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Chairman: Mr. SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil)

CONTENTS

STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL DEBATE

Statements were made by:

U Saw Hlaing (Burma)
Mr. Ott (German Democratic Republic)
Mr. Kostov (Bulgaria)
Mr. Oyarce (Chile)
Mr. Bierring (Denmark)
Mr. Saba (Burkina Faso)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 65 AND 142 (continued)

STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL DEBATE

The CHAIRMAN: This morning the Committee will begin its second phase of work, which is devoted to "Statements on specific agenda items and continuation of the general debate".

U SAW HLAING (Burma): The delegation of Burma is very gratified at the honoured role that you, Sir, have been called upon to play as Chairman of the First Committee and extends its warm congratulations on your unanimous election. Your integrity, knowledge and skill, which have been demonstrated so amply in many a disarmament forum, will surely prove valuable in guiding the Committee's challenging tasks towards a successful outcome.

We do not wish to let this opportunity pass without expressing our congratulations to the other officers of the Committee on their well-deserved election.

As stated by many other delegations assembled here, we are conscious of the frustration and disappointment felt by the international community at the impasse that persists in disarmament negotiations, at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. It is common knowledge that the past year once again failed to register any sign of meaningful movement in the direction of reaching agreement on the limitation and reduction of arms, be they nuclear or conventional. What has happened is that international efforts in the field of disarmament continue to labour under an adverse international climate of sharp strains in the relations between the world's two major and most heavily armed nuclear-weapon States. The essential prerequisite of mutual trust and political will which would enable them to fulfil the promise of arms control has been lacking on their part. Meanwhile, the international community is exposed to the perpetual danger of the outbreak of nuclear war - a danger that will last as long as the two major nuclear-weapon States relentlessly pursue the path of an unbridled arms race.

For too long the fear engendered by the threat of a nuclear outbreak and the complete reliance on excessive military strength has made it impossible for all nations - big and small, powerful and weak - adequately to respond to the major social, economic and cultural changes in their society and the world at large. For too long man has devoted the greater part of his creative genius and energies to

(U Saw Hlaing, Burma)

increasing his capacity for self-destruction by making and perfecting diabolical weapons, which he knows instinctively must never be used. For too long the thoughts and actions of nations have been locked into the frozen attitudes and doctrines that may have made sense earlier but are no longer relevant or adequate today. The reorientation of thinking and the development of more appropriate concepts that will enable us to meet the present challenges are, however, possible only at a lower level of international tension.

It is in this spirit that we welcome the recent resumption of high-level contacts between the United States and the Soviet Union. These talks may or may not have any direct impact on this Committee's scope and deliberations. At this stage it is difficult to foresee whether they will bring themselves to engage in real negotiations and accept significant arms limitation and reduction. But we need to improve the current state of affairs.

It is therefore incumbent on the two major nuclear-weapon States to attempt to unfreeze the situation and to induce movement by providing grounds on which they might meet and negotiate their differences. The best service this Committee can render is to exert pressure on the two major nuclear-weapon States to negotiate, not only in terms of armaments, but also in terms of a general understanding on the reduction of international tensions on issues that divide them, so as to advance the process which could, phase by phase, achieve a breakthrough in the current stalemate.

It seems to my delegation that in considering the wide range of items on this Committee's agenda it is necessary first of all to state the nature of the problems as we understand them.

The delegation of Burma has always been of the view that the ultimate goal of the entire human race in the field of disarmament must be the achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Indeed, we believe that there is no alternative. But, as we all know, general and complete disarmament raises a multiplicity of complex and delicate issues that strike at the very heart of the security and sovereignty of nations. It presupposes the existence of an effective system of universal collective security without military alliances, such as that envisaged in the Charter, as well as the further maturing of the spirit and ideals of internationalism. The achievement of general and complete disarmament would therefore be a distant goal and inevitably take time. In the circumstances, my delegation holds the view that the immediate and

(U Saw Hlaing, Burma)

urgent need of the international community is to come to grips with the real and awesome problem of nuclear arms. As we see it, the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and the achievement of nuclear disarmament are matters of the highest priority on the international agenda; but the task is a vast and complicated one.

In his annual report this year, the Secretary-General says

"It is only realistic to recognize that nuclear disarmament will depend primarily on agreement among the nations having nuclear weapons, especially, and beginning with, the two most powerful. It is equally true, however, that success or failure in the reduction of nuclear weapons can have a most important bearing on the future of the entire international community."

(A/39/1, p. 3)

Very few would disagree with that view.

(U Saw Hlaing, Burma)

The subject of disarmament, as dealt with by experts, is highly specialized, not easily understood and to the general public difficult to appreciate at first sight; but the same general public does fully understand that nuclear disarmament is a matter of crucial concern to all individuals. They know it is clearly linked to the issue of the survival or extinction of mankind. This explains the surge of popular sentiment and demonstrations against nuclear war and the deployment of nuclear weapons. We believe that there is widespread recognition in the international community that the build-up of nuclear arsenals, particularly by the two major nuclear-weapon States, has reached crisis proportions and that new technological refinements threaten to erode further the present precarious nuclear balance.

It becomes apparent that the prevention of nuclear war will continue to be an issue that will dominate the life of the international community for a considerable segment of time. It is an issue which can be solved only through the pursuit of measures on the limitation and reduction of arms in the nuclear field. In this context my delegation, in common with many others, supports in principle the idea of a verifiable nuclear freeze, as it would provide a credible essential mechanism to induce the process of reducing nuclear arms and to ensure that there are no loopholes in that process. It would close the path towards the development of new weapons and counter-force systems. A concomitant pledge of the non-use of nuclear weapons would also spare the anguish of a concerned world and lessen the chance of an accidental nuclear exchange.

The cessation of all test explosions of nuclear weapons and the urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty are without question the most urgent of all the items on our agenda. It is urgent because every delay in putting an end to nuclear-weapon tests makes the future more uncertain. Even though it is a fact that the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests can come about only through agreement between the nuclear-weapon States, every nation, regardless of size or circumstances, is directly and inescapably involved in this issue.

Burma became a party to the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963, viewing it as an initial component of a larger process towards the ultimate achievement of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban and beyond that to wider and even more significant agreements. The progress of the talks since 1963, however, has been most

(U Saw Hlaing, Burma)

disheartening. Since then, the tests conducted over the past 20 years have transcended everything that gave rise to the original clamour that led to the partial test ban.

My delegation would like to interpose a thought here: It is not sufficient to preserve the peace of the world merely by ensuring that those nations which do not at present have nuclear capability should never acquire that capability. It would be infinitely more meaningful if today's nuclear-weapon States, as positive action towards limiting and reducing their own arsenals, took at least the essential first step of ending all test explosions of nuclear weapons and achieved a comprehensive test ban. Such an achievement would stop the trend towards the further sophistication of nuclear weapons.

It is appropriate for me to state here that my delegation is pleased to endorse the joint declaration made this year by the Governments of six countries - Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania - on the nuclear-arms race. Their appeal for an immediate freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and the call for continued negotiations on nuclear arms comes at a timely juncture in the interest of world peace and stability.

Significantly, the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone and that of a peace zone continue to gain momentum in various regions of the world. This is looked upon as a stabilizing factor in consolidating peace and achieving the removal of nuclear arms. More and more countries are declaring themselves in favour of such zones. Apart from Latin America and Africa, action in this direction is being initiated in the Nordic region, the Balkans, the Mediterranean, the South Pacific and in South and South-East Asia.

Regardless of terminology, both types of zones involve a fundamental relationship between security and co-operation. The realization of nuclear-weapon-free zones necessarily includes the element of co-operation, as does the zone of peace. Neither concept can ignore the element of security from the existence of nuclear weapons. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are an important objective of disarmament measures. In this sense, we perceive the spread of such zones as bearing a positive effect in the strengthening of international peace and security. However, the process of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone or a zone of peace is not easy in the context of the present pattern of the world's strategic relationships. Much is contingent on the positive reaction of external forces and the development of internal conditions.

(U Saw Hlaing, Burma)

Given this analysis, Burma supports the establishment of such zones where there is unanimity of purpose and no political objections exist. We consider that, once a group of countries agree to such a process to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone or a peace zone in their region, third parties, particularly nuclear-weapon States, should undertake to respect them.

As a littoral State, Burma fully supports the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and regrets the long delay over the holding of the much awaited international conference.

The developing threat of outer-space militarization has begun to impinge upon our lives, and the prevention of an arms race in this domain presents a foremost issue. The danger is plain and imminent. The potential of anti-satellite weapons and systems and the possibility of a new breed of space-borne weapon systems being deployed demand urgent priority for the development of effective disarmament measures applicable to outer space. The time has come, we believe, for the world's two foremost space Powers to make a move towards discussing the issues which divide them in this area and to ensure that outer space remains a peaceful environment as part of the common heritage of mankind. If they do not, this important concept will be undermined. In time, weapons and counter-systems will be produced and stationed in space and the whole world will pay the price. We regret that recent bilateral moves for talks on the banning of space weapons have not been possible because of what each party perceives as pre-conditions and extraneous questions. The problem cries out for a perspective that rises above doctrine and mutual recrimination.

(U Saw Hlaing, Burma)

Another matter to which we attach the utmost importance is the elimination of chemical weapons from the arsenals of all States. A number of allegations which surface from time to time that chemical weapons are being used in various regional conflicts lead us to believe that the technology of chemical warfare has continued to develop. The recent agreement by the Foreign Ministers of the European Economic Community to impose controls on substances used in the production of chemical weapons is a welcome constructive step towards achieving a ban. My delegation is also encouraged by the ongoing multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament to secure a convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction and the working out of adequate and effective verification procedures. We are happy that both the United States and the Soviet Union are taking part in these negotiations although major differences between them have yet to be bridged on verification compliance procedures. However, the forthcoming attitude of the Soviet Union in regard to on-site verification gives us hope that some light will creep in for the next round of negotiations.

The disappointing result of the discussions in the Conference on Disarmament at its session this year is not surprising. The work of the Conference regrettably continued to show all the signs of the gloom in East-West relations which has tended to negate rational thinking and co-operation on various matters. As a consequence, the Conference was unable to carry out substantive negotiations on the greater part of the issues entrusted to its consideration. Nor was it able to implement its mandate to establish various committees owing to procedural hindrance.

My delegation approaches the many issues that confront the Conference and this Committee with a sober but not pessimistic realization. Even though there may be a set-back to the gains thus far achieved, we are aware that the sustained will and the mutual effort shown over the years are not irredeemably lost in a day. Much may be salvaged by a renewal and reorientation of efforts.

It is not untrue to say that differences in security perceptions are responsible for the present world crisis. In this nuclear age a nation's security is perceived as being dependent on heavily armed strength. The concept of deterrence, as developed was based on the paradoxical premise that the more modern and potent the means of waging war, the better became the prospect of maintaining peace. Peace, it seems, is attainable only as the synthesis of conflict, not through common sense and spontaneous goodwill. By the very nature of things, peace

(U Saw Hlaing, Burma)

based on the balance of terror is not peace. Security based on the concept of defence through deterrence is insecure. Understanding generated by terror cannot endure. To our mind the absolute notion of equal security is derived from the same postulations. What is urgently required is a mutually agreed upon long-term commitment for a steady evolution towards the goal of common security.

And now for some final observations. We tend to think that there are already encouraging signs that significant external and internal pressures operate on both the major nuclear-weapon States to re-examine their relationships, their legitimate interests and commitments and to determine to what extent they can co-operate in the maintenance of peace and international security rather than persist in fruitless and costly confrontation. We wish to express our hope that both the major Powers will display the necessary political will and address themselves more constructively to these questions of international peace and security which preoccupy the Committee.

Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): Mr. Chairman, my delegation has already had the opportunity of expressing to you and the officers of the Committee best wishes on your election. I may assure you of the further active support and co-operation of the German Democratic Republic delegation in the fulfilment of your responsible task.

My delegation joins other delegations in noting with satisfaction that in the course of the debate so far the majority of speakers have clearly pointed to the central tasks of our work. These are the prevention of nuclear war, as has been eloquently stated, for example, by the representative of India, Ambassador Dubey, fundamental questions of nuclear disarmament as well as the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the guarantees of its use exclusively for peaceful purposes. The significant initiative of the Soviet Union on that issue has our full support. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic will spare no efforts at this session of the United Nations General Assembly to promote measures directed against the dangerous threat of nuclear war and for improving the international situation. To that end, we will submit precise proposals, in particular relating to agenda items 59 and 64. Permit me first to make some general remarks about the debate we have had so far.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic
Republic)

The 1970s have furnished proof that the principles of peaceful coexistence are a solid basis for developing equal relations between States having different social systems. Treaties were signed that helped political détente to a breakthrough. Agreements on arms limitation and disarmament were an expression of endeavours for consolidating political détente by military détente. It was possible to reach concrete results because equality and equal security were the underlying principles of the negotiations, an approximate military balance was maintained and the security interests of all sides were respected. The transition to a policy of disregarding these fundamental norms pursued by the most aggressive circles of imperialism, in particular the United States, is the actual reason for today's aggravated political and military confrontation. The beginning of the deployment of new United States medium-range nuclear missiles in a number of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) States, among them the Western neighbouring State of the German Democratic Republic, has brought about an immense deterioration in this situation. That step constitutes the most striking expression of an illusionary but dangerous striving for military superiority. To improve the international situation, to avert the danger of nuclear war, requires the abandonment at last of the striving for military supremacy and the return to the principles of peaceful coexistence and fruitful international co-operation.

The Head of State of the German Democratic Republic, Erich Honecker, declared in his address to mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of the German Democratic Republic on 6 October 1984:

"We have never been proponents of a balance of terror, and never will be. What the GDR is working for ... is disarmament in East and West, the freezing and abolition of all nuclear arsenals, a return to the path of détente, the implementation of peaceful coexistence to which there is no acceptable alternative."

We will relentlessly continue our endeavour to solve all problems by way of negotiations.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

The prevention of nuclear war is and remains the question of all questions. Top priority for this problem was clearly stipulated in the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, adopted by the consensus of practically all States. Trying to play this down is in contradiction with the Final Document and can only be regarded as an attempt to undermine it.

On 4 April this year the German Democratic Republic, on behalf of socialist States, submitted at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, in document CD/484, a catalogue of measures for the prevention of nuclear war. As has already been underlined by many States, it offers a solid basis for negotiations. It includes norms or, in other words, main elements for a code of conduct regulating relations between the nuclear-weapon States. This relates to the renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons and of any propaganda for nuclear war, as well as the renunciation of doctrines purporting to justify the "legitimacy" of the use of nuclear weapons. Apart from these political and legal measures, the proposed practical steps are gaining ever-greater importance. The socialist States focus, above all, on the following points: quantitative and qualitative freeze of nuclear weapons, prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and of the militarization of outer space, as well as measures for nuclear disarmament and the complete liquidation of nuclear weapons. It stands to reason that with these measures the nuclear-weapon States would fulfil their special responsibility for preventing nuclear war.

Furthermore, at this year's session of the General Assembly, the German Democratic Republic will advocate that an urgent appeal be directed to those nuclear-weapon States which have not yet done so to undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

The solemn pledge made by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1982 to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons is a step of historic significance. The People's Republic of China at this session of the General Assembly reaffirmed that at no time and in no circumstance will it be the first to use nuclear weapons. In the Final Communiqué adopted by the Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries to the thirty-ninth session, all nuclear-weapons States are urged to make a commitment and pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons in armed conflicts.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

At the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and elsewhere, the States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) assert that the strategy of their military organization is, as they say, "exclusively defensive". The concept is mentioned - and this is by no means new - that in the age of nuclear weapons war can no longer be a means of achieving political ends. Such words must be followed by deeds. The German Democratic Republic will therefore propose at this session that we work out and submit to the General Assembly an international instrument incorporating the obligation, binding under international law, not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

The Conference on Disarmament is, in our view, the appropriate forum to discuss and draft such a document on a multilateral basis. The renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons by all nuclear-weapon States would offer an important avenue to regulate relations between them and to reduce the danger of a nuclear holocaust. We share this conviction with the great majority of States.

The present complicated situation urgently calls for steps towards halting the nuclear-arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament. At the Geneva Conference on Disarmament the socialist States, as well as the non-aligned and neutral States, emphatically demanded that a negotiating body be established, and they spoke out in favour of practical measures in this regard. The German Democratic Republic supports the Joint Declaration by six Heads of State or Government of 22 May 1984. That appeal advocates a freeze on nuclear weapons as a first step towards reducing and, finally liquidating nuclear weapons, which would be the most effective guarantee for averting the danger of nuclear war - hence a measure that is very much up-to-date.

Since no progress could be achieved thus far as regards the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, the responsibility then lies with the same forces which, by introducing qualitatively new weapons systems, are fuelling up the nuclear-arms race, and which regard negotiations as being nothing but an obstacle to the implementation of their arms build-up. And these are precisely the same forces which intend to turn the agenda item "Cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament" into a dead item. Their "no" has for years prevented any substantive discussion, not only at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. It is high time to give due consideration to this urgent issue.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic
Republic)

The thirty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly should, therefore, reaffirm its urgent call upon the Geneva Conference on Disarmament immediately to undertake negotiations and to start elaborating practical measures in accordance with paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament, including the preparation of a programme of nuclear disarmament.

Within the framework of nuclear disarmament, the German Democratic Republic attaches great importance to the prohibition of the nuclear neutron weapon, which is, after all, a symbol of the qualitative nuclear-arms drive that must be halted. The production of that weapon continues while the Conference on Disarmament is being prevented from taking appropriate measures to prohibit it. In the face of the threat for the security of peoples emanating from the qualitative arms race, the German Democratic Republic deems it necessary for the Conference on Disarmament to undertake negotiations also on the drafting of a convention on the prohibition of the nuclear neutron weapon. The draft convention submitted by the socialist States offers a good basis for negotiations. This step fully coincides with the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament which gives highest priority to the cessation of the qualitative arms race in the nuclear field and which calls for the elaboration of relevant agreements.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

In spite of intensive efforts by the majority of the States represented at the Conference on Disarmament, no breakthrough could be achieved in the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Above all, it is the discriminatory demands for verification that are conceived in a manner that would not be acceptable, like the concept of "open invitation", which block an agreement. Realistic proposals have, however, been submitted by the Soviet Union and other socialist States, including one for the setting up of an international consultative committee. It cannot but cause serious concern when one side, which on all occasions emphasizes the question of verification, is at the same time pushing for a sophisticated potential of binary weapons. It is obvious that such a step would render verification difficult or even impossible. The General Assembly should renew its call upon States to negotiate seriously and to refrain from any actions that would impede negotiations. This refers, in particular, to the production of binary weapons and other new types of chemical weapons as well as to their deployment, above all on the territory of other States.

We are firmly convinced that regional measures are well suited to advance and promote the conclusion of a comprehensive ban of that weapon of mass destruction.

The German Democratic Republic attaches special importance to the forthcoming Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. That Treaty is today, more than ever before, an important instrument for reducing the danger of nuclear war, for preserving and strengthening international security and for guaranteeing and intensifying the peaceful uses of atomic energy. It is, therefore, a requirement of our time to ensure that the Conference contributes to the strengthening of the Treaty and its universality. That would certainly have a positive effect on international relations in general and would lead to strengthening efforts for the implementation of the constructive proposals submitted on nuclear-arms limitation and disarmament. We are further convinced that the Conference will give fresh impetus to promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The German Democratic Republic regards Article VI as a fundamental obligation. It has, like the Soviet Union and the other socialist States, consistently - and this can be proven - advocated the fulfilment of that obligation.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic
Republic)

My delegation believes that negotiations and their results are too important a question to make them the subject of political games. The all-decisive issue today is to show the political will to engage in substantive and productive negotiations. Words should be matched by deeds. Misinterpretations and distortions of the position adopted by the socialist States, as can occasionally be heard in this Committee, are in contradiction of the facts and are of no help to anybody.

It is a fact that some delegations at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament even try to delete the term "negotiations" from the vocabulary of multilateral diplomacy. It is quite obvious that the slogan "negotiations without preconditions" is harped on whenever the basis for negotiations is removed by creating faits accomplis. Some carry that slogan with them like the proverbial fig leaf to evade the question of how they would justify their agreement to the deployment of United States first-strike nuclear weapons.

Recently words of commitment to peace and to a readiness for negotiations could also be heard from representatives of the main Western Power. Yet, it remains difficult to believe such words when they are not followed by deeds. It would be so easy to accept the proposal of the Soviet Union to undertake negotiations on the prevention of the militarization of outer space. Acceptance of that proposal is, however, linked to preconditions which would not only burden such negotiations but actually turn them into non-committal discussions. It would be quite easy to agree at the Conference on Disarmament to negotiating mandates for the priority items of its agenda, but so far there has been no glimmer of hope for that.

Today more urgently than ever before the socialist States call for a businesslike dialogue and productive negotiations on the burning issues of our time. This has only recently been reaffirmed by General Secretary Konstantin U. Chernenko in his interview with the Washington Post. He said:

"We have always been prepared for serious and business like negotiations and have repeatedly said so."

I should now like in conclusion to make a few remarks on our own business, so to speak, that is, on the question of a higher effectiveness of the Committee's work. That matter has already been addressed by a number of delegations. My delegation shares the view that it is our permanent task to seek ways and means for

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic
Republic)

increasing the effectiveness of the work of our Committee. In our understanding this would mean, above all, an effort to increase the degree of participation in our endeavours. It cannot, however, amount to curtailing the rights and scope of the activities of Member States. Over the last years, for instance, the Committee has done a great deal in compliance with the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament. Such tasks and demands, like the prevention of nuclear war, the non-first use of nuclear weapons or a freeze on nuclear weapons arsenals, have gained substance and weight through this Committee's work. They have rightly become the focus of the attention of world public opinion.

What matters, in our view, is not the number of resolutions we adopt. Besides, that is only a reflection of the great concern felt in view of the dangerous international situation. What matters is a businesslike and substantive discussion of the basic issues of our time. What matters is respect for the will of the overwhelming majority of States and peoples as expressed in resolutions initiated by this Committee. What matters is to respect and fulfil the mandate of the Committee.

The preservation of peace is the overriding task we are facing and it calls urgently for practical measures. My delegation expects that the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly will give renewed impetus to this effort.

Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria): The general debate at the current thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations demonstrated in the most categorical way that the danger of nuclear war is the focal point of concern on the part of the international community of nations. Scores of delegations noted with deep concern the further aggravation of tensions owing to the dramatic growth of stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction and the reckless drive to obtain military superiority, a basic consequence of which is the increased risk of a military crisis with unpredictable implications. In its first statement in this Committee, the Bulgarian delegation touched upon the basic issue haunting mankind, which is, the necessity of preventing a nuclear holocaust. In this context we dwelt in greater detail on the dangers of militarization of outer space which, as a particularly destabilizing stage of the arms race, could open the door to the outbreak of a global nuclear conflagration.

Today we should like to amplify on our concepts concerning the problem of avoiding such a war by laying stress on its very basis, namely, nuclear weapons and the need for nuclear disarmament.

It is generally acknowledged that nuclear arms pose the greatest threat to the future of civilization and the existence of mankind. Nuclear arms are the material foundation of adventurist and militaristic plans, of fantasies about world supremacy. Various analyses indicate that the horrendous stockpiles of nuclear weapons are capable of destroying 15 times over all human life on the planet. Information provided by Soviet and American scientists point out that 1.1 billion people would perish during the first massive exchange of nuclear strikes while a similar number would die afterwards owing to nuclear radiation. As the American scientist Carl Sagan authoritatively argued, nuclear explosions would wreak profound geophysical changes, precipitating a "nuclear winter" that would devastate irrevocably vegetable and animal life, as well as all living conditions on the planet.

Common sense dictates that such weapons cannot be a rational instrument of policy. Unfortunately, certain imperialist circles continue to consider nuclear arms as the mainstay of their national security. Moreover, they view nuclear weapons not only as a "deterrent" to potential adversaries but also as an instrument for fighting and prevailing in a nuclear war. We have made no secret of our clear-cut position that the culprits for the present critical state of affairs are the very circles which, blinded by their hegemonistic ambitions and rabid militarism, have been the driving force behind the arms race in all its twists and

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

turns during the past 40 years. The military budget of the present United States Administration has reached \$300 billion for fiscal 1985, and spending on strategic nuclear forces has jumped by 100 per cent between 1980 and 1984 as the nuclear stockpile has climbed to over 13,000 warheads. Its plans envision the deployment of over 5,500 cruise missiles in the near future; the production of thousands of single-warhead mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles of the Midgetman type; and the development of laser, beam and other apocalyptic weapons of mass destruction. In order to justify this most massive rearmament drive known to history, the absurd argument has been advanced that this is being done to preserve peace and in the long run to eliminate the very need for nuclear weapons.

The socialist countries, above all the Soviet Union, deem as most essential to a reliable and sound guarantee against the danger of mutual annihilation the need for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear arms. Central among the numerous initiatives designed to improve the international climate is the complex of measures aimed at curbing the nuclear-arms race and reducing and eliminating nuclear arsenals, renouncing at the same time the use of force in international relations. At the core of this complex of measures is the nuclear disarmament programme contained in the memorandum submitted by the Soviet Union at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in June 1982, a programme which my Government wholeheartedly supports. That programme set forth the following substantive stages of a comprehensive process of arms limitation and arms reduction: the halting of the development of new systems of nuclear weapons; the prohibition of the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons purposes; the prohibition of the production of all nuclear arms and their delivery systems; the gradual reduction of nuclear-weapon stockpiles, including delivery systems; and the complete elimination of nuclear arms.

Implementation of this programme would require collective efforts and good political will, as well as a comprehensive approach taking into consideration the complex interrelationships between various elements of the nuclear arsenals. Obviously the programme should encompass all nuclear weapons, according priority to the most powerful and destructive of them, namely, the strategic and medium-range nuclear weapons. It is these weapons that are the topic of the dialogue between the two most powerful nuclear-weapon States, a dialogue that is of paramount significance in shaping the entire outlook of international relations in the years to come.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

Regrettably the solution of these problems at the present stage is being hampered by the biased and unilateral approach of the United States that has dominated its foreign policy since 1981. The evident intent of the United States side to eliminate the most sophisticated strategic systems of the Soviet Union while preserving freedom of action to deploy large-scale nuclear systems of its own has produced a standstill in negotiations. In so far as medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe are concerned, the United States side chose to negotiate from the position of a fait accompli and ultimatums. Beyond any doubt, it is imperative to have a dialogue on these questions, but this dialogue would be meaningless unless the United States removed the obstacles which have so far doomed it to failure in the first place.

The only correct approach to the entangled problems of disarmament was clearly formulated long ago on the basis of historical experience and sober evaluation of nuclear-age realities. This approach lies in the strict observance of the principle of equality and equal security. It is no accident that this principle was laid down as one of the fundamental principles in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. This principle was reaffirmed in a number of important documents and decisions of the world Organization. Its observance in the present-day context would be tantamount in practice to the renunciation by States of any attempt to obtain one-sided advantages to the detriment of the other side while striving, as a matter of priority, to maintain military-strategic parity at ever lower levels of military confrontation.

My country shares the view that the most reliable method of reducing the nuclear threat is the reduction of nuclear weapons. In our age of incredible scientific and technological dynamism and of no less intensive contradictions and conflicts, nobody can predict whence the fatal spark will explode the nuclear powderkeg. Many are the scenarios leading to the outbreak of nuclear war: a surprise "pre-emptive" strike, as advocated by influential circles in the West; escalation of a local conflict; unauthorized use of nuclear weapons; accident; technical error; actions by irresponsible individuals; uncontrolled militarization of further realms. There is but one principal road to removing the danger of nuclear war, that is, the elimination of its instruments.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

As I have already mentioned, we are well aware of the difficulties which the implementation of a global programme for nuclear disarmament is likely to encounter. Nevertheless, we should like to emphasize that today it is fully feasible to check the spiralling arms race and to commence the gradual lowering of the level of military confrontation. Such an opportunity is provided by the initiative concerning a freeze on nuclear weapons which, with good reason, enjoys the broad-based and active support of all peace-loving forces. Its effectiveness is favoured in particular by the presence of such a propitious prerequisite for its realization as the rough military-strategic equilibrium between the two most powerful nuclear-weapon States.

The idea of freezing nuclear weapons was embodied in resolution 38/73 E, which was adopted by a wide majority at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. This resolution called upon all nuclear-weapon States to stop any further production of all types of nuclear weapons, including delivery systems, not to deploy any new types and systems of such weapons, to agree on a moratorium on all nuclear-weapon tests, including tests of delivery systems, and to halt completely the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons purposes. The resolution envisages that the Soviet Union and the United States should first agree to a simultaneous freeze on their nuclear weapons on a bilateral basis with the other nuclear-weapon States following suit.

The Bulgarian delegation is convinced that the cessation of stockpiling an increasing number of nuclear arms would be the turning-point in the entire international politico-strategic situation. This would provide a powerful momentum to the entire machinery for negotiations - bilateral and multilateral - on questions of disarmament.

An analysis of the majority of initiatives in the field of nuclear disarmament indicates that general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is of overriding importance in the efforts to make serious progress in this field. As is well known, these tests are the basic means for the qualitative improvement of these weapons, their modernization and the production of new types of such weapons, as well as other highly effective instruments of destruction, such as laser weapons, fueled by nuclear explosions. Hence, these tests have a direct bearing on the pace and scope of the nuclear-arms race. They impede negotiations in this field and have a markedly adverse effect on the international situation. And last but not least, they inflict severe damage on the environment.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

Despite the signing of the Moscow Treaty in 1963, as well as the Soviet-American Treaties on underground tests in 1974, and the Treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions in 1976, the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty was stalled. As is well known, the tripartite negotiations between the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom were broken off by the Western delegations at a time when the basic provisions of the draft treaty had been practically agreed upon. The reasons for this turn of events are known: they lie in the plans of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for frantic rearmament and modernization of their missiles systems by adding high-precision nuclear warheads. Herein lies also the answer to the question as to why Washington has refused to this very day to ratify the two above-mentioned bilateral treaties. In this instance, as in others, its unwillingness to proceed to the practical solution of the problem is disguised by exaggerated and unwarranted claims on verification.

The delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is of the opinion that all objective conditions are at hand for immediately starting concrete work on the preparation of an instrument on general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. A solid basis for such work is the draft put forward by the Soviet Union in document CD/376. What is essential is that narrow-minded military-strategic considerations give way to a broader political vision without which we would find it impossible to build collective security under conditions of curtailment of armaments. Resumption of the tripartite negotiations would be a manifestation of such a far-sighted approach as much as a stimulus to the undelayed conclusion of the treaty. An act of unquestionable good will, given the present tense situation, would also be the ratification by the United States side of Soviet-American treaties on underground nuclear tests and peaceful nuclear explosions concluded 10 and 8 years ago respectively.

Given the increased danger of nuclear war, the issue of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons continues to be high on our agenda. The acquisition of nuclear arms by aggressive States, which have failed to observe international norms of conduct, and which would not hesitate to use them, could have catastrophic consequences. A matter of serious concern is also the growing number of States capable of producing nuclear weapons and nuclear installations which are not covered by the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The best possible manner of checking these trends is strict compliance with the

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its universalization. The forthcoming Third Review Conference of the NPT is called upon to play a major role in this connection.

We have already expressed our conviction that nuclear disarmament measures should be implemented in close relationship with the strengthening of political and legal guarantees for the security of States, and with the strengthening of peace and confidence in relations among participants in international life. We have already had the opportunity to stress that at the present stage there can hardly be a more convincing demonstration of good will and peaceful intentions than the renunciation by a major nuclear-weapon Power of first use of nuclear weapons. This historical step was taken by the Soviet Union, which has assumed the unilateral obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. If all nuclear-weapon States would follow this example, it would greatly ease pent-up international tensions and facilitate the dialogue on disarmament questions, pushing into the background the immediate threat of nuclear conflagration.

As we all know, the People's Republic of China has already assumed a similar obligation. However, the other nuclear-weapon States, and above all the United States, have stubbornly refused to heed this call, which is contained in an important international document, namely, General Assembly resolution 38/183 B. Not only have they refused to commit themselves to such an obligation, but they have also spared no effort in playing down its significance. In our view, the argument invoking the right of "legitimate self-defence" under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, as was rightly pointed out by the Group of 21 in paragraph 64 of the Report of the Conference on Disarmament in document A/39/27, is irrelevant. Also totally unfounded is the assertion that the Soviet Union has thus striven to gain superiority in conventional forces. Regarding the latter of these spurious arguments, the legitimate question could be asked as to why then the Western States have so adamantly refused to conclude a treaty on the non-use of force, as proposed consistently by the socialist countries. Why have the Western States since 1976 blocked the work of the United Nations in preparing a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations?

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

The conclusion comes to mind that the Western States - or at least some of them - continue to rely on the most horrible weapon of mass destruction as an instrument for pursuing one or another set of goals in their foreign policy. That is why it is imperative, from the standpoint of mankind's future, that this position, which is in sharp disagreement with present-day realities, be abandoned.

My delegation regrets that the group of Western countries at the Conference on Disarmament rejected the proposal of the Group of socialist States and that of the Group of 21 on the mandate for an ad hoc committee on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, thus blocking once again the efforts towards taking practical measures in this field.

My country attaches particular importance to other issues related to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to the general reduction of the nuclear menace. My delegation, in another statement at a later stage in our discussion, will elaborate on the item on strengthening the security of non-nuclear-weapon States, which is a question of vital interest for the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

In conclusion, I should like briefly to underline the particular importance that my country attaches to the question of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world. From Bulgaria's viewpoint as a European and Balkan country, the creation of such zones in Europe - where the concentration of nuclear arms is the highest and the possibility of the outbreak of nuclear conflict is the greatest - is of major significance and urgency. As a result of the rallying of public opinion and the sincere efforts of peoples and countries in this connection, new proposals have sprung up recently on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Northern and Central Europe and in the Balkans. The realization of these ideas would create a kind of buffer zone along the demarcation line between the two principal military-political blocs. That would contribute to the prompt and tangible relaxation of tensions in that most delicate zone of confrontation and would provide a great momentum to the all-European peace process, including the Conference in Stockholm.

In conformity with this position of principle, we attach particular importance to the idea of turning the Balkans into a zone free of nuclear weapons. That idea enjoys broad support and was the subject of discussion at the meeting of experts from the Balkan countries, held last January and February in Athens. We sincerely hope that that initiative will build its own momentum with a view to bringing our positions closer to and finally reaching an agreement on principle for the creation of such a zone.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

Those were the specific issues to which my delegation deemed it necessary to draw attention in this statement.

Mr. OYARCE (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish briefly to refer to agenda items 52 and 65 (a).

The persistent accumulation of nuclear weapons and the continued qualitative and quantitative proliferation, including geographically speaking, together with the elaboration of doctrines that unquestionably lead to their use pose a problem of collective security, generate instability and jeopardize the principles contained in the Charter.

It is paradoxical that in contemporary international relations the security of the majority group of nations, the non-nuclear developing nations, is affected by decisions of the major Powers which may lead to a nuclear holocaust annihilating civilization. Furthermore, that great majority of countries in real terms is not capable of controlling those situations whose deplorable and morally unacceptable implications have a direct bearing on them. Their field of action is not unrelated to what in sociology is known as marginalization.

In these circumstances the least which that group of countries could expect would be having unconditional guarantees of negative security. That would eliminate the possibility of those States being the object of nuclear attack, even though the danger of nuclear war would indeed persist. It seems logical that countries which have renounced nuclear weapons in order to preserve international stability should at least be assured that they will not be victims of that type of weapons.

Unfortunately, the unilateral statements by nuclear-weapon Powers make no specific reference to the essential objective of nuclear disarmament, which is the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

With the single exception of China - which two decades ago entered into an unconditional commitment - the other statements are subject to conditions which in pragmatic terms distort their essence, offer no effective guarantee and contribute to promoting a climate of mistrust.

The tasks of the subsidiary organ at the Conference on Disarmament reflected the fact that, after many years of discussing this item in multilateral forums, a situation has been reached which offers no reasonable prospects for progress towards a political consensus reflecting the letter and the spirit of paragraph 59

(Mr. Oyarce, Chile)

of the Final Document. Here, again, one notes a dangerous trend of disregarding the commitments entered into when that instrument was adopted by consensus, an instrument which was unanimously reaffirmed at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

In this context, it appears valid to ask the following question: What is the significance and validity of the concept of effective security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of those weapons when the majority of the nuclear Powers - which possess more than 90 per cent of the nuclear arsenals - are not capable nor are they in a position to accept any binding legal obligation or any provisional agreement which is satisfactory to the non-nuclear-weapon States and which contributes to strengthening international security? In that respect, the concern of certain countries over the validity of this concept is relevant.

There are two geographical areas subject to a legal régime of denuclearization; the first of them is Antarctica. In this respect, the Antarctic Treaty, signed in 1959 and ratified by many States, including all the nuclear States, categorically prohibits the militarization of the continent, nuclear explosions and depositing radioactive wastes. At the same time, it establishes a verification system that includes on-site visits, which guarantee full compliance with the obligations entered into by all the States.

The second area in which a denuclearization régime is applicable is Latin America. The Tlatelolco Treaty establishing that régime clearly applies the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones to a densely populated area. Nevertheless, that régime is not free from the criticism to which my delegation has already referred. In fact, in the statements of adherence to Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco qualifications have been included which thwart the purposes of a denuclearized zone. There again one can note the interest still prevalent in some circles in preserving the use of nuclear weapons.

This reality leads us to ponder about two specific areas. First, about the need to have appropriate verification procedures to achieve effective compliance with the obligations entered into by the nuclear-weapon States to a specific denuclearized zone. In this connection, one could consider the contribution of an international agency of monitoring satellites that would be supplemented with on-site inspections.

(Mr. Oyarce, Chile)

Secondly, we consider it essential that the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones should duly regulate the transit and transport of nuclear weapons and the areas of application circumscribed in the treaties which establish those zones. At the same time, and from the conceptual standpoint, we should not lose sight of the fact that not only is the Treaty of Tlatelolco a fundamental non-proliferation instrument but also that it is intended to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy and, obviously, international co-operation in this field.

The stagnation which is seen in the disarmament process, particularly with regard to nuclear problems, gives rise to concern in my delegation over the work which is being carried out by the Group of Experts designated by the Secretary-General in accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/99 F, whose mandate is to review and supplement the comprehensive study of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all their aspects. For my country and, I am certain, for many other delegations, not only from the Latin American region, it would be highly useful to have a somewhat more detailed account of the work of that Group, in addition to the communication contained in document A/39/400 of 15 August 1984.

Many delegations have referred to the nuclear-weapon-free zones within different conceptual frameworks, specifically regarding new parameters of non-proliferation and from the standpoint of confidence-building measures. It would be of interest, if the mandate of this Group of Experts is renewed - and my delegation attaches the highest priority to its work - that a paragraph should be included in the relevant resolution similar to the operative paragraph of resolution 38/188 I, so that the Group of Experts would take into account the opinions which have been expressed in this debate.

Growing international concern over the prevention of nuclear war and imminent self-destruction would be incomplete were sufficient attention not to be given to regulating the obligations of the nuclear Powers in the nuclear-weapon-free zones, with a view to achieving the total application of paragraphs 33 and 60 to 63 of the Final Document. That is the only guarantee which would lend political viability and practical effectiveness to the concept in various regions of the world.

Mr. BIERRING (Denmark): Mr. Chairman, let me begin by congratulating you and the other officers of the Committee upon your election. I am confident that your wise guidance will help the Committee to deal successfully with its tasks.

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

Some days ago the representative of Ireland made a statement in this Committee on behalf of the 10 member States of the European Community. While fully endorsing that statement, I should like today to share with the Committee some additional considerations of my Government.

On the eve of the centennial of my countryman, the nuclear physicist Niels Bohr, I feel it pertinent to quote at the outset a passage from his open letter to the United Nations in 1950. Niels Bohr, who embodied science as well as humanism in his remarkable personality, had a deep feeling of responsibility towards the world community because of the dangers for mankind if the release of nuclear energy, which he had contributed significantly himself to bring about, got out of hand. He wrote:

"Within the last years, world-wide political developments have increased the tension between nations and at the same time the perspectives that great countries may compete about the possession of means of annihilating populations of large areas and even making parts of the earth temporarily uninhabitable have caused wide-spread confusion and alarm ... A radical adjustment of international relationships is evidently indispensable if civilization shall survive ... The situation calls for the most unprejudiced attitude towards all questions of international relations. Indeed, proper appreciation of the duties and responsibilities implied in world citizenship is in our time more necessary than ever before."

The preoccupations of Niels Bohr seem as relevant as ever to the international situation of today. The shadow of increased world tension looms large over the deliberations of this Committee. It places upon us a very special responsibility to seek ways and means of obtaining the stability and security from which we would all benefit.

Developments in the field of international security and disarmament during the past year show how difficult it is to make progress. But, whatever our differences, we must try to maintain the dialogue and the disarmament negotiations at all levels. We must strive to live up to our responsibility as world citizens.

Arms control and disarmament measures in the nuclear field must be given the highest priority and it is the firm position of the Danish Government that the strongest efforts should be made to stop and reverse the nuclear arms race. A year ago much hope was still pinned on the two sets of bilateral negotiations between

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

the United States and the Soviet Union on the reduction of strategic and intermediate-range nuclear arms. These talks have, to our deepest regret, been broken off unilaterally and we sincerely urge their early resumption. In this context we welcome the recent high-level contacts between the United States and the Soviet Union and express the sincere hope that those contacts will develop into full-fledged negotiations.

A few days ago the President of France, Mr. Francois Mitterrand, in a speech in London, made the most relevant remark that the real objective is not to go on endlessly correcting the imbalances by the introduction of increasingly numerous and advanced weapons but, on the contrary, to bring back those balances to progressively more reasonable levels - in short, to the lowest possible levels.

But restraint in the nuclear field is not a matter solely within the responsibility of the nuclear Powers. All responsible nations must join forces to prevent a nuclear war and an extension and expansion of the nuclear arms race. The further spread of nuclear weapons would have far-reaching consequences for international security and stability. It would increase the risk of nuclear confrontation and be a serious blow to all our hopes of bringing the arms race under control.

The Danish Government considers it imperative that a treaty banning all nuclear-weapon tests be concluded at the earliest possible moment. An important step forward was taken with the conclusion of the partial test-ban Treaty in 1963. However, that Treaty has not hindered the further development of nuclear technologies in the military field, as nuclear tests underground continue unimpeded.

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

The realization of a comprehensive test-ban treaty is urgent and significant as it will bring to an end development of nuclear weapons and prevent proliferation of such weapons to non-nuclear States as well. We value the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament towards attaining this goal, but regret that little progress has been made in negotiations so far. We urge the conference to continue to give priority to this item and to try to break the unfortunate deadlock. We realize that one of the requirements of an acceptable agreement would be to ensure that compliance with a comprehensive test ban could be effectively verified. Such a verification system is not easily attainable and the significance of the Seismic Experts' Group and its efforts to provide the technical background for the verification of a global nuclear test ban can therefore hardly be overemphasized. This, however, is of no avail if not all parties at the Conference show sufficient political will to bring about a complete ban on nuclear tests.

The most effective instrument against the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons remains the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Denmark is looking forward to participating in the forthcoming Third Review Conference, which will provide a useful tool in the efforts to restrain nuclear proliferation together with the opportunity to review the implementation of all articles of that Treaty. Considering the international situation, the Conference may well unfold against a sombre background, and we should not burden it with exaggerated expectations. However, the Conference ought solemnly to confirm the principles of the Treaty and secure a better implementation of it. This would also have a stimulating effect on other areas of arms control.

The Danish Government supports all realistic efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in conformity with the provisions of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament.

Consequently, we are in favour of discussion with the aim of realizing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Nordic area in a larger European context. Such a zone must be guaranteed by the United States and the Soviet Union.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world would contribute to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons to regions where not all States are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It could therefore constitute an important disarmament measure.

Several proposals to impose a freeze on the arsenals of nuclear weapons as a first step towards nuclear disarmament have been considered in the United Nations for several years.

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

As concerned world citizens we feel a responsibility to explore all means that might conceivably contribute to a safer world. In an effort to halt the continued build-up of nuclear weapons, the Danish Government supports the idea that the nuclear-weapon States should agree to a verifiable freeze on all types of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles as a basis for negotiations on a reduction, taking into account the security interests of all States.

Other ideas relating to nuclear disarmament may deserve consideration as well in order to come to grips with the problems in this area. Confidence-building measures in the nuclear field may serve a double purpose as a useful background to negotiations on balanced and verifiable reductions of nuclear weapons and also as an essential complement to international agreements thereon.

We must, and we do, give the highest priority to nuclear disarmament. This, however, in no way means that we should neglect the present situation in the area of conventional arms. Quite apart from the possibility of conventional war itself and the risk of its escalation into nuclear war, it remains a shuddering fact that world military expenditure was estimated to be approaching \$US 800 billion in 1983, and it is generally believed that at least four fifths of that amount are absorbed by conventional arms and armed forces. We therefore hope that the report which the Secretary-General has submitted to the General Assembly on all aspects of the conventional arms race and on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces will provide a stepping stone towards effective measures of conventional disarmament complementary to measures of nuclear disarmament. I shall refrain from making further observations on this topic today. They will be expanded upon when the important question of conventional weapons is considered at a later stage of our deliberations.

The Conference on Disarmament deals with a comprehensive agenda of pertinent questions. Among these is also the question of chemical weapons.

The danger posed by these weapons is serious and real. We have recently witnessed the use of chemical weapons in clear defiance of the Geneva Protocol of 1925. These incidents serve to underline the urgency and importance of a comprehensive and verifiable ban on chemical weapons. We have therefore welcomed recent initiatives of the United States and the Soviet Union to this end. They reflect, we believe, a common desire to proceed with substantive negotiations towards eliminating this category of weapons. We appreciate the comprehensive and far-reaching draft for the prohibition of chemical weapons which was introduced by the United States. A positive element was, furthermore, the Soviet statement that

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

the Government of the Soviet Union would in principle be prepared to accept the presence of observers while chemical weapons were being destroyed. We believe that adequate verification of a chemical weapons ban is of vital importance, and we see in the Soviet statement hope that some aspects of this problem are nearer a solution.

It is in our opinion high time that progress was made in this important field. We ask all parties to show goodwill and flexibility and to work together in an effort to reach agreement on a convention banning chemical weapons.

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

I should like next to turn to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Danish Government is concerned about the risk of having the arms race extended to this area. Such an extension would be a serious threat to international stability and would divert further resources from other areas where they are urgently needed.

Satellites that serve communication and verification purposes are of a stabilizing nature and should be protected. Therefore, we favour a ban on anti-satellite weapons.

We welcomed the Soviet proposal, on 29 June this year, for bilateral talks on outer space and the immediate acceptance of such talks by the United States. To our regret talks were not initiated in September, as originally stipulated. But we are hopeful that such talks will soon commence. The bilateral talks should be accompanied by constructive, multilateral deliberations in the Conference on Disarmament.

We much regret that it has not been possible to establish an ad hoc committee on outer space during the 1984 sessions of the Conference on Disarmament. None of us is blind to the technical complexities of arms control in outer space, but this should not prevent us from trying to identify areas where pragmatic solutions could be reached and negotiations of an agreement might be possible.

Mention should also be made of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, which held its sixth substantive session in May this year. Regrettably, though not surprisingly, no concrete recommendations were agreed upon, and little progress was made. We still believe, however, that the deliberations of the Commission should continue to seek fruitful ground for our work.

We are pleased to note that the Conference in Stockholm on Confidence and Security-Building Measures in Europe is now under way and we believe that it can make a useful contribution to the success of negotiations on disarmament, including the work of the Conference on Disarmament. There is no alternative to dialogue, based on mutual confidence, if we are to reach the overall objective of disarmament. Therefore, the task of the Stockholm Conference - to agree on a set of militarily significant, politically binding and verifiable confidence-building measures applicable to the whole of Europe - is a most important one. Together with our allies, Denmark has submitted a set of constructive proposals designed to attain these ends.

May I revert to Niels Bohr and his Open Letter. He has also stated in this letter that:

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

"despite all attempts, the negotiations within the United Nations have so far failed in securing agreement regarding measures to eliminate the dangers of atomic armament. The sterility of these negotiations, perhaps more than anything else, made it evident that a constructive approach to such vital matters of common concern would require an atmosphere of greater confidence".

Unfortunately, this statement, made almost 35 years ago, is still valid. Must we, and dare we, wait another 35 years before serious and substantial negotiations, inside and outside this body, are embarked upon, in order to achieve real progress in the field of disarmament?

As world citizens, we all have duties and responsibilities. In recognition of this we must strive for trust and co-operation. We must not give in to suspicion, and we must not choose the alternative of a continuing arms race in which, in the final instance, no security can be found.

Mr. SABA (Burkina Faso) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, Burkina Faso would like through me to extend its congratulations to you and to the other officers of the Committee on your elections to the Bureau of our Committee. We assure you that we are entirely ready to work with you towards achieving a successful conclusion of our work.

When confronted with as crucial a problem as that of disarmament, there is no need to shilly-shally. We are duty-bound to go to the core of the question of nuclear peril, which is of such great concern to our world. We must, therefore, essentially avoid ignoring truth, no matter how unpleasant to anyone, because our community today is characterized by duplicity.

Indeed, if today the psychosis of nuclear weapons has reached its climax, it is because the fundamental principles of our Charter and the moral values governing our community, are wittingly spurned by all. How can one understand that there is unanimity on the need for disarmament while nuclear arsenals multiply? How is one to understand that all States reassert their firm will to fight the proliferation of nuclear weapons and that all parts of the world are replete with them?

How can one denounce apartheid and racism, and allow the system symbolizing this scourge to acquire the most dangerous weapon?

We must be realistic. Some statements are short on sincerity, and the lack of will to achieve disarmament is obvious in others.

(Mr. Saba, Burkina Faso)

In this very room, all the arguments have been put forward to justify progress - present or future - in the field of nuclear weapons. The super-Powers accuse each other and turn away from the noble mission entrusted to them by the Charter. They strive to convince us that our salvation resides in the balance of terror. Deterrence now has another meaning and has become tantamount to supremacy. The ever-faster race for the occupation and control of outer space for military purposes is a challenge to the right to live and the security of mankind.

The open strategic confrontation between the two great Powers tramples on our fundamental values and sanctions the law of force, which long hence has become a State policy in both camps. Anti-missiles and anti-satellites are deadly weapons which in no case can be justified by deterrence.

In fact, the root cause of the tension existing today is the constant effort to bolster the blocs, to bipolarize the world. Indeed, economic and political blackmail is not sufficient to maintain the former colonies within their spheres of influence. That is why here and there hotbeds of tension are fanned and maintained; nuclear weapons proliferate in all parts of the world, especially in Africa and the Middle East, to strangle the legitimate aspirations of peoples to peace and security; the third power - the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries - has since its creation been the target of various manoeuvres to undermine its cohesion, stifle its efforts to maintain its personality and transform it into an easy prey; and, finally, the psychosis of imminent nuclear peril is knowingly fostered to facilitate the recruitment of new satellites and round out the blocs.

(Mr. Saba, Burkina Faso)

It is time to react; time to think in other terms.

We cannot rest content with articles of faith proclaimed everywhere. Since the nuclear Powers show utter contempt for the needs of the large popular masses of the whole world, and since no sincere debate can begin among them, we must fully assume our responsibilities and openly condemn the increasing trend towards the bipolarization of the world.

The "peace" which we know today is neither universal nor stable. Crises and conflicts constantly shake it. It is broken by the frenzied arms race, resort to force, foreign interference in the affairs of others and unequal international political and economic relations.

We live in a world of turbulence from which morality and respect for human beings are excluded. The land, the seas and outer space are replete with deadly weapons. Nothing can save mankind in the event of a conflict. My country therefore wonders whether it is still useful to speak of denuclearized zones or of zones of peace.

That is why we address a solemn appeal to all States that truly cherish peace to mobilize and embark upon the battle for disarmament, because the world is so interdependent today that there cannot be any "islands of peace".

We are all cowed by nuclear weapons which, whether in the hands of the West or the East, present a serious threat for our survival. There can be no illusion in this matter. A nuclear war would spare neither peace zones nor nuclear-weapon-free-zones; neither the possessors of those weapons, nor, even less, those who think they can hide under their umbrella.

Given such an analysis of events, we should like to suggest to the international community that it consider the use of nuclear and chemical weapons as a crime against humanity and their deployment, for whatever reason, as State terrorism. If such a suggestion met with the approval of members it could pave the way to a strong condemnation of nuclear-weapon tests.

The only solution which can preserve us from the holocaust is to demand the dismantling and destruction of these large-scale instruments of death. This is an obvious matter for reflection.

In Burkina Faso our only ambition is to live in peace and security so as better to devote ourselves to satisfying our fundamental needs. Comrade Thomas Sankara, President of the National Revolutionary Council, Head of State and Government of Burkina Faso, declared in a statement in the General Assembly on 4 October 1984, the following:

(Mr. Saba, Burkina Faso)

"The folly of those who, by a quirk of fate, rule the world makes it imperative for the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries ... to consider as one of the permanent goals of its struggle the achievement of disarmament, which is an essential condition of our development." (A/39/PV.20, pp. 16, 17)

Indeed, in the already lengthy list of natural obstacles and barriers to the harmonious development and blossoming of mankind, the nuclear weapon undoubtedly has pride of place. It destroys the will for co-operation on a basis of equality, sharpens hegemonistic instincts and swallows up enormous resources that serve only the cause of destruction.

We must note that some nuclear Powers have mobilized enormous resources - most of their resources - to achieve progress in their destructive capacities at the expense of the prosperity of their peoples and of mankind. The economic crisis which is strangling the developing countries interests them less and less: the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was a failure; the United Nations Industrial Development Organization was subverted, and the London Economic Summit shirked the questions of development.

While the volume of assistance to the third world is being dangerously reduced, military budgets are being greatly increased. All attempts to reduce military expenditures for the benefit of development have so far yielded no positive results.

However, the nuclear Powers must understand that constructive, democratic and equal co-operation among all the peoples is the historic alternative to the policy of armament rivalry, aggression and enslavement, and that it is necessary as of now to redirect military expenses and apply the fruits of science and technology to bring about the indispensable conditions for development.

It is in that spirit that President Thomas Sankara called for:

"cutting all budgets for space research by 1 per cent and devoting that amount to research in the field of health and improving the human environment which has been disrupted by those 'fireworks' which are harmful to the environment."
(A/39/PV.20, p. 22)

We submit this proposal for consideration by members and we hope that it will without difficulty meet with their approval. In our view, it is a concrete way for States to give expression to their often proclaimed will to fight for disarmament and their dedication to work for development.

(Mr. Saba, Burkina Faso)

The nuclear Powers - the permanent members of the Security Council in particular - should support this proposal, which is an integral part of the special and eminent responsibilities assigned to them under the United Nations Charter.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.