those negotiations deserve the most careful consideration. The untimely suspension of the nuclear talks has lasted too long.

(Mr. Froytnes, Norway)

An important nuclear issue that has divided us in the past has been the nuclear arms freeze. I believe that here again there would be a larger potential for agreement if we were able to make full use of all the opportunities offered by this Committee for dialogue and consultation. In this context I should like to recall that the Norwegian Prime Minister, Mr. Willoch, in his statement before the General Assembly on 24 September, said that we should strive to create a basis for an agreed, balanced and verifiable freeze on nuclear weapons in the context of substantial reductions in nuclear weapons. If we manage to create such a broader platform for our recommendations on the nuclear freeze issue, we may at the same time manage to preserve this idea as an important factor in the disarmament process.

A comprehensive nuclear test ban is considered by my country to be an important element in a strategy aimed at reversing the nuclear arms build-up, including the prevention of the proliferation of such weapons to non-nuclear-weapon States.

Norway regrets that the Conference on Disarmament was not able to agree on a mandate for a subsidiary body to resume substantive examination of specific issues in connection with such a ban. It is our hope that the Conference on Disarmament will be able to resume its examination of these issues next year. In our view, this question is ill served by continued absence of action by the Conference on Disarmament. To my knowledge, no country has denied the importance of this issue in an arms control perspective. Positive substantive examination of this issue in the Conference on Disarmament would further secure the place of this issue on the international arms control agenda. The General Assembly should, therefore, in our view, recommend practical steps with this overall objective in mind.

In less than one year most of the countries represented here will be meeting in Geneva to review for the third time the operations and objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We are pleased to see that the Treaty has gained significantly in support since the last Review Conference in 1980. The non-proliferation régime, however, needs further strengthening - both in terms of adherence by additional States and in terms of offering increased security and benefits to those which are or will be parties to the Treaty. While we regret the lack of results in halting vertical proliferation, this cannot justify actions that

(Mr. Froysnes, Norway)

might weaken the Non-Proliferation Treaty régime. If additional countries should acquire nuclear explosive capability, it would result in less security and create tension in the regions concerned and, indeed, in the broader international context. For this reason supplier as well as recipient States should recognize the crucial significance of full-scope safeguards as a prerequisite for further collaboration in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Indeed, the credibility of the whole non-proliferation régime depends to a great extent on the credibility of the safeguards system.

An arms race in outer space would threaten international peace and security. It could also impair the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. It is therefore imperative to make every effort to avoid such adverse developments in outer space.

Several important multilateral conventions limit or prohibit various military uses of outer space. Technological developments are, however, so rapid in this area that it is of vital importance that talks be initiated on the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This is a question that concerns not only the space Powers but the whole international community.

For this reason we hope that it will be possible for the Soviet Union and the United States to initiate bilateral negotiations at an early date and without pre-conditions. As we see it, bilateral negotiations and multilateral talks within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament can strengthen and reinforce each other.

My country therefore supported last year's resolution 38/70, which requested the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its consideration of all aspects of this question and to establish a subsidiary body with a view to negotiations. Norway believes that the Conference on Disarmament could discharge its responsibilities in the first phase by undertaking to identify, through substantive examination, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

It is imperative that the Conference on Disarmament completes as soon as possible the elaboration of a chemical weapons convention to be submitted to the General Assembly at one of its first sessions. These weapons of mass destruction should be prohibited in a global and comprehensive convention. The convention should primarily prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and cover their destruction.

(Mr. Froyanes, Norway)

Norway welcomed the decision by the Conference on Disarmament at the beginning of this year's session to start a full and complete process of negotiations. In this context, the United States draft convention, which was submitted in April, was a significant contribution.

Considerable progress, but no final breakthrough, has been made in the negotiations on this draft convention. Nevertheless, the result of this year's work is a comprehensive document which comprises concrete texts. Important problems remain to be solved, in particular the question of on-site inspection on challenge and verification of non-production. The world community expects this General Assembly to lend its full and unanimous support to the negotiation process and its successful conclusion in the not-too-distant future. In the Conference on Disarmament the willingness to demonstrate flexibility has indeed been stressed by a number of countries, including both the United States and the Soviet Union. We therefore welcome the fact that the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference, Ambassador Ekeus of Sweden, is to hold consultations in preparation for the resumed session on 14 January 1985. It is important that the present momentum in these talks be maintained and further strengthened.

While the negotiations on a comprehensive chemical weapons convention continue, the Norwegian Government is well satisfied that the Secretary-General has presented a report that will mean that provisional verification procedures relating to the 1925 Geneva Protocol can now be implemented, in accordance with resolution 37/98 D of the General Assembly.

In a note dated 20 July 1984 to the depositary Powers of the Convention on biological weapons, Norway proposed to the States parties that a second review conference be held in 1986 and that an appropriate procedural draft resolution to this effect be submitted at this session. The Norwegian proposal is in accordance with the Final Declaration of the First Review Conference in 1980, which Norway had the honour to preside over and which decided that a second review conference should be held in Geneva, at the request of a majority of States parties, not earlier than 1985 and in any case not later than 1990. Our proposal has received wide support from the States parties and we intend to pursue this matter in a draft resolution after appropriate consultations.

Disarmament and development are two of the major challenges facing the global community. Therefore consideration of the relationship between disarmament and

(Mr. Froyshes, Norway)

development at the 1984 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission was most timely. The deliberations at the United Nations Disarmament Commission demonstrated that the time is now ripe for an international conference on ways and means to take certain practical steps in the field of disarmament and development. In view of our involvement in these issues, Norway supports the envisaged initiative concerning a decision at this session of the General Assembly to convene an international conference, to be held under the auspices of the United Nations and to be properly prepared.

(Mr. Froysnes, Norway)

Norway attaches great importance to comprehensive research on issues relevant to arms control and disarmament. For this reason Norway has supported the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as an independent and autonomous United Nations institute. We have in particular given financial contributions to the Institute's fellowship programme for researchers from developing countries, and we intend to continue this support.

Norway welcomed the decision of the Conference on Disarmament in 1983 to increase its membership by not more than four States. The Conference has this year reconfirmed its decision to expand its membership by not more than four States and, in addition, agreed on the model of nomination of new members. Furthermore, the report clearly states that the Conference intends to take a positive decision on this important issue during its 1985 session. Consequently, Norway hopes that all groups can identify acceptable candidates so that we can have an early expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): I should like first, Sir, to express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing a diplomat of your stature presiding over the work of the First Committee at this thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We are glad that your efforts will be supported by the erudition of our colleagues, Ambassadors Wegener and Vejvoda, and by our Rapporteur, Mr. Kessely. We are sure that this enlightened choice of Committee officers will make a considerable contribution to a fruitful and effective discussion of the most pressing problems of our times: peace, disarmament and the strengthening of international security.

Our agenda is, in a concentrated form, the reflection of the vast range of pressing present-day issues. Taken together, those problems all come together to create one imperative, namely, that we must be fully aware of the monstrous threat of a nuclear catastrophe and immediately take material and political steps to avert it.

Most preceding speakers have already dwelt in some detail on the causes that have led to this alarming state of affairs. The statements we have heard have all had as their central theme the profound conviction that the principal source of tension resides in policies aimed at military superiority and world hegemony. We share that conviction. Such policies, inspired by the most reactionary imperialist

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groups, are the prime movers behind the arms race and the main reason for international confrontation. The arms programmes of the 1980s are distinguished by their vast scope and their long-range effects. The planned space wars that are being mentioned more and more frequently of late can quite rightly be termed a genuine militaristic invasion of the future.

Unfortunately, we must also note that militarism is impinging to an ever-greater degree on the sphere of foreign policy and diplomacy in certain Western States in the form of ideological extremism and on the so-called basis of national security. Never before has the word "war" been so frequently employed in various contexts in international diction.

For anyone who cares to listen the message of history is clear: to attempt to counter socialism by an approach based entirely on military force is doomed to failure from the start. The 1940s, 1950s and 1960s witnessed the implementation of large-scale campaigns aimed at achieving military superiority. We are familiar with the results. On the one hand, on each occasion the initiators of such campaigns suffered a complete political and strategic set-back and, on the other hand, qualitative advances in military technological progress were made and an increasingly dramatic military confrontation was created on the international scene.

Based on a realistic analysis of the international situation, my country considers that chances for a favourable evolution of the situation do nevertheless exist. Those chances arise from a fact that is no less important than the existence of the arsenals of militarism. That fact is that it is in the vital interest of millions and billions of people on earth to ensure for themselves a lasting peace and a secure and tranquil future for coming generations. The ideas of détente that were the most direct embodiment of that interest are vital and deep rooted. Any evidence of realism and goodwill can help to trigger efforts to prevent a further deterioration of the situation and can serve as a catalyst to bring about a more positive trend in international relations.

The position of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, and of the other socialist countries as well, on the paramount question of peace and war remains clear and unequivocal: nuclear war cannot be allowed, whether it be limited or world wide, prolonged or lightning swift, since it would lead to the total eradication of civilization as we know it. In order to eradicate the atomic nightmare the Soviet

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Union has proposed that as a first and most urgent step the nuclear Powers adopt a body of basic rules in their relations. That step would be of prime importance in improving the international climate and would make it possible for the protagonists on the world scene to engage in joint action to decrease future threat of war.

The concrete contents of that realistic and timely initiative by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Konstantin Chernenko, are already known to all delegations. Each of its points rests on a clear base of identical or very nearly identical positions shared by the vast majority of countries Members of the United Nations, positions that have been reached through a process of long, detailed debates on the major problems of peace and disarmament. The adoption of the proposed basic rules would mean that the nuclear-weapon States would make the prevention of nuclear warfare the very corner-stone of their policies and would contribute in every way possible to reducing the risk of such a war; they would provide in that regard such practical evidence as refraining from being the first to use nuclear weapons and committing themselves to the non-use of such weapons in any circumstances against any non-nuclear-weapon State having no nuclear weapons on its territory, to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form, not to transfer the nuclear arms race to other areas of space and to make consistent efforts to achieve progress in the field of disarmament. A collective undertaking of that nature would serve as an important point of departure; it would be a breakthrough to more effective and far-reaching measures to reduce weapons capabilities.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

I should like to give some of the views of the Bulgarian delegation on one aspect of this particular initiative which from the military, technical and general political viewpoint is of crucial importance for the solution of the problem of the prevention of nuclear war. This is the prevention of the militarization of new areas of space, including outer space. This is a pressing problem which is dealt with in some detail by the new, major Soviet proposal covered by item 142 of our agenda, entitled "Use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind". The question of the prevention of the use of outer space being for military purposes has occupied the attention of our Committee and the United Nations in general for some years now, but today it is taking on a particularly acute character. The militarization of space is now becoming the focal point of all the evils which the arms race is capable of bringing upon the world.

First, the insistence on the so-called defensive nature of the military space systems envisaged by the United States is simply intended to hoodwink world public opinion. Experts in this matter agree that even the most sophisticated system of this type would not be a reliable barrier against a massive attack by nuclear missiles. The purpose of these systems is obviously quite different - namely to ensure the success of nuclear aggression and to protect the perpetrators from well-deserved reprisals. The advocates of space weapons do not try to hide the unprecedented capability of these weapons to hit ground targets from outer space. This reveals clearly the role assigned to these weapons as an effective means of carrying out a preventive attack.

Thus, the space armament programme must be seen as an organic part of the doctrines of first nuclear strike and limited and prolonged nuclear war. As has been indicated by such reputable military experts as Keith Payne and Colin Grey in this year's issue No. 4 of "Foreign Affairs", the mere possession of a space anti-missile defence capability will make it possible for Washington to wage "a prolonged nuclear war" in which the Soviet Union would have no chance of success, whereas the United States would be able to make the maximum use of its superior industrial and military potential and thereby avoid destruction. Such a hypothesis needs no further amplification; its meaning is quite obvious.

We must refer also to the development of new theories concerning a kind of space duel, as a specific and allegedly harmless type of limited war. In the West,

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very highly placed political and military figures are trying to pacify world public opinion by promising that nuclear war would take place a long way above the heads of the inhabitants of the earth, without affecting their territories and without claiming any victims. Such assertions are simply designed to present in a new, more acceptable guise the principal theme of militarism, according to which nuclear war is admissible, can be won and can serve well-defined political purposes.

As far as the technical aspect of the problem is concerned, it can be stated definitely that new super-sophisticated armaments and advanced military systems in outer space would increase the unpredictability and the risk of the possible outbreak of a military conflict. Last, but by no means least, the extension of the arms race to outer space would lead to staggering military expenditure, leading to the ruin of mankind as a whole. As a number of sources have indicated more than once, the complete realization of the space-war strategy would require expenditure of the order of \$500 billion to \$1,000 billion. There can be no doubt that other States involved in nuclear rivalry in space would be forced to allocate a growing part of their gross national product to such expenditure. Such a course would create an impenetrable barrier to the efforts to stimulate international economic co-operation, in particular diminishing the prospects of more substantial assistance being channelled into the social and economic development of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

It therefore becomes quite clear that so-called space defence will not only fail to strengthen the security of anybody but may well run the risk of destabilizing irrevocably the world military and political situation. For this reason, it would indeed be a sign of statesmanlike wisdom and a sense of responsibility for the future of mankind to halt armament in space before it reaches the point of no return and before the super-weapons get beyond the drawing boards, laboratories and testing grounds. To put a stop to this arms race the Soviet Union has made specific proposals for the immediate and permanent prohibition of the use of force in outer space, from space to earth and from earth to targets in outer space. The first questions to tackle are the prohibition and elimination of means of attack in space, whatever the system, and progress towards more comprehensive and far-reaching bilateral or multilateral agreements, which would logically be followed by the creation of a world organization for the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

Our justified concern about outer space, where a new, apocalyptic military confrontation might well come about, should not distract our attention from the equally alarming situation on earth, particularly in Europe. It is well known that despite mass protests by the peoples of those countries, the first consignment of American medium-range missiles has been installed on the territories of certain Western European countries. As a result of that operation in a densely populated part of the world with a very high concentration of extremely important material and cultural wealth there has been a net increase in the stockpiles of weapons that could in a few seconds reduce flourishing towns inhabited by millions of people to radioactive ash. It is hardly necessary to be versed in military strategy to understand that this step which has been taken by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has absolutely nothing to do with strengthening peace in Europe. Preparations for nuclear warfare have reached an even more advanced stage, with hundreds of millions of people made to serve the interests of the imperialists whose ambition is world domination.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

The position of my country on the subject has frequently been voiced in the past, and I shall not repeat it now. It is entirely in keeping with the fundamental position taken by the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the will for peace clearly expressed by the international community.

In order to reduce the danger of war, it is very important that an end be put once and for all, and simultaneously, to the constant and perilous growth in thermonuclear arsenals. Analysis of the general strategic situation proves cogently that, apart from a freeze, there is no more effective way currently to bring about a general cessation of the arms race. In practical terms this means halting the manufacture of arms, and a complete prohibition on tests and deployment of nuclear weapons and their vectors firstly on the part of the major military Powers - the Soviet Union and the United States. This initiative, which was launched by the socialist and non-aligned countries, at present enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of the 159 Member States of the world Organization. The idea of a freeze on nuclear arsenals as a first step towards their limitation and gradual reduction is also the focal point of the well-known declaration made by the Heads of State of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania, an authoritative international document which is a faithful reflection of the aspirations for peace which are predominant in the international community.

Such a whole-hearted step as freezing nuclear arsenals, with a view to their subsequent limitation and reduction, has the unique advantage of providing at the same time a comprehensive and realistic approach to the global reduction of the danger of atomic war. In this connection, serious attention must necessarily be given to the various components of the arms race which for many years now have been gravely undermining international security and engendering mistrust and suspicion in relations between States. All these problems are important and, indeed, ripe for action. In this connection, particular priority must be given to the general and complete cessation of nuclear tests, the prohibition of the development of new types and systems of arms of mass destruction, the total prohibition of chemical weapons and the elimination of stockpiles of such weapons, the limitation of naval weapons and military activities in the world's seas and oceans and, finally, the creation of zones of peace and nuclear-free zones.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

On the matter of naval weapons and naval activities, my delegation had occasion last year to submit a resolution (38/188 F) which was adopted by the Committee and by the General Assembly. We will discuss this topic in more detail in the course of the debate. I would simply point out at present that the world's seas and oceans, like outer space, are turning into strategic parade grounds for the testing and realizing of the most sophisticated weapons technology, that far-reaching preparations are being made in order to wage nuclear warfare and that aggressive operations have been carried out in this way, the effect of which has been to increase international tensions. There can be no doubt whatever that the international community is duty-bound to do everything possible to minimize the danger of war arising from such actions by bringing the world's seas and oceans into the purview of confidence-building measures. The regions which are crossed by the major navigational routes or in which there is the greatest danger of critical situations arising should be the subject of special attention.

On all these problems it is important that there be constructive dialogue based on the principles of equality and equal security. The socialist countries have contributed, and are continuing to make a sincere contribution, to bringing this about. They are not to blame if a number of constructive initiatives have been rejected out of hand and have been dismissed as "propaganda" without even having been studied. They cannot agree to accept or share responsibility for the suspension of negotiations on a series of important problems of disarmament with those circles whose objective is to compromise the very idea of negotiations and to use them as a smokescreen for their own persistent efforts to achieve military superiority. There is no lack of examples to illustrate what I have just said. But, as we see the mission of this body and the purposes of the United Nations with regard to the problems that we have just been discussing, the pressing need now is to achieve the greatest possible degree of agreement on the ways and means by which humanity can get out of the rut of the cold war and be spared the heavy rumblings of the thermonuclear hurricane.

My country lends an attentive ear at all times to declarations of goodwill and devotion to peace whenever they are enunciated from the platform of the United Nations. Nevertheless, we consider that the real touchstone of the quality of any policy is not simply the oral expressions used, whether they be bellicose or conciliatory, but rather actions, for it is actions only which can lead to positive results having an impact on the very tense international atmosphere.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

On behalf of my delegation, I should like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that it will spare no effort to co-operate actively with you and the other delegations in order to achieve the most fruitful outcome possible of the Committee's work and to ensure that real progress is achieved in working for international peace and security and towards the eventual goal of disarmament.

Mr. MAHBUBANI (Singapore): Mr. Chairman, may I first join other delegations in offering you and the other officers Singapore's sincere congratulations on your election to these important posts. We are confident that no one could better steer the deliberations of this Committee.

As one of the smallest countries in the international community, Singapore can do little to influence the decisions and policies of the major Powers. But we are fully aware of our responsibility to do what we can.

It is for this reason that Singapore has signed various arms control agreements: the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Underwater of 1963; the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1968; the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof of 1971; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction of 1972; and the Agreement for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and Protocol of 1977.

It is because we recognize our responsibilities that Singapore, together with its partners in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), earlier this year formed a working group to study the question of the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia. It is for this reason also that Singapore has supported the many United Nations resolutions on arms control and disarmament emanating from the First Committee.

As I said earlier, Singapore's influence is limited. But our record on the issues before the First Committee is clear. The Committee's agenda is lengthy and varied. In the weeks ahead, we will have to consider many important issues dealing with many countries and many regions of the world. I wish to assure you that my delegation and I will always be at your disposal to help to facilitate the work of the Committee in any way we can. However, allow me to focus my remarks this morning on only one aspect of the work of the First Committee - the nuclear relationship between the two super-Powers.

(Mr. Mahbubani, Singapore)

My delegation believes that this relationship lies at the very heart of all the other questions on our agenda. The statistics are eloquent. According to the calculations of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the Soviet Union and the United States have between them a total of more than 4,300 strategic delivery vehicles with a total of more than 18,500 warheads, with a total megatonnage in excess of 9,700 megatons. Between them, the two super-Powers account for most of the world's nuclear stockpile. The statistics would, of course, be much higher if the intermediate-range and tactical nuclear arsenals of both super-Powers were also included. Therefore, the relationship between the two super-Powers is central to the security of all of us.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, a succession of events has created the overwhelming impression of an inexorable downward slide in relations between the two super-Powers: the invasion of Afghanistan in 1980; the breakdown of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) negotiations and the strategic arms reduction talks (START); the downing of the Korean civilian airliner; the boycott of the Los Angeles Olympic Games; the invasion of Grenada; assaults on diplomats; and a host of other incidents. Such incidents have cast a shadow over the entire international community. Their cumulative impact has led many to believe that relations between the super-Powers have never been worse. Some observers have even spoken of "a new cold war".

This phrase is misleading. It is true that an already narrow relationship between the super-Powers has been further dangerously circumscribed. It is true that much harsh and bellicose rhetoric has emanated from both Moscow and Washington. But it is also true that, in their direct dealings with each other, both super-Powers have been cautious. Despite all the alarms of the last four years, there has been no "eyeball-to-eyeball" super-Power confrontation like that which occurred over Cuba in the 1960s, over Berlin in the 1950s or in the Middle East during the war of 1973.

Behind the caution with which the super-Powers have dealt with each other lies the essential stability of the central strategic balance. This is a stability that can only be glimpsed darkly through the fog of rhetoric, propaganda and counter-propaganda. Despite much arcane speculation by experts, many of whom contradict each other, and in spite of technological advances, the central nuclear

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balance between the United States and the Soviet Union remains essentially stable because each super-Power has, and will retain for the foreseeable future, the ability to rain assured destruction on the other. This is the slender thread on which mankind's future hangs. We may not like the concept, but there is no present realistic alternative. Both super-Powers, whatever they may publicly profess, know this. Neither side would ever be prepared to negotiate an agreement that eroded its assured second-strike capability.

We believe that an acknowledgement of this fact is a prerequisite for any reasoned assessment of the current situation. Conceptual clarity is also essential if we are to avoid falling into propaganda traps.

Arms control and disarmament are not synonymous, as popular usage and propaganda would have it. Disarmament, in its true sense, is an ideal that we should all continue to strive for, but also one that we must acknowledge is unlikely to be realized in a less than ideal world. So long as there exist countries which seek to use their massive military forces to invade and occupy neighbouring States, other countries will need arms to protect and defend themselves against such aggressors. Disarmament will remain a distant dream.

Arms control is, by contrast, a difficult but realizable means of coping with a less than ideal reality. But arms control is not, as super-Power propaganda suggests, intended to bring about peace. To the super-Powers, the aim of arms control is not peace but stability. Arms control does not seek to abolish nuclear weapons, but only to secure the nuclear balance at a less costly and risky level. Its aim is to rationalize super-Power competition for power and influence and not to abolish it. The current stalemate in the INF negotiations and START thus does not so much reflect the lack of goodwill that each side has charged the other with, but the failure of both to accommodate each other's interests.

In Europe, the continuing deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles has destabilized the theatre balance and thrown the security of the West European countries into question. But the countervailing deployment of American ground-launched cruise missiles and Pershing-II intermediate-range ballistic missiles also poses real problems for the Soviet Union. In Asia, the deployment, according to the calculations of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, of more than 130 Soviet SS-20 missiles has also brought almost every Asian country under direct

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nuclear threat and threatens to complicate the INF negotiations. This is a new and disturbing development. In the START talks, each side has been equally unwilling to address the central concerns of the other. The USSR is unwilling to negotiate reductions in its very large SS-18 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), an area in which it holds a clear advantage. On the other hand, American START proposals would require drastic reductions in Soviet land-based ICBMs without limiting the deployment of the America MX ICBMs and Trident II submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLEBs).

The situation is complex and the record is not a happy one, but I must confess to being something of an optimist. Perhaps this is because I am also a confirmed sceptic. Once we recognize that both super-Powers act only in their self-interest and that neither is either the sole repository of international virtue or the only cause of international tension, then it is also possible to recognize that both the United States and the Soviet Union have vital interests that will, sooner or later, compel a return to the negotiating table.

But since both super-Powers know that the central strategic balance is stable, neither seems to be in any particular hurry. What the international community is witnessing today is a super-Power propaganda battle: a preparatory contest of nerves designed to weaken the negotiating position of the other and to squeeze every last ounce of negotiating advantage. This propaganda battle is being conducted in many forums including, I regret to say, this one.

(Mr. Mahbubani, Singapore)

Both super-Powers play the propaganda game. All of us can perhaps count ourselves fortunate that the super-Powers have chosen to fight each other with words rather than with the enormous arsenals at their disposal. But the propaganda battle is not irrelevant. We should all also be aware that it is designed to secure real and tangible strategic advantages.

We have all sometimes heard the complaint that multilateral forums such as this one have not been able to make a significant impact on arms control negotiations because the super-Powers do not take such forums seriously enough. I believe that view is mistaken. I believe that, on the contrary, the super-Powers take the discussions of multilateral forums extremely seriously, perhaps even more seriously than some of us take ourselves.

The super-Powers know that when the time comes to sit down at the negotiating table their relative power positions will depend not only on such obvious factors as economic strength and size of military forces, in which they are in any case fairly evenly matched, but also on more subtle and intangible factors. The super-Powers regard the discussions of our forum and others as one vital input into what one super-Power calls "the correlation of forces". They seek to shape the direction of our discussions, to manipulate international public opinion as a means of tipping the overall correlation of forces in their favour and to use the correlation of forces in order to secure real and tangible negotiating advantages.

There is one vital difference between previous arms control negotiations, those conducted in the 1960s and the 1970s, and any negotiations that will be conducted in the 1980s. In the past, arms control was almost solely the preoccupation of experts and was handled in a relatively technical manner. The attitude of the general public and the vast majority of the international community was one of benign indifference. Today the situation has changed. The arms control process has been politicized in an unprecedented manner. No super-Power can today afford to neglect the political milieu in which negotiations occur, a milieu which is defined by the correlation of forces. Thousands of people have taken to the streets to express their views. Unfortunately, only one side allows its population to express their views on disarmament. I suspect that today neither super-Power will negotiate seriously until it is confident that the correlation of forces will ensure that the final outcome of any negotiation will give it some measure of strategic advantage over its adversary.

(Mr. Mahbubani, Singapore)

Of what use is strategic advantage? That is a legitimate question. Both super-Powers have the capability to destroy each other many, many times over. Once an assured second-strike capability has been attained, the impact of any margin of strategic advantage is questionable. I believe that the super-Powers at least know what strategic advantage can be used for. They have invested heavily to influence the correlation of forces in order to ensure that they will enjoy such an advantage over their adversary.

The most significant impact of any margin, however slight, of strategic advantage or disadvantage will not be on the central relationship between the super-Powers themselves. It will not be felt in areas of vital interest to either super-Power, because the very nature of their interests in such regions will impel caution and force a stalemate, as indeed it has done ever since the end of the Second World War, but those of us who live in the third world will feel the adverse consequences of either super-Power's gaining a strategic advantage.

We are all painfully aware of the catastrophic consequences for mankind of a nuclear holocaust. Recent scientific research has proved beyond reasonable doubt that the environmental impact of a nuclear war would more likely than not result in the extinction of the species homo sapiens; but it is also a fact that since the end of the Second World War not a single human being has died as a consequence of nuclear warfare. Far too many people have, however, perished as a result of conventional conflicts in the third world; therefore, while it is understandable that the populations of the super-Powers should feel concerned over the threat of a nuclear war, we in the third world should voice our own concerns.

It is one of the bitter ironies of the contemporary international situation that some States - and I do not mean only the super-Powers - whose voices are raised loudest in their denunciation of nuclear war have in fact been in the forefront of the development of conventional arms and have not been loath to use those arms. The situation is the direct result of the stalemate in the central strategic balance. No Soviet soldier is going to kill an American soldier; it is too risky. There is no reason for the super-Powers to run the risks of direct conflict so long as it is possible to inveigle, persuade or bribe some third world soldier to kill another third world soldier on their behalf. The evidence is to be seen everywhere, in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Cambodia, Afghanistan and Central America furnish some examples of the resulting conventional conflicts. Those are conflicts fueled by the global political ambitions of the super-Powers

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and advanced by super-Power proxies. They are tragic case studies which allow us to understand the uses of strategic advantage.

The meaning of strategic advantage in a condition of assured second-strike capability is to give the State which enjoys such an advantage the freedom to manoeuvre in areas which are of lesser, or peripheral, interest to its adversary. Strategic advantage raises the risks of response in such areas, thus posing difficult policy dilemmas for its adversary. A super-Power seeks strategic advantage because it knows it will constrain the ability of its adversary to act in such areas. Only a super-Power can check on another super-Power. If one super-Power succeeds in manipulating the correlation of forces so as to impel the conclusion of an arms control agreement which is unbalanced, the resulting freedom to manoeuvre will be of immense political significance. For those of us who live in the arenas of super-Power competition it will mean more deaths, more human tragedy, more suffering.

Now that some signs of flexibility have slowly emerged in relations between the super-Powers and it appears more likely that there will be serious arms control negotiations in the foreseeable future, it is all the more important that we do not allow cynical attempts to influence forums such as this one to succeed. It is no secret that many of the discussions held in this Committee are repetitive. It is no secret that many of the resolutions that we have passed have become "routinized". This is a situation which is tailor-made for manipulation. It is in the vital interest and the duty of all of us to measure each and every line, each and every proposal and resolution by a single yardstick: will it give one side undue advantage or is it balanced and fair; will it advance the ambitions of one Power or the security of all?

It is not in the interest of third world and non-aligned countries to allow any attempt to manipulate the horror that we feel at the prospect of a nuclear holocaust. It is not in our interest to acquiesce in any effort to use our sincere commitment to genuine peace in order to gain negotiating advantage. Our only interest is in a balanced arms control agreement between the super-Powers; an agreement which takes into account the legitimate interests of both sides and which will enhance international peace and stability by constraining the freedom of both super-Powers to exercise force in the third world. We should not allow ourselves to be seduced into calling for peace or disarmament at any price, because if we lend ourselves to attempts to compel an agreement which is unbalanced it is we in the third world who will ultimately be made to pay the price.

Mr. BAMELA ENGO (Cameroon): My delegation is particularly pleased at seeing you, Mr. Chairman, presiding over the First Committee's proceedings at this juncture in the life of our Organization. You are an accomplished diplomat, renowned for clear and vigorous dedication to the cause of genuine disarmament and a distinguished son of a friendly country, Brazil, with which my continent, Africa, shares close ties of historical and cultural identity and solidarity. We pledge our support and co-operation to you and the other officers of the Committee in that inspired fellowship of mutual interest in attaining success in our common endeavours.

My delegation also wishes to express its appreciation to Ambassador Vraalsen of Norway for the effective manner in which he guided our Committee's work at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The international community is now preparing to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the advent of the United Nations - an Organization consciously conceived to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Looking back on the plight of the human condition over four decades of addressing the vital issue of international peace and security, the future presents a skyline which provides no clue as to the scope or change we may expect from our failure to attain that fundamental objective. Paradoxically, at a time when advancements in science and technology present alternatives between higher and better standards of living in conditions of enduring peace for us all on the one hand and frightening threats to our very survival on this planet on the other, Members of this historic world body are drifting away from this objective with almost childlike indifference to grave dangers.

At its birth, the aspiration of all was that the United Nations would usher in a new world order based, above all, on collective security and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It now faces, on the contrary, a critical challenge, as its very raison d'être is increasingly being questioned on the basis of a clear failure of prolonged efforts to restrain the arms race as well as the continuing dangerous militarization of international affairs.

The international community is today confronted by two key predicaments: the escalating arms race and the growing socio-economic disparities between the industrialized and the developing countries. Those two phenomena - whether viewed as the sources or as the consequences of the dangerous spiral of tension and

(Mr. Bamela Engo, Cameroon)

conflict to which the international community has, unfortunately, become accustomed - constitute major obstacles to any national, regional or international effort to promote peace and progress. To small developing countries like my own, the bleak realities of the present, which stand in stark contrast to the bright hopes envisaged in the Charter, are a source of particularly grave concern and anxiety. For, in the final analysis, we are the most deprived among those at the receiving end of the negative effects of an unrestrained arms race and growing military expenditures. This is in spite of the fact that we ourselves do not directly participate in those harmful activities.

My delegation sees disarmament as a central element and an essential step in the search for genuine peace and security. At the same time, we see the failure to achieve substantive progress in the disarmament field as perhaps one of the leading failures of the United Nations in its first 40 years and the epicentre of contemporary international conflict and socio-economic deprivation. To my delegation, the interrelationship seems clear and convincing: without progress in the disarmament field genuine security would be impossible; and without security progress in such vital areas as development and the protection of human rights would be difficult, if not altogether impossible, to ensure.

It is curious that every country condemns the arms race and agrees that nuclear weapons pose the most serious threat to mankind's survival. Yet the arms race, including in particular the nuclear arms race, continues unabated. Has the absence of a global conflict on the scale of the first and second world wars produced a sense of complacency within the international community in the course of the past four decades? If there is a sense of complacency anywhere, it is definitely not everywhere. It may be truly argued that most of the industrialized countries have enjoyed since the end of the Second World War perhaps the longest period of uninterrupted peace in modern history, and have achieved the most remarkable economic and technological advances ever. The greater substance of truth is, however, that at the same time the developing countries have been victimized by a vicious cycle of war and poverty, as their territories together have experienced the nightmare of more than 100 wars and conditions of belligerency costing millions of human lives, producing incalculable material, ecological and other damage, and bringing untold sorrow to important sectors of mankind.

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Surely, therefore, we in the developing world in particular cannot afford to be complacent about war and peace. Our small defenceless countries face a frustrating dilemma because, although we are not responsible for the arms race, we are nevertheless affected and endangered by it, like countries everywhere. This explains our active interest in disarmament.

The arms race has achieved unprecedented intensity and vigour, in both the nuclear and the conventional field, and now threatens to expand from Earth and its oceanic regions to outer space. At the same time, the international community has been in the grip of an increasingly serious international crisis, which hits the developing countries particularly hard. Collectively, those developments stimulate and threaten dangerous destabilization of the already fragile international situation and affect in other pernicious ways efforts aimed at improving the human condition. We therefore continue to believe strongly that progress towards genuine disarmament is essential for the satisfaction of basic human needs and the promotion of such basic human values as peace and the security of human life. But disarmament cannot be seen as a goal in itself, nor should efforts towards its attainment be pursued in isolation from the wider search for peace and security.

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The Algerian Foreign Minister pertinently pointed out in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 24 September this year that:

"As long as disarmament efforts continue to be separated from the crucial question of collective security, and as long as this continues to be seen exclusively in terms of the balance of power, our efforts will be futile or, at best, totally inadequate to meet the requirements of the day." (A/39/PV.4, p. 58-60)

My country is situated in a region of the globe that faces serious economic and security crises, a situation worsened by the fact of South Africa's policies of apartheid, militarization, aggression and other forms of coercion, as well as the nuclear threat. As independent African States in the exercise of their legitimate right to security begin to pursue measures of self-defence, prospects of an increase in arms acquisition and increased acts of armed conflict in our continent will tend to grow, threatening still further not only the region's already volatile stability and progress but also international peace and security as a whole. To us therefore disarmament is not a distant, intellectual exercise, but a real and urgent requirement for our development, security and, in today's nuclear age, survival.

Nothing that I have said so far is altogether new. In fact, for nearly four decades and with greater strength in recent years, the message in that multilateral forum has been the same repetitive appeal within the United Nations system for arms limitation and disarmament. Have those appeals been heeded? What does the world body have to show for nearly 40 years of continuous involvement in the field? On the eve of the Organization's fortieth anniversary, it seems clear to us that the lack of any noticeable substantive progress in the disarmament field constitutes one of the key failures of the United Nations in the 40 years of its existence. The Cameroonian Foreign Minister expressed the strong sentiment of our delegation in his speech in plenary meeting on 8 October that it would be appropriate to renew the United Nations role in the field of disarmament with a view to rendering it more effective. We believe in this connection that some stock-taking is necessary, to look back and evaluate what has been accomplished, the road that has been traversed, so that we may better appreciate what still has to be done and the road that still has to be traversed.

This would not be the first time for such a review. Some nine years ago the General Assembly decided to undertake a comprehensive review of the role of the

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United Nations in the field of disarmament. From that important initiative the momentum gathered led to the collective reaffirmation of the central role and primary responsibility of the world body in this field and the establishment of dynamic structures and progress designed to ensure that the United Nations played its role effectively. Since then we have had two special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament; the First Committee has been set aside for the consideration of disarmament and related security issues; the Disarmament Commission has been reactivated; the Conference on Disarmament has been enlarged and reformed; the role of the Secretariat has been enhanced and strengthened with the establishment of the Department for Disarmament Affairs; and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research has been created to undertake research and studies on disarmament and related issues. It is our conviction that immediate focus in our collective endeavour must be on the fullest and most constructive use of the resources and structures of the United Nations system in the field of disarmament. If the regrettable impasse and deadlock in disarmament efforts have demonstrated anything, perhaps the greatest is that notwithstanding the importance that may be attached to the institutional arrangements and reforms established, notwithstanding the large number of studies carried out and meetings held, they should be neither confused with nor made to replace concrete, substantive results.

Disarmament is a question of security. It therefore concerns and is of interest to all countries. Progress in this domain requires co-operation and participation by all. The process of democratization and equal participation has already begun and must actively be encouraged. A more effective United Nations role in the field of disarmament will help to ensure that opportunities are provided for accommodating the concerns and interests of all Member States in all relevant disarmament discussions and negotiations. The universality of the disarmament objective postulates a desirable universality of participation in efforts aimed at its attainment. Therefore the world forum of the United Nations with its objective of universality should be utilized more fully and more constructively in the disarmament field.

A review of the United Nations role in the field of disarmament is neither a panacea for the lack of progress in this field nor meant to replace substantive deliberations within the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission and negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament. Rather it is meant to assist

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and enhance those efforts by clearly identifying ways and means by which the United Nations role in this field can be more effectively discharged. The fortieth anniversary of the birth of the United Nations will coincide with the tenth anniversary of General Assembly resolution 3484 B (XXX) of 12 December 1975, by which the Assembly decided to launch the first major review of the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field. That might serve to rekindle and to refocus attention on the primary purpose of the United Nations, namely, to maintain international peace and security. It would serve also as a contribution to the preparations for a third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which we hope will take place in the near future. Above all, it is to be recalled that by its resolution 31/90 of 14 December 1976 following its consideration of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament, the General Assembly, among other things, decided to keep the question of strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament under constant review. We believe that the time for another such review has come. It should provide an opportunity for infusing meaning and substance to the notion that the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the field of disarmament. Otherwise, the concept will remain a powerless vehicle which can serve only to erode further the credibility of the Organization in the eyes of the public.

In his statement in plenary meeting on 8 October 1984 the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country reiterated the constant theme of my nation's President, Paul Biya, on the critical place of disarmament in the universal quest for peace and on a number of specific issues on our disarmament agenda. At this stage of this Committee's general debate, we should like to refer to other items which my delegation believes deserve far more than the occasional grumble in protest.

One such item is the Conference on Disarmament itself. We can only politely state our view that the results of that Conference fall far short of our expectations. Except, perhaps, for its work on chemical weapons, the level of real negotiations appears to have fallen so low that what we have witnessed is mere discussions on what the issues are supposed to be. Those issues outlined clearly on its agenda require urgent and serious attention.

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It is our sincere hope that the Conference will begin substantive negotiations in 1985, notably on the prevention of nuclear war, on the militarization of outer space, on security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States and on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban.

My Government attaches great importance to the work of the Conference on Disarmament and looks forward to the opportunity of continuing to follow up and actively to contribute its modest efforts to that endeavour. In this regard we shall support any concrete action in the Conference on the question of additional membership pursuant to the recommendations contained in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

My delegation is convinced that nuclear disarmament is the most urgent priority disarmament item of our day. We appeal to the nuclear-weapon Powers, in relations among themselves and within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, to do everything possible to embark on serious efforts towards curbing and eventually eliminating the nuclear threat that hovers over the whole world.

We dispatch our strongest appeal to the nuclear Powers of this generation, and especially to the two super-Powers, to join the rest of the world in a universal effort consciously to design the finest conditions of lasting international peace through the rejection of war and the threatening elements that sustain belligerency and conflict.

We call upon the United States, born just over two eventful centuries ago, a nation whose founding fathers were driven by a revolutionary quest for justice and other conditions of peace to seek a new haven in a new world, a people who, in declaring independence, never contemplated reducing their economic, social and security attainments to forces that could cause discomfort and ruin for others; we call upon the Soviet Union, a nation born of a historic revolution in this century, a people that developed a unique system based on an ideology declared in the name of justice and peace, a country whose direct involvement with the nightmares of global warfare has created national abhorrence of the destructive forces of conflict: those two nations owe it to their populations and to an endangered mankind as a whole to negotiate the blending of the old and the new, to help share this generation's critical survival and a better system of peaceful coexistence among nations.

We support as an important first step in this direction agreement on a verifiable nuclear-weapons freeze, first between these two largest military Powers and then among all five nuclear-weapon States. In this volatile international

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climate, great power must be handled responsibly and the nuclear threat combated by the collective wisdom of mankind and not by adding newer and ever-more destructive weapons. Unless the nuclear Powers take concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament it might become more and more difficult to attract universal participation in any non-proliferation régime. Non-proliferation, to be even more meaningful, must not only be geographical; it should also include the freezing of the nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States.

Cameroon fully supports the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones world wide, and in this connection it wishes to reaffirm its attachment to the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa adopted by the States members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). That Declaration, which is 20 years old this year, demonstrates independent Africa's total commitment to peace and to a nuclear-free world. It makes clear that if a nuclear arms race emerges in Africa the responsibility for that negative development would not lie with the States members of the OAU. In this connection my delegation regrets the fact that the Disarmament Commission was unable, for the second consecutive year, to reach a consensus on recommendations to counter South Africa's nuclear capability.

We are pleased to commend once again the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the OAU for the report contained in document A/39/470 on the continued development of South Africa's nuclear capability. We find that document to be of tremendous value in the context of our exploration of effective ways and means of implementing the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. The document also shows that important qualitative studies that can contribute to our collective disarmament efforts can be carried out at relatively low cost within the United Nations system. My country, which is represented on the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies, believes that studies can sometimes facilitate disarmament negotiations by contributing to a better understanding of the issues involved.

At the same time, however, we feel that attention must be paid to the high cost of those studies. We have calculated that the financial implications submitted to the General Assembly for the studies undertaken between 1978 and 1983 amounted to over \$20 million, or an estimated \$13,000 per page. While studies may be important in the search for disarmament, surely the Assembly ought to consider effective and less costly ways of carrying them out in view of the serious financial constraints confronting the United Nations and Member States, in particular developing countries, of which my country is one.

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We must also seek to ensure that studies are not used as an excuse to delay disarmament negotiations, especially on subjects where it is generally believed there is already adequate understanding of the relevant issues involved. We believe that the most important missing element in our work is political will, not the lack of technical knowledge.

My delegation also attaches much importance to regional disarmament and confidence-building measures as valuable contributory steps towards wider global efforts at general and complete disarmament. We believe that increased trust and confidence among regional countries can help restrain military expenditures and armed conflict in the regions concerned. We support the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe and hope that concrete and effective disarmament-related measures will result therefrom. We also strongly support regional disarmament measures on our continent. We see the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa as the most important element in this respect. We therefore call upon the international community and, in particular, the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the nuclear-weapon Powers, to co-operate with the OAU to eliminate South Africa's nuclear threat so that Africa can indeed be turned into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

We also support the proposals contained in document A/39/529 for the holding in Togo, in West Africa, in 1985, within the framework of the observance of the fortieth anniversary of the birth of the United Nations, of a regional seminar on peace and disarmament bringing together States members of the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States, with the assistance of the United Nations.

Further, within the framework of our support for the World Disarmament Campaign, we take note of the information contained in document A/39/485, which deals with regional disarmament, that preparations are proceeding with a view to convening a regional seminar for Africa on disarmament issues at Cairo in February 1985.

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We welcome such activities organized by the Secretariat under the World Disarmament Campaign programme, and in view of their importance we hope that consultations will be had with the countries in the regions concerned to ensure their success. To ensure the universality of the campaign and to enhance its effectiveness, my delegation supports also the proposal contained in document A/39/529 for the establishment in Lome of a regional institute to promote research on peace and intensify the disarmament information campaign in Africa.

The regionalization and decentralization of the Secretariat's World Disarmament Campaign activities would have the additional positive effect of reducing costs and increasing local impact. In the field of disarmament information and study activities, my delegation continues to believe that the United Nations fellowship programme increasingly performs a valuable service in promoting disarmament expertise among more Member States, especially the developing countries, and thus contributes to facilitating the participation of all countries in disarmament deliberations and negotiations.

We also believe that the administration of a fellowship programme by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, to enable scholars from developing countries to carry out research on disarmament and related international security issues at the Institute, are very welcome, indeed.

As a small developing country, Cameroon is constantly concerned about the social and economic consequences of the arms race. That is why we fully support the proposals for a reduction by 10 per cent of the military budgets of the permanent members of the Security Council, Senegal's proposal for a tax on military expenditures and the French initiative for the establishment of an international disarmament fund for development. As stated in document A/39/229 dealing with the fund, my delegation feels that the question of the procedures or modalities for a concrete functional link between disarmament and development is not as important as the demonstration of the political will of the major military Powers to make a firm and determined commitment to reverse the course of the arms race. The more productive course of global peace demands the devotion of additional resources to development tasks, especially in the developing countries. At the same time, such a practical link between disarmament and development, for instance through the establishment of an international disarmament fund for development and the

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imposition of a tax on military expenditures, should not be seen as the moral legitimization of the arms race but rather as the expression of a political commitment to end the arms race and military expenditures.

These are some of the ideas my delegation wanted to express at this stage in the general debate of our Committee and we reserve our right to speak again as the deliberations of the Committee continue.

The CHAIRMAN: I have received an indication from the representative of France that he wishes to speak in exercise of his right of reply today. As members are aware, this right is usually exercised at the end of the day, but bearing in mind that there are still some minutes available, and in the interests of expediting our work, I am sure the Committee will have no objection if I call on the representative of France to exercise his right of reply now.

Mr. de la Gorce (France) (interpretation from French): The French delegation wishes to reply briefly to the statement made at our last meeting by the representative of New Zealand on nuclear testing by France on French territory in the South Pacific.

We note that opposition to such tests, reaffirmed by the delegation of New Zealand, is not principally motivated by concern over the environment. In that regard, the delegation of New Zealand notes that the conclusions reached by the international mission of inquiry which went to Mururoa last October and which, moreover, invited a guest from New Zealand:

"... 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." (A/C.1/39/PV.7, p. 12)

What we must note is that the international mission of inquiry did not take a position against the continuation of the tests. Such was the main conclusion of the report - whether explicit or not - from which it is clear that health risks resulting from radioactivity in the South Pacific region do not exist, and nothing leads to the conclusion that a continuation of the tests would change that situation.

The report of the experts further states that in a period of 500 to 1,000 years, some radioactivity from underground testing could reach the sea. That

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conclusion is based on the hypothesis of a number of tests totalling five megatons. According to observations made by New Zealand detection networks, the total amounts to less than 1 megaton. Thus, even assuming that testing would continue, further results would be reduced to a small fraction of the figures which appear in the report. Therefore, the impact on the environment would be insignificant if part of the fission materials were to filter into the seas in 5 or 10 centuries.

To conclude, I should like to remind the Committee that France is the only nuclear-weapon country which has invited a mission of experts to visit the site of its tests.

I come now to the main reason for the opposition expressed by the delegation of New Zealand which objected:

"... to the use of a relatively peaceful part of the world for developing and refining the instruments of nuclear war." (ibid., p. 11)

We do not see how French nuclear tests, which have been practiced for years, could affect the peaceful nature of the region. Such tests in no way affect the security of the States there. They are in no way a risk to peace. For my country, the instruments which are being tested are not instruments of nuclear war but instruments of deterrence, a fundamental factor of security which the Government of New Zealand has thus far not challenged in any way.

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France has undertaken less nuclear testing than either of the two nuclear super-Powers. It must continue to do so because it must preserve the credibility of its instrument of deterrence. Only in those territories of the Pacific, has France found the desired conditions with regard to geology and the availability of a sufficiently large space. In accordance with its law and the exercise of its sovereignty, France is undertaking an action required for its security, which, I repeat, does not affect the peace of the region, the security of the States situated there or the environment or health of its populations. Thus the delegation of New Zealand is opposing the rights and fundamental interests of France in the area of security - a political claim, a political thesis, which is not based on any specific interest or on de facto or de jure arguments.

With regard to the duration of the tests - a matter also raised by the delegation of New Zealand - the Minister for External Relations of France at a recent press conference in New York expressed the position of the French Government:

"We hope that the testing of the nuclear part of the deterrence force will in time be slowed down, and then halted. But we will continue it for as long as it is necessary."

Any other information is not authoritative.

The French delegation wishes to express the firm and earnest hope that in the period of time which separates us from the end of testing - and these are factors which are independent of the will of the authorities of my country - the question of testing will not weigh unduly on relations of friendship and co-operation which France wishes to maintain and develop with New Zealand as well as all the other States of the South Pacific.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.