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Chairman: Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia)  
(Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

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

Mr. LINGAMA-TOLEQUE (Central African Republic) (interpretation from French):  
May I first, Sir, address congratulations to you on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee and express the admiration of the delegation of the Central African Republic for the way in which you are conducting the work of the Committee. Your eminent qualities as a diplomat and your proven capacity as a skilled negotiator confirm our feeling that the choice which has fallen upon you is undoubtedly the best one. The same sentiments are also addressed to the other officers of the Committee who are assisting you.

At this time, when the work of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly is proceeding and on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of our Organization, it must be noted that the political and psychological climate throughout the world is not of the best. The tension between East and West has reached a new stage and the psychosis of an inevitable nuclear war has invaded the world.

The Central African Republic, a country which is profoundly attached to the ideals of peace, is more than ever aware that the survival of mankind is severely threatened. Consequently we wish to make our contribution to any action undertaken by the Organization, either directly or indirectly, to preserve peace and security among the nations.

My country, which is one of the most disadvantaged in the world and which, furthermore, is land-locked, is keenly aware of the importance of the values of peace and security, without which there can be no possible co-operation between States and peoples.

(Mr. Lingama-Toleque, Central African Republic)

The Central African Republic remains fundamentally attached to the principles laid down in the Charter of our Organization despite the fact that these principles are no longer capable of effectively governing international relations because they are frequently violated by certain Member States.

This year once more, the First Committee is again taking up all matters connected with disarmament.

First of all, my delegation would like to express its growing anxiety at the scant progress achieved despite the adoption of a number of resolutions during previous sessions, especially in the light of the fact that relations between the nuclear Powers have a direct impact on disarmament negotiations and that, far from seeking through honest dialogue ways and means of bringing about a military de-escalation, the two super-Powers have irrevocably launched an arms race by improving the technological capacities of their nuclear arsenals, which threaten the universe with certain destruction.

In this connection the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation of the Central African Republic stated on 11 October before the General Assembly that:

"Thus, while the Central African Republic welcomes the negotiations under way on disarmament, it also deplores the fact that they are stalemated at a time when the proliferation and development of arms are reaching alarming levels, thus perpetuating the vicious circle of destruction."

(A/39/PV.31, p. 41)

In recalling this position, my delegation shares the hope expressed by other delegations which have spoken previously that these negotiations will shortly be resumed and that, despite the differences between them, the two big Powers, like all other States, will "be aware of the pressing and collective task of championing international peace and security". (Ibid.)

It is for this reason that my country has always supported any resolution aimed at achieving the overall aims of disarmament.

During this thirty-ninth session we shall once again support any resolutions establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia and Latin America and giving effect to the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

(Mr. Lingama-Toleque, Central African Republic)

Apart from these specific items, my delegation will also give very careful attention to all other agenda items before our Committee.

At present the world is undergoing a grave economic crisis. The least developed of the developing countries, including the Central African Republic, are feeling the effects of this very strongly because it tends to disrupt all the fundamental structures of poor nations such as ours and at the same time aggravates the insecurity and poverty that is the daily lot of their peoples.

At the same time, the technological advances of the military Powers in the field of armaments are devouring indescribable sums of the order of \$600-700 billion, thus diverting these fantastic resources which could have gone to finance development aid.

In the light of such waste, one might think that the lot of the third world has never been a very high priority.

We are suffering tremendously because our future is uncertain.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Central African Republic is nevertheless gratified at the desire expressed recently by the two super-Powers to resume dialogue in order to restore détente, which is so essential to any co-operation.

It is our hope that the mistrust that characterizes international relations at present will gradually dissipate and yield to security and peace throughout the world, because this is the point at issue.

Mr. KABANDA (Rwanda) (interpretation from French): In speaking this afternoon on disarmament I do not claim to introduce any new ideas because a number of speakers who are more authoritative and more familiar than I with the material before us have said everything and at times said it very wisely and convincingly.

The reason for my delegation's speaking at this stage of our consideration of the disarmament items is to associate the voice of Rwanda with those which throughout the world have in their various ways appealed for universal peace and justice for all.

Before going into the substance of my statement, I would like to convey my delegation's congratulations to the Chairman and officers of the Committee.

May I now pay a tribute to Latin America, which through the Tlatelolco Treaty collectively undertook to protect the populations of its region from the nuclear-arms race. This is an act which has undeniable political and historical scope.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

Undoubtedly it is this desire for peace and collective security that inspired the Heads of African Governments 20 years ago when they proclaimed that the African continent would be a denuclearized zone.

The same desire underlies the ongoing consultations between the countries of South-East Asia on ways and means of denuclearizing that part of the world.

This desire for peace and security, collectively expressed, should be respected by one and all since it serves the interests of all countries, both nuclear and non-nuclear.

All these regions quite rightly feel that the real struggle, if there is to be one, should take place on other grounds: the struggle for peace and justice starts with the struggle for economic and social development for our peoples. This is indeed a struggle that is worthy of being waged by all mankind.

However, we are unfortunately living in a world marked by ever-growing insecurity resulting precisely from the existence of tremendous nuclear arsenals and stockpiles of conventional weapons.

Much concern has been voiced in this Committee and in the Conference on Disarmament on the very serious dangers inherent in nuclear weapons. We will never be able to find language strong enough to describe the kind of catastrophe that would befall mankind in the case of a general nuclear war if nuclear weapons were launched as a result of a simple error of calculation or manipulation. This is why Rwanda believes that the nuclear Powers should exchange information on their stock management in order to warn each other in case of an accident. If the other party or parties were kept informed, sufficiently in time, of the inadvertent use of such weapons, that would make it possible to avoid an automatic response.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

A number of voices have been heard stating that negotiations should be resumed on the freeze on nuclear weapons, that is to say, the cessation of the production of nuclear weapons while at the same time pursuing negotiations so as to reduce and finally destroy these instruments of death. My delegation also strongly advocates the resumption of these negotiations, particularly in the case of the denuclearization of outer space.

Rwanda attaches equal importance, first, to the negotiations on disarmament sponsored by the United Nations in Geneva and elsewhere and, to a certain extent, in this Committee; and, secondly, to those consultations and negotiations which are being conducted bilaterally or among all the nuclear Powers. It has been stated that these negotiations are too serious a matter to be left up to the nuclear Powers alone because, whether they are nuclear or not, developed or developing, all countries are affected, all mankind is involved.

Conventional weapons are also dangerous; they are all the more dangerous in that they can be easily acquired, can easily proliferate and can be within the reach of all countries and even of individuals. Negotiations under the aegis of the United Nations should be focused on conventional weapons which, furthermore, are fed by a prosperous market, while they are also spreading death and destruction throughout the world.

The United Nations, which has the duty to protect mankind from the scourge of war, cannot be kept outside all those matters that affect world peace and security. Unfortunately, we have witnessed a tendency in these negotiations to over-politicize the problem and even to make use of it for propaganda purposes, which considerably detracts from the importance that should be attached to disarmament problems. It is true that important proposals have been made by both sides. In my delegation's opinion, they should be given all due credit, and such credit is necessarily dependent upon the sincerity and the goodwill displayed in these negotiations. The element of credibility is fundamental in any negotiation, and as soon as it is eroded or simply ceases to exist it is best to revise both policies and methods.

We should place the greatest confidence possible in the negotiations at Geneva and elsewhere, because it is that confidence on the part of the international community which means the negotiations can continue; otherwise, they would be destroyed by a climate of suspicion and mistrust - and that would be regrettable.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

As I just indicated, we also believe that the consultations between the nuclear Powers are of considerable importance - consultations or negotiations that I would term technical. It is indeed this kind of negotiation where politics are less in evidence that have been responsible for already existing Treaties in the field of disarmament or nuclear prevention: the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, the Treaty on the Use of Outer Space for the Benefit of All Mankind, the Convention on Assistance to Astronauts in Distress, the SALT I Agreement and others. All those positive results have been essentially the outcome of discreet negotiations among the nuclear States.

Progress has been achieved in the course of recent negotiations, even if it may appear to be scanty in view of the breadth and seriousness of the danger inherent in nuclear and conventional weapons alike. Reference has been made here to the progress achieved particularly in the negotiations on chemical weapons. My delegation would like to voice its encouragement to the negotiators and hopes that further progress can be made, so that by the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations the Conference on Disarmament can present the General Assembly with the gift of a new convention or treaty in the field of disarmament.

While it is true that encouragement should be given to the Geneva negotiators and those negotiating in Vienna, where bilateral and other consultations are going on, it is also important that the international community place a modicum of trust in the commitments solemnly undertaken by responsible authorities in the nuclear countries. As my delegation sees it this kind of confidence is an indispensable element. Thus, when a country solemnly declares that it will never use nuclear weapons against countries bound by the Non-Proliferation Treaty nor against regions declared to be nuclear-free zones, when it states it is ready to negotiate on the limitation of certain types of weapons, the monitoring or verification of military arsenals, the other party must take that seriously if that same party itself wishes to be taken seriously when it repeatedly declares it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons or proposes to enter into negotiations on the denuclearization of outer space. The situation would be grave indeed if the negotiations had to continue in an atmosphere of mistrust.

Those assurances should be taken seriously, because it would be extremely parlous for the credibility of those negotiations were the moral and political assurances offered by responsible leaders in certain countries to be regarded simply as inconsequential.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

Naturally, since we are here in negotiations aimed at creating a world ruled by law, it would be desirable for these assurances on both sides to be formally enshrined in an international instrument. But in the meantime Rwanda considers that those assurances are already of paramount importance and that at least a modicum of credibility should be placed in them.

Rwanda fosters scientific progress in all areas, including the nuclear area, but in order to serve the interests of mankind; for if science is conducted for its own sake it cannot really be a goal; on the contrary, it might lead to catastrophes. Many resources, both human and material, are used day by day to develop and produce ever more sophisticated nuclear or conventional weapons in order to embark upon competition that is both useless and dangerous; while, on the other side of the coin, millions, even billions of human beings are suffering from all kinds of privation.

Yes, it is true that we must disarm. But we must start with people's minds; we have to persuade them to get their values straight. Life and human dignity, the flourishing of the human being in a world free from suffering and worries about tomorrow are what should be sought first and foremost.



(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

Political will inspired by a desire to see mankind and civilization survive can lead to a solution to the crucial problem of disarmament in general and nuclear disarmament in particular.

The reduction of military budgets would be a decisive step on the path to disarmament. Unfortunately, since the General Assembly has been requesting cutbacks in military expenditures, negligible results have been recorded. The Conference on Disarmament should continue to give attention to this important aspect of disarmament, since the objective is to increase security for everyone. Development is not possible without security; and without optimum conditions for everyone's development, security itself will remain precarious. In anxiety and fear for the morrow, nothing durable can be built. This is one of the tragedies that we are experiencing. We have to meet this challenge. Let us hope that the United Nations - and the United Nations means all of us - will succeed in this enterprise to create conditions for the flourishing development of all peoples.

Mr. AL-ANSI (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): The world has lost today one of its most prominent leaders, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of friendly India and Chairperson of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. This great loss has been a cause of agony and sorrow for us all in expressing these condolences and offering our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family, I wish for friendly India a continuation of stability.

At the outset of my statement I am pleased to express to you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation warmest congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that your wide diplomatic experience and your experience in disarmament issues will lead to the success of the proceedings of the Committee. May I take this opportunity to express congratulations also to the officers of the Committee on their election.

More than five years have elapsed since the holding of the first special session devoted to disarmament. However, we cannot say that the negotiations that have been conducted and the resolutions adopted since that time have led to any tangible progress. On the contrary, the state of international relations has been exacerbated. We now observe that many States have recourse to force in settling disputes, thus disregarding the principles of the Charter and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States. Also, the nuclear Powers, especially the super-Powers, spare no efforts in their stockpiling of nuclear weapons, which have reached a level sufficient to destroy all human life many times over. Furthermore, despite the

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

détente in relations between the two super-Powers, we note that the talks in Geneva on strategic weapons as well as on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) remain stalemated; and the work of the Conference on Disarmament for 1984, with the exception of the consideration of chemical weapons, remains at almost the same level as has applied in recent years.

Despite all this frustration, my country still maintains that negotiations are the only means available to us to remove the obstacles that destabilize international security, compromise independence and act as a barrier to the realization of the aspirations for peace based on justice. In fact, the super-Powers should co-operate first and foremost in curbing the unprecedented nuclear-arms race in which they are engaged. It behoves us, therefore, to work to restore the momentum engendered by the first special session devoted to disarmament in order to curb the spiral of the arms race and prevent nuclear war through the formulation of a programme for complete and general disarmament - especially nuclear disarmament - under effective international control where the Charter of the United Nations will be at the forefront concerning the issues posing a threat to international peace and security.

The Sultanate of Oman urges all parties to put an end to destructive weapons posing a threat to the values that some even claim such weapons defend. It also urges the parties concerned to show good faith in order to save mankind from a cataclysmic conflagration that would engulf all life, including the environment.

We consider that any disarmament efforts will be incomplete unless it takes into account conventional disarmament, especially since the Secretary-General, in his introduction to the "Study on conventional disarmament", contained in document A/39/348, mentioned that "over four-fifths of the world's total expenditure for military purposes is spent on conventional arms and armed forces". However, we must ensure that any such efforts take into account the security interests of all States alike. These efforts should take place in an atmosphere in which confidence prevails and in which all States will observe the principles of the Charter, so that they may all eventually live in peace and tranquillity, free of any external threat or intervention, and so that no State, especially any developing State, will have to commit increasing amounts of its revenue on defence instead of on the more urgent objective of economic and social development.

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

Because Oman is one of the littoral States of the Indian Ocean, it has exerted every effort towards the implementation of resolution 2832 (XXVI) on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. On the basis of my country's policy aimed at maintaining the balance, especially in the area in which we live, we shall spare no effort to implement that Declaration in order to put an end to international rivalry, especially among the super-Powers, over spheres of influence in this area of the world.

In this respect my delegation welcomes the measure of progress achieved by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean in 1983, as represented in its agreeing to the discussion of the provisional agenda of the proceedings of the Indian Ocean Conference submitted by the non-aligned countries. We hope that this augers well for the long-awaited holding of the Conference, which is scheduled for 1985 in Colombo.

The Sultanate of Oman, like many other countries, firmly believes in the need for the total elimination of nuclear weapons; however, until that becomes a reality, it considers that it is appropriate to create nuclear-free zones as a first step towards eliminating these weapons.

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

On this basis, my country was privileged to support all the initiatives taken in this respect for all areas, especially the Middle East. The relevant resolution on the Middle East called on all the States of the area, inter alia, to cease the production or possession of nuclear weapons and subject their nuclear activities to the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). My delegation believes that special priority should be accorded in this respect to the provision of safeguards to the non-nuclear Powers against the threat or use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, it maintains that it is necessary to formulate certain legally effective measures to prohibit attacks against nuclear reactors, such as the attack by Israel against the peaceful Tammuz reactor in fraternal Iraq, although it knew beforehand, beyond any doubt, that it was devoted to peaceful purposes. We associate ourselves with the view that outer space should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and reject any attempts to militarize this common heritage of humanity.

Oman appeals to the two super-Powers to take more steps and to conduct international negotiations in accordance with the spirit of the principles governing the activities of States in the field of exploring outer space, including the moon and other satellites, in accordance with paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes the efforts made by the Conference on Disarmament, and hopes that the work of that Conference will achieve better results next year than those achieved last year and the years before, particularly since we have witnessed certain positive developments during this session between the two super-Powers in the form of the high-level contacts which took place between them. We hope that a continuation of these contacts will result in curbing the arms race between the super-Powers, especially in its nuclear aspects.

It may be pertinent before concluding to quote a paragraph from the report of the Secretary-General for 1983, as contained in document A/38/1, which throws light on the responsibility of these two Powers vis-à-vis the survival of mankind and the prevention of a nuclear war between them:

"In no area is the need for a recommitment to the principles of the Charter more important and more closely tied to the survival of humanity than in the field of disarmament and arms limitation. The prevention of nuclear war remains the unique challenge of our time, since such a war would be the

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

ultimate negation of all human endeavour. While the international community as a whole is deeply concerned with this vital problem, the key to its solution is in the hands of the two major nuclear Powers." (A/38/1, p. 2)

Mr. NGUAYILA MBELA KALANDA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): First and foremost, Sir, I should like to convey to you the warm congratulations of the delegation of Zaire on your election as Chairman of our Committee, and to the other officers of the Committee on their election to their respective posts, and to assure you of our full co-operation in the accomplishment of your mission.

The question of disarmament has been on the agenda of the General Assembly since our Organization was created. It goes back even further than the Organization itself. If the attention the international community devotes to this matter were to be accompanied by a unanimous political will on the part of the world leaders, particularly those of the powerfully armed countries, this question would already have been at least partially resolved and the present anxieties of insecurity would have disappeared from our minds and humanity could give some thought to development projects. Unfortunately, vast sums are absorbed in the frenzied armed race which is engaged in, first and foremost, by the highly-armed States, and which has now gone beyond the boundaries of our planet and has even reached outer space.

The arms race swallows up more than \$800 billion per year at present, whereas official development assistance is far from reaching the level planned by our Organization. This race, in which the entire world seems to be involved, is widening the gap between the industrialized and the developing countries. Lacking in security safeguards, the States of the third world, fearful of being attacked, invaded and occupied by some other country, or by some powerful neighbour, are expending the scant resources available to them for their development to equip themselves for their own protection. Fear and distrust have become the rule these days in international relations. Never has the world been so concerned by the arms race, particularly in its nuclear aspects, since the strike capability of the latter can annihilate the whole of mankind in a few seconds.

The existence of hotbeds of tension throughout the world, created by the policy of force, interference in the internal affairs of other States, the threat or use of force, the quest for military superiority and the existence of military blocs are all factors which promote this frenzied and pointless arms race.

(Mr. Nguayila Mbela Kalanda, Zaire)

The preservation of international peace and security is a matter which concerns all States on our planet, great or small, rich or poor. It is also vital and urgent for our common security. To this end sustained efforts will have to be made by all, particularly by the super-Powers, which have arsenals containing arms of all types. The Republic of Zaire, like other peace- and freedom-loving countries, has spared no effort to achieve this goal. We have supported the idea of creating nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace as appropriate mechanisms for promoting disarmament.

Referring specifically to the creation of such zones of peace, the summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was held in Cairo in July 1984, adopted a Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa. However, we have to admit that despite the existence of this Declaration and the adoption by the United Nations of numerous resolutions on the subject, the South African nuclear threat is not only a very real danger for the entire African continent but also a threat to international peace and security. Some States, completely ignoring the OAU Declaration, continue to co-operate and collaborate with the South African régime in the nuclear field, even going so far as to transfer to South Africa nuclear installations and the relevant technology, which enables Pretoria to enhance its nuclear potential and thus thwart the very aims of that Declaration.

As a non-nuclear-weapon State, and as a member of the Conference on Disarmament, the Republic of Zaire believes that priority should be given to the drawing up of a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear tests. The existence of such an instrument would indeed be an important step towards controlling armaments and achieving disarmament.

(Mr. Nguayila Mbela Kalanda, Zaire)

It is a matter of regret that, despite repeated appeals and numerous resolutions adopted on the subject, the negotiations on this question are still marking time at the Conference on Disarmament.

The absence of any real progress in the main negotiations on disarmament, and particularly on nuclear disarmament, is mainly the responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States. Those States and their allies seem to attach no importance whatsoever either to the resolutions adopted by the United Nations or to the wishes expressed by the international community.

The negotiations on disarmament at the Conference on Disarmament are deadlocked because of the inflexible positions taken by the nuclear-weapon States. The nuclear Powers are erecting obstacles in the way of any progress towards general and complete disarmament by systematically blocking any initiatives that might pave the way to concrete negotiations, which is the only way to promote an atmosphere of trust and confidence-building measures.

Those same Powers refuse to provide the negative security guarantees to the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons. We regard this as a very serious threat to the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States.

Disarmament cannot be achieved by fine words alone; those words must also be translated into concrete action. The Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament in 1978 should serve as a basic reference for any negotiations on disarmament. Thus, it is obviously the Conference on Disarmament which is the most appropriate forum to carry out such negotiations and subsequently to achieve satisfactory results, because the membership of that body is not only based on geographical representation but it also includes all schools of thought.

Confronted by the major danger inherent in the escalation of the arms race and, first and foremost the nuclear-arms race, it is high time for the international community to take steps to eliminate those weapons in order to avoid the destruction of our planet.

The tremendous quantities of nuclear weapons in the hands of a few States are threatening the survival of mankind. The dangers confronting the international community at the present time make it essential that any idea, any proposal from whatever quarter should be carefully studied, provided that its goal is to achieve general and complete disarmament. It is for that reason that the Republic of

(Mr. Nguayila Mbela Kalanda, Zaire)

Zaire, as a member of the Conference on Disarmament, will support any initiative aimed at achieving disarmament.

Hence, in his statement before the General Assembly the Head of the delegation of Zaire, said the following:

"The problem of over-armament is crucial because it raises questions that involve the very survival of mankind. Whether we consider the question in its deadly and devastating aspect or in the way in which it diverts major resources from the development of less wealthy peoples, the conclusion is the same ...

"If those weapons could strike only their inventors we could perhaps shrug our shoulders and sleep in peace, thinking that after all they will get only what they deserve. But no, we are all concerned by the holocaust."

(A/39/PV.21, p. 92)

Mr. GOMEZ BOLAND (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): It is with a deep sense of loss that we heard the sad news of the tragic death of the great statesman and acknowledged leader of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. So tragic an event should give us food for thought concerning the urgent need for international peace and security in this very difficult hour for mankind.

I should like to extend to the Chairman of the Committee the greetings of the Bolivian delegation and our most heartfelt congratulations on his election to guide the work of this Committee. There is no doubt in our minds that his great experience and well-tryed knowledge of disarmament affairs constitute a guarantee for the success of our work. I also wish to emphasize our great satisfaction that a representative of a Latin American country, a neighbour of ours, should be elected to carry out such important duties. We also extend our greetings and congratulations to the other officers of the Committee.

My country, as a peace-loving State that has never given any thought to embarking upon a costly arms race, wishes once again to raise a warning in this forum, since we share the view of the representative of Argentina that

"Those who lack power also have something to say about their future, and will not shirk their duty or forfeit their right to do so." (A/C.1/39/PV.4, p. 62)



(Mr. Gomez Boland, Bolivia)

That right or obligation assumes particular importance in the present circumstances, since we are witnessing a very grim picture with regard to world peace and security, particularly because of the scant progress made in this field over the last 12 months, if indeed one may speak about progress, given that the bilateral disarmament negotiations taking place in Geneva between the two major super-Powers during the past year have been suspended and that the multilateral negotiations taking place in the Conference on Disarmament are also not making the hoped for progress. On the contrary, minute by minute countries continue to produce and accumulate the most sophisticated weapons of mass destruction, which threaten the very survival of organized life on our planet.

Accordingly, my delegation joins with all others that have already appealed to the major super-Powers to resume as soon as possible a broad and constructive dialogue in this field so that they can reach satisfactory agreements for the sake of their own security and that of all mankind as well.

Bolivia is a country with an undeniable dedication to peace and has always followed the course of reason and international law rather than that of the force of arms. For that reason, as I stated earlier, my country has never undertaken or participated in any arms race. Quite the contrary, it has supported and will continue to support all initiatives towards the achievement of peace in this deeply troubled world, or at least in some of its regions, particularly our own.

In this context my Government wishes to avail itself of this opportunity to express its full support for the Joint Declaration of 22 May 1984, in which the Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania express their conviction that there must not be another world war and point out that:

"It is primarily the responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States to prevent a nuclear catastrophe, but this problem is too important to be left to those States alone." (A/39/277, p. 4)

(Mr. Gomez Boland, Bolivia)

Similarly, my country, as a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, lent its full support to the declaration made by the Movement in the Final Communiqué of the Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation held from 1 to 5 October last on the occasion of the opening of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. That communiqué, in one of its more salient paragraphs, expresses the concern of the non-aligned countries over the arms race in the following terms:

"The escalating arms race, particularly in nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, the rise in international tensions and the absence of constructive dialogue among the nuclear-weapon States have today reached unprecedented levels. These have increased the risks of the outbreak of a nuclear conflict affecting the very survival of mankind."

(A/39/560, para. 9)

The Government of Bolivia feels that the resources which are being used today for the desperate and suicidal arms race embarked upon by several countries, including some countries of what is termed the third world, should and could be used for nobler purposes, such as the economic and social development of States, the struggle to overcome hunger and programmes for health and housing. In short, they could be spent on improving the general living conditions of our peoples. Consequently, the link between disarmament and development is undeniable, and in support of that statement it is necessary only to examine and compare the increasing arms budgets of the great Powers for military programmes and the budgets earmarked by developing countries to educational and health services programmes. But this inversion of values, this insensitivity of those who hold in their hands the fate of our civilization, must not continue. It is essential that the rich countries, especially the super-Powers, understand that it is unjust that vast amounts of money and resources should be spent on sophisticated weapons at a time when thousands of children in various parts of the world are dying every day of hunger or disease.

Moreover, this should not apply only to the rich countries. There are also developing countries which continue to purchase conventional weapons and other more sophisticated weapons, setting aside to some extent their own development concerns and the well-being of their peoples. We appeal to them also to cease these useless expenditures so that all of us, in a true climate of international security, may

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dedicate our resources, our efforts and our energies to trying to escape from the quagmire we find ourselves in today and strive for a better world.

In conformity with its dedication to peace, my country is a signatory to the principal existing agreements on disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and so on. Bolivia was one of the first countries to support the initiative to bring about the denuclearization of Latin America, an initiative which, fortunately, after a number of years of intense effort took the form of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which was adopted in 1967. Today, the Treaty of Tlatelolco has great importance because, like the Antarctic Treaty signed in 1959, it defines a nuclear-weapon-free zone, the first and only one existing to date in a densely inhabited region; also because it establishes a system of international control under a permanent monitoring body, together with a system of inspection to deal with cases where violations of the Treaty may be suspected; and, finally, because it reaffirms the rights of the contracting parties to make use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes, particularly for their economic development and social progress.

In view of the foregoing, the Government of Bolivia attaches particular importance to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and we would once again urge the Government of France to ratify Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America.

On another subject, I have the honour to announce to this Committee that, by a Supreme Decree of 21 September 1984, Bolivia has decided to accede to the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, known as the Geneva Protocol of 1925, for which purpose my Government will soon deposit its instrument of ratification with the Government of France, which is the depositary Government.

The facts I have stated speak eloquently of my country's concern over disarmament issues and its determination to contribute, within the limits of its modest possibilities, to preserving international peace and security.

The chief objective of the United Nations is to preserve international peace and security and prevent a nuclear war. However, to achieve that aim it is necessary to formulate international conventions on a world-wide level, conventions which could bring about the disappearance and the complete destruction of the terrifying nuclear, chemical, conventional and other types of weapons of mass

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destruction which exist today or which might be developed in the near future. In short, it is necessary to bring about the demilitarization of our planet and particularly outer space - that is, to bring about the total disarmament of all States, from the most powerful to the poorest.

We know, however, how difficult, not to say impossible, it will be to achieve that aim, but we must not be discouraged. Mankind is today at a crossroads, where it can choose between only two roads. The first of those roads, and apparently the easiest to follow, would lead us to continuing this unchecked arms race with the aim of mutual mass destruction which could spell doom for our civilization. The second of those roads is a longer and more difficult one - the road that would lead us to strengthening dialogue and negotiations on disarmament until we have achieved agreements that could secure world peace and security. Only by following that road will we save civilization, and mankind as a whole.

Mr. ICAZA GALLARD (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like at the outset to convey to the Indian delegation our heartfelt condolences on the tragic and irreparable loss which its country has suffered in the assassination of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Chairperson of the Non-Aligned Movement. As has been said by the Co-ordinator of our Government of National Reconstruction in a message to Mr. Zail Singh, the President of India, the loss of the Prime Minister of India and Chairperson of the Non-Aligned Movement is a painful event which leaves a great vacuum not only in India but in the world as a whole.

Permit me, Sir, to express our warm congratulations to you on your election to preside over the work of this Committee. Your ability and experience, so well proved in previous years in what was known as the Committee on Disarmament and in the Disarmament Commission, are a guarantee of the success of our work at the present session of the General Assembly. You may be sure of the full co-operation of my delegation in the fulfilment of your duties. I should like also to express our appreciation to Ambassador Tom Vraalsen of Norway, who presided over the work of our Committee at the last session with efficiency and great diplomatic skill.

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We also wish to express our congratulations to Ambassadors Henning Wegener of the Federal Republic of Germany and Milos Vejvoda of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic who, with their experience and ability, will surely be helping us in the course of our deliberations. Our congratulations also go to our new Rapporteur, Mr. Ngare Kessely of Chad.

As we approach the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of making our work at the present session the same repetitive and unfruitful ritual of past years, years when a vast mass of resolutions was not followed up with real advances in various disarmament issues. We should focus our attention on specific proposals designed to remove the blockage in the machinery and continue to remove what the General Assembly called in resolution 38/62 "the persistent obstruction of a very small number of its members".

If we take a look at what has happened, it is truly alarming that some of these questions of such vital importance to mankind as a whole are in fact showing backward movement. Disarmament negotiations on nuclear weapons have been broken off. Almost every day the media tell us of plans to build new nuclear weapon systems and modernize and expand conventional defence systems. Nuclear tests are increasing as are the arsenals of chemical weapons. The arms race is now reaching into outer space. Frivolous interpretations, motivated by adventuristic policies, are undermining agreements already arrived at. The total expenditure so far exceeds a billion dollars a year, an exorbitant figure when there are entire peoples who are dying of malnutrition and hunger, when there are millions of people who are without clothing and without a roof, and millions of people who remain illiterate.

Nothing concrete emerged from the session of the Disarmament Commission and, as to the Conference, a single positive result can be seen, which is a draft convention on the elimination of chemical weapons, which must be negotiated in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference and possibly, in the longer term, may be concretized.

On the majority of issues, however, the situation was disappointing. Two draft conventions on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons - an item which has been discussed in the United Nations for more than 25 years - submitted by Sweden and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics respectively, have not been dealt with substantively by the Conference. The same attitude by a small number of

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countries made it impossible to establish an ad hoc committee to give preliminary consideration to the item on the prevention of nuclear war, an item which was considered by the General Assembly in 1978 as "the most critical and urgent task of the day".

The considerable efforts exerted by the Group of 21 in this respect, which should certainly be remembered, met with the determined opposition of the United States and a small number of members of the Conference. A similar attitude negated everything that was done on another important and urgent item at this time, that relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

This alarming lack of trust in the multilateral disarmament process is only a part of the deterioration of multilateralism in general. Accordingly, we should recall the words of the Secretary-General, who, in his report to the General Assembly, expresses the view that:

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

(A/39/1, p. 7)

Similarly, we should recall here what was stated by the Heads of State and Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania, in their Joint Declaration of 22 May 1984:

"It is primarily the responsibility of the nuclear weapons states to prevent a nuclear catastrophe, but this problem is too important to be left to those states alone." (A/39/277, p. 4)

Having considered this discouraging picture of the work of the principal United Nations bodies on disarmament, and reaffirming the importance of a multilateral approach to the solution of these vital problems, we feel that the work of this Committee, far from being transformed into a simple repetition or creation of new and inoperative resolutions, should focus upon concrete proposals which have emerged in the course of the discussion, proposals which may lead towards a way out of this alarming deadlock.

Accordingly, we should give thought to the proposal put forward by the Group of 21 two years ago, relating to the reformulation of rule 21 of the rules of procedure of the Conference and the recommendation of the Group contained in paragraph 95 of the report of the Conference.

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Another important aspect that we cannot fail to mention is that pertaining to the grave effects of the accelerated increase in arms expenditure not only on the economies of the developing countries, but also on the world economy as a whole, provoking distortions in the monetary system of the world and in world trade. The high military budgets are the principal cause of the great budgetary deficit of the United States, which in turn is the cause of the high interest rates. This directly and dramatically affects the underdeveloped economies, most of which are carrying the burden of an extremely high external debt. The waste of resources on the development and production of powerful new weapons limits and restricts possibilities for economic co-operation, which is so closely linked to international security. It is important, therefore, that this Committee turn its attention to this particular aspect of the question and scrupulously study the opportunity and advisability of an international conference on disarmament and development.

The Co-ordinator of the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua, Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra, in his statement to the General Assembly at the present session, said the following:

"No one can ignore the United Nations efforts in defence of peace, justice, freedom and the independence of peoples.

"But, most unfortunately for mankind, there are policies, backed up by nuclear weapons, which blackmail, threaten, and attack the principles of the United Nations Charter." (A/39/PV.16, p. 2)

With these words, Commander Ortega was touching upon one of the fundamental aspects of the problem of the arms race and disarmament, its close relation to international security.

It is undeniable that the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race, constitutes a threat to peace and security. But, similarly, those policies of "those that have characterized themselves by their defiance, mockery and undermining of resolutions of this Organization" (A/39/PV.16, p. 2), to whom Commander Ortega referred, constitute causes of tension in different regions of the world and in international relations as a whole.

Peace and security are being threatened by the daily recourse to force or the threat of force in international relations and by the systematic violation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of State and the principle of the right of peoples to determine their own political, economic and social

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systems. Those interventionist and adventuristic policies, those policies which foment the arms race, the conduct of military manoeuvres as a means of pressure or threat, the establishment of military bases in sensitive areas of the world, those policies which make a mockery of the obligation that all States have to resolve their disputes by peaceful means constitute a violation of international peace and security.

Disarmament and the arms race are an integral part of international security. If we abandon that broader concept of international security, we will not find appropriate solutions in the grave times in which we are living. Only by fulfilling the purposes, principles and obligations of the Charter will we create the appropriate climate and open up the way to the solution of the problems that we are facing today.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.



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