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President: Mr. Adam MALIK (Indonesia).

AGENDA ITEM 8

Adoption of the agenda (*continued*)*

FOURTH REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE
(A/8500/ADD.3)

1. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) (*interpretation from French*): Owing to circumstances beyond my control I was not able, as chairman of the African group for November, to submit to the General Committee the request communicated by 36 representatives of African countries [A/8494 and Add.1] that a new item be placed on the agenda for the twenty-sixth session: the problem of co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, particularly as regards the holding of meetings of the Security Council in an African capital. But my colleague from Zambia, whom we know well, and other fellow Africans have done so more ably that I myself could and I wish to thank them publicly.

2. I should also like to express my sincere thanks and the appreciation of the African group for the diligence and understanding with which the General Committee received our request.

3. That request, as representatives know, concerns consideration of the grave situation prevailing in Africa with a view to finding other measures to implement the various resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly on decolonization, the struggle against *apartheid* and racial discrimination on our continent in the face of the determined refusal of the Portuguese and South African authorities—to mention only those—to implement these urgent resolutions.

4. In stating the case for Africa from this same rostrum on 24 September last, Mr. Moktar Ould Daddah, the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, said that this was "no longer a news item whose aspects there is some point in describing or whose urgent requirements should be

stressed" [1938th meeting, para. 5]. He went on to say that "the problems facing Africa and the world at large are so complex and unrelenting that applied concentration is required to identify the facts which are, after all, constantly changing" [*ibid.*, para. 9].

5. It is that need for continuous reflection which seemed to us so basic and which impelled us to request that the question be placed on the agenda for this session. In so doing, we are aware of the inconvenience this may mean for representatives, and are accordingly grateful to them in advance for their indulgence.

6. In the message he addressed to the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at Addis Ababa¹ on 21 June 1971 Secretary-General U Thant said that:

"Seven years ago, in my address to the first session of this Assembly, I described the adoption of the Charter of the Organization of African Unity as a 'welcome support to the United Nations', and it has been a source of profound satisfaction to me that since then close relations have developed between the United Nations and its agencies and the OAU. This relationship has become an important feature of international co-operation in recent years, and the effective functioning of this regional organization of African States is recognized as of great interest to the United Nations and the international community."

He went on to say:

"On this occasion, and bearing in mind that 1971 has been designated International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, I should like once more to make an earnest appeal to all States—particularly the great Powers and the main trading partners of South Africa and Portugal—to give urgent consideration to effective measures in order to stop the drift toward catastrophe in southern Africa. I would also venture to appeal once again to the Governments of South Africa and Portugal and their supporters to reconsider their attitudes and take steps towards peaceful solutions which would enable the peoples of southern Africa to play their rightful role in the progress of Africa and the world. Such solutions will demand from them courage, statesmanship and an enlightened vision of the future. The United Nations and the international community will not fail to show an understanding of the difficulties they might encounter in pursuing this new course and to provide all appropriate assistance."

¹ Eighth session of the Conference, held from 21 to 23 June 1971.

* Resumed from the 1980th meeting.

7. It is because we fully share this view that we believe that our request for the inclusion of the new item is amply albeit belatedly justified, especially bearing in mind the appearance of new signs of deterioration of the situation in our continent. At this stage I shall not go back to the explanatory memorandum attached to our request for inscription of a new item; it is sufficiently explicit.

8. I should simply like to add that, in the view of the African group, the title of the new item which we are proposing should not be restrictively interpreted. We are, of course, pointing up the now urgent necessity for the Security Council to hold meetings in an African capital which would be devoted to the problems of decolonization, to the struggle against *apartheid* and to racial discrimination in our continent. But our objectives are also long-term. We believe that co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization for African Unity does not encompass only painful aspects. The Secretary-General's report [A/8386] invites us to intensify and strengthen this co-operation in the common interest of the two Organizations. We take note of that with satisfaction, but we are also thinking of the specialized agencies and other bodies: the International Atomic Energy Agency, and more particularly the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Health Organization, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund. We should also like to appeal to the specialized agencies that have not yet done so, in conformity with the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly, to contact the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity with a view to the preparation and signing of agreements of co-operation.

9. This co-operation has become all the more urgent because on it depends, to a large extent, the implementation of the General Assembly's resolutions of 1969 and 1970 concerning assistance that the specialized agencies, each in its own field, could and should give the liberation movements, in co-operation with the OAU, so as to enable those movements, as well as refugees and other victims of colonial occupation and racist oppression, to carry through their legitimate struggle to recover their independence and freedom.

10. Last but not least, fruitful relations exist between the Economic Commission for Africa and the OAU—relations which took a new turn after the reforms introduced by the ninth session of the Economic Commission for Africa, held at Addis Ababa in February 1969 and its tenth session held at Tunis in February 1971. These long-term objectives are not new; nevertheless I thought it would be useful to mention them at this stage.

11. In conclusion, I should like to repeat something said by President Ould Daddah, the current Chairman of the OAU:

“Courage, we believe, is necessary to enunciate and to denounce what is wrong in the international system so as to improve its performance. We Africans are determined

to exercise that courage in spite of and against the prejudices and collective hypocrisy which, under the guise of ‘appropriateness and diplomacy’, some would wish to impose on the working methods of our Organization.”
[1938th meeting, para. 16.]

12. The African group, through me, would like, of course, to express the hope that the cause they plead will be heeded and upheld by the Security Council and by those here gathered who wish together to study the future of the continent and to find a foundation for salvation before it is too late.

13. Mr. OVINNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The Soviet delegation has carefully studied the request of 36 African States for the inclusion in the agenda of a new item entitled “Co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity: holding of meetings of the Security Council in an African capital”.

14. The delegation of the Soviet Union is mindful of the fact that this proposal by a large number of African countries is in keeping with a resolution adopted at the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of member countries of the Organization of African Unity, at Addis Ababa in June of this year, a resolution urging that a special session of the Security Council should be held in Africa to consider the measures to be taken with a view to implementing the various Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on decolonization and the struggle against *apartheid* and racial discrimination in Africa. In supporting the request of the 36 African States, the Soviet delegation wishes to indicate that when the question of substance is taken up during this session of the General Assembly the Soviet Union will take into consideration the opinion of the African States that the General Assembly should request the Security Council to hold such meetings. At the same time, the Soviet delegation would like to point out that, in accordance with Article 28, para. 3, of the United Nations Charter, decisions to hold Security Council meetings away from United Nations Headquarters are taken by the Security Council.

15. The PRESIDENT: In its fourth report, the General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item entitled “Co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity: holding of meetings of the Security Council in an African capital”. The General Committee further recommends that the item should be considered in plenary session. May I take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendations of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 97

World Disarmament Conference (*continued*)

16. Mr. WALDHEIM (Austria): From the very beginning of the United Nations, the prevention, control and reversal of the arms race has been one of the primary objectives of this Organization. Indeed, the first resolution adopted by the General Assembly as early as January 1946 concerned

the problem of disarmament. Ever since that time, the consideration of the disarmament items on the agenda of the United Nations is regarded as one of the most important functions of the United Nations, and the search for a solution to the problem has become the central preoccupation of the nations of the world.

17. The realization that the disarmament issue is important—as important as the survival of humanity itself—is world-wide. It stems from the existence of a threat to mankind that has grown into one of mass destruction. This realization is most clearly reflected in the resolution adopted unanimously on 20 November 1959 [*resolution 1378 (XIV)*], which affirmed that the question of general and complete disarmament was the most important one facing the world and expressed the hope that measures leading towards comprehensive disarmament under effective international control would be worked out and agreed upon in the shortest possible time.

18. In the 12 years that have passed since the adoption of that resolution, a series of very important agreements have been reached, excluding parts of the environment and vast spaces of the surface of the world from the arms race or limiting its scope. These collateral measures of arms control are the Antarctic Treaty,² the Moscow Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear tests,³ the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco),⁴ the outer space Treaty,⁵ the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*], the sea-bed Treaty⁶ and the draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and on their destruction [*A/8457, annex A*], which is now before this Assembly.

19. However important and significant these collateral measures may be, they cannot make us forget that we have hardly come any closer to the final objective of our endeavours. On the contrary, the known facts about the progressing arms race, which continues unabated, challenge us to find new approaches and ways in our determination to preserve mankind from a fatal and final catastrophe.

20. It was in the light of this development that the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, speaking during the general debate [*1946th meeting*], welcomed the initiative and proposal of the Government of the Soviet Union to convene a world disarmament conference [*A/8491*]. In doing so he recalled that Austria has always supported and will continue to support all measures and initiatives aimed at achieving genuine disarmament and control of armaments. The consideration of the subject before us is

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 402 (1961), No. 5778.

³ Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 480 (1963), No. 6964).

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634 (1968), No. 9068.

⁵ Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 2222 (XXI), annex).

⁶ Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof (resolution 2660 (XXV), annex).

particularly enhanced by the presence among us of the delegation of the People's Republic of China. Indeed, when the General Assembly took its historic decision on 25 October [*resolution 2758 (XXVI)*], it did so also in the awareness of the importance of the participation of the People's Republic of China in the disarmament negotiations. The decision was based on the recognition that without the full participation of the People's Republic of China in the activities of the United Nations we could not expect to make significant headway with regard to the many problems with which this Organization is confronted and which relate to its basic goal, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. It is obvious that there can be no far-reaching measures of disarmament, either nuclear or conventional, unless all the nuclear Powers take part in these negotiations. I wish again to express our pleasure and satisfaction at seeing the representatives of China in this hall and I trust that the necessary adjustments will be made to secure the participation of that country in the other disarmament efforts as well. In this context I cannot let the opportunity pass without also stressing the importance of the participation of France in the disarmament negotiations.

21. In dealing with the question of convening a world disarmament conference we must be aware of two factors: first, the present situation in the field of armaments which *inter alia* prompted this initiative, and secondly, the fact that the idea of a world disarmament conference has been discussed inside and outside the United Nations in the past.

22. As early as the sixth session of the General Assembly a proposal recommending the convening of a world conference to consider a substantial reduction of armed forces and armaments and practical measures of prohibiting atomic weapons and establishing international control of such prohibition was discussed. Moreover, in some of the early plans for general disarmament, provision was made for a world disarmament conference. We also know that the People's Republic of China has put forward proposals regarding the convening of a world disarmament conference.

23. The most relevant precedent of a discussion on the question of a world disarmament conference within the United Nations dates back to 1965, when the Disarmament Commission considered a draft resolution affirming the idea of a world conference and recommending that the twentieth session of the General Assembly give the proposal urgent consideration.⁷ The idea of holding a conference arose at the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in 1964, which proposed such a conference and stressed the desirability of having all countries participate in it. At that time it was argued that the conference should not be convened under the aegis of the United Nations because of the importance of the participation of all countries including all significant military Powers and particularly that of the People's Republic of China.

24. In the meantime we have secured the participation of the People's Republic of China in the work of the United

⁷ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965*, document DC/224.

Nations, and, as the Foreign Minister of Austria stated in the general debate, we hope that it will also be possible in the near future to admit the divided countries to membership in the world Organization, which would then become truly representative and universal.

25. In order to appreciate the initiative of the Government of the Soviet Union, we should again try to become aware of the present situation in the field of armaments and of the dimensions and ramifications of the problem. The Secretary-General, on the basis of a resolution of the last General Assembly [*resolution 2667 (XXV)*] and with the help of eminent international experts, has submitted a report on the economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security [*A/8469 and Add.1*]. Although the report is the subject of consideration in the First Committee, it might seem appropriate to mention it in this context since it emphasizes the great dangers of the arms race, both nuclear and conventional, illustrates the dimensions and ramifications of the crushing burden of military expenditure and forces us to the conclusion that effective measures are imperative to halt this ominous development. We hope, with the Secretary-General, that the report will convince people and their leaders that they must begin to re-arrange their national and international priorities and concentrate their resources and energies on the solution of the staggering economic and social problems facing humanity. The report, which deserves widest circulation, also helps us focus on the tasks of the proposed conference. It contributes to a better understanding of one of the most crucial problems which faces mankind today and makes us aware of what we stand to gain if we continue our efforts in the field of disarmament with the requisite determination and perseverance.

26. The question has been raised what the function and task of the world disarmament conference would be in relation to the present disarmament efforts and the structure within which they are carried out. In trying to clarify this problem we should distinguish the different forums seized of disarmament issues.

27. The first forum that comes to mind in this context is the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament; and we trust that it will be restructured in such a way as to provide for the participation of the People's Republic of China. In the light of this development, I should like to express our hope of seeing the delegation of France take its seat in the Committee on Disarmament.

28. Another important forum is constituted by the bilateral Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) being held by the United States and the Soviet Union alternately at Helsinki and Vienna. Although the opinion has been expressed that multilateral negotiations and commitments should prevail even where measures of bilateral self-restraint are concerned, we see considerable value in the holding of these talks, which have been described by the Secretary-General as the most important and fateful disarmament discussions since the Second World War.

29. Furthermore, the First Committee of the General Assembly deals extensively each year with the problem of disarmament.

30. Lastly, disarmament efforts are carried out on a regional basis. I need not recall the varied measures that have been brought about within such a framework.

31. As is well known, these bodies were not able to offer final solutions to the disarmament problems facing us. However, they have proved their usefulness: their work was constructive in the past, and they promise to contribute further to our common endeavour in the field of disarmament. It follows from the foregoing that the world disarmament conference should be comprehensive, so as to provide a broad basis for the work in these other organs. At the same time, the conference should avoid interfering in processes which might have been set in motion in more restricted forums; only then can it achieve its purpose, which would be to strengthen the determination of governments to halt and reverse the arms race.

32. In this context I should like to express my conviction that the arms race is linked to unrest and suspicion between nations. Any initiative which is likely to lessen tension and remove suspicion is, therefore, an important element in our efforts towards disarmament. One such measure aimed at the relaxation of tension is the proposed conference on security and co-operation in Europe, which would also have a beneficial effect on the adoption of disarmament measures.

33. My delegation is of the opinion that due attention should be given to the importance of the preparatory work for the world disarmament conference. Indeed any such conference, in order to produce concrete and lasting results, would have to be carefully prepared in thorough consultations among all governments. The many questions awaiting a solution in this context relate, among other things, to agreement on the agenda, the proper timing in relation to the international situation, and the participation of all militarily significant States, in particular the nuclear Powers.

34. My Government is ready to take part in these consultations and pledges its full co-operation with a view to promoting agreement on the question of convening a world disarmament conference.

35. Mr. HAINWORTH (United Kingdom): This year has seen a great many disarmament discussions, ideas and proposals as well as some results, and it is worth spending a moment to recall the major work already being done in this field.

36. First, there is the United Nations own First Committee of the General Assembly, which gives all Members of the United Nations a chance to discuss this year's full agenda of disarmament items. I believe there are some promising prospects and I hope that the Committee will decide to endorse at least one concrete result.

37. This result stems from the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, from which, following a British initiative in 1968, a draft convention on biological weapons and toxins has been forwarded, with the report of the Conference, to the General Assembly. The hope has been widely expressed that the draft convention will be commended by the General Assembly and opened for signature at an early date.

38. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has also done much necessary basic work on the subject of chemical weapons and on a comprehensive test ban. This work builds on the solid achievements of the past, including principally the Moscow partial test-ban Treaty and the non-proliferation Treaty.

39. This year has also seen the opening for signature on 11 February in London, Moscow and Washington of the sea-bed arms control Treaty. It is my hope that that Treaty will very soon be brought into force.

40. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have continued, their progress being watched with hope by the nations of the world. On 20 May 1971 the United States and Soviet authorities announced that they had agreed on a framework for continued negotiations, whose main feature is concentration this year on working out an agreement limiting the deployment of anti-ballistic missiles. They also agreed that together with the conclusion of an agreement to limit anti-ballistic missiles, they would agree on certain measures with respect to the limitation of offensive strategic weapons. The first formal results of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks—agreements on an improved Soviet-American "hotline" and on measures to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear war—were signed in Washington on 30 September. This progress has been encouraging—and further positive results will certainly have a stimulating effect on our work throughout the arms control and disarmament field.

41. Regional measures are another fruitful field of disarmament negotiations. The Treaty of Tlatelolco continues to blaze the trail and hold out encouragement for the rest of the world that this approach can lead to positive and practical results.

42. In the European region too this year has seen some encouraging developments. In the disarmament field the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) call for serious talks on mutual and balanced force reductions has elicited a response from the Soviet Government that has encouraged the NATO Governments to appoint their former Secretary-General, Mr. Brosio, to probe the prospects further.

43. Now, more recently, there has been a resurgence of interest in the prospect of broadening the participation in international disarmament talks and negotiations and, one hopes, in disarmament treaties already signed. We cordially welcome this prospect.

44. If the treaties of the past seem slow steps, laboriously negotiated, let us not forget that they are treaties, they do limit the spread of arms, and, most important, they do deal with nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction. While no one denies that there is still much to be done, it is no exaggeration to say that in the last 10 years more has been achieved in the field of arms limitation and disarmament than at any previous time in the history of mankind. Now, with a widely-endorsed draft of a treaty on biological weapons, for the first time there is the prospect of the destruction of existing stockpiles of some of these weapons of mass destruction. If not all the major military Powers have been associated with the negotiations and with the

treaties, at least many of the most important have been, and it is our sincere hope that ways satisfactory to all will soon be found to associate all of them both with the achievements of the past and the endeavours of the future.

45. Earlier this year there was a proposal for a conference of the five nuclear-weapon States. The British Prime Minister, Mr. Heath, made it clear that the United Kingdom would be glad to take part if a conference of the five nuclear Powers were held. It is the British view that a concerted effort by all nuclear-weapon States would greatly facilitate progress in this field, provided due regard was paid to the interests of non-nuclear-weapon States. But in the event it became clear that the conditions were not yet right for the holding of such a conference. We, however, continue to abide by our willingness to participate if the day should come when such a conference is recognized to be generally acceptable.

46. At the time that this proposal for a five-Power conference was put forward, the British Government stressed, as it has also always done in the past in connexion with previous proposals for world disarmament conferences, the need to co-ordinate such proposals and the proposals for the agenda and composition of the conferences and so on, with negotiations elsewhere. We were glad to note that this was also the view of the Soviet Government from the start. As will be clear from what I have said, the British Government greatly values the existing work that has been done, and is being done, in the many different disarmament forums, and believes in the prospects for further positive results.

47. Turning now to the specific proposal for a world disarmament conference, let me say that although there are possible disadvantages in tackling the disarmament issue in too big a framework, the British Government is willing to consider the proposal most carefully and to take part in any negotiations that are likely to bring effective measures of disarmament significantly nearer. Disarmament is so vital an issue that we are ready to discuss it in any forum for which there is general support.

48. What we are not disposed to do is to support ideas to do away with the existing and proven negotiating forums. We do not wish to establish the sort of gathering that would be merely a debating society, where delegations would preach to each other or exchange condemnatory criticisms. We do not believe that a world disarmament conference need be like this. A world disarmament conference could have a positive role, but equally we must recognize that such a body would be too unwieldy to negotiate treaties and agreements. We believe that those in favour of such a conference recognize this. Certainly it would be wrong to raise false hopes.

49. Disarmament is possibly the most serious issue facing us. It touches us all at the point of greatest sensitivity, our national security. Disarmament is necessary for international security, but not at the cost of destabilization or of causing imbalances which might actually increase the possibility of war.

50. A world disarmament conference could play a useful role. It might, for example, help to encourage countries to

subscribe to the treaties which we, collectively as the United Nations, have commended, but to which not all of us, as individual nations, have yet felt able to accede. It might also act as a catalyst to enable all the major military Powers to become truly involved in disarmament negotiations. As past results have shown, some valuable progress can be made without the participation of all such Powers. However, one can only regret the limitations imposed by their absence, which clearly confine both the pace and the scope of negotiations towards the goal of general and complete disarmament.

51. With regard to the details of the proposal before us, I must say that my own view at this early stage is that a world disarmament conference would most appropriately be held within the United Nations framework. It is difficult to see how such an important subject as the disarmament goals of mankind could be taken in a conference outside the cognizance and inspiration of the United Nations, which was after all created to serve amongst other purposes the strengthening of international peace and security. It would reflect badly on the United Nations. It would be inappropriate for the United Nations to recommend that another body had greater competence. This Assembly is the body which must take the decision whether or not to hold such a conference. This is recognized by the very fact that the proposal before us has been addressed to this Assembly. The United Nations should accordingly take responsibility for its organization and the United Nations Secretariat would in practice have to arrange and service it.

52. There is another important and related aspect to this question. This concerns the preparation of any such conference. Here in the United Nations I need not stress the importance we attach to the appropriate preparation of major conferences. For such matters as the law of the sea, for the protection of the environment, and similar subjects, the preparations, as delegations well know, involve over many months the closest attention to detail and to the traditional skills of diplomacy in establishing the goals which should be set, the parameters within which progress is possible, the subjects that are most ripe for fruitful resolution, and the combinations of ideals and practicalities that can best be made to achieve tangible and worthwhile results.

53. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has over a number of years acquired great experience in these skills in relation to disarmament. Further preparation, that is to say, the essential preliminary consideration of all relevant details, for any world conference would undoubtedly need to be careful and thorough. It would need to take account of the experience and expertise of the Committee on Disarmament, which has been for many years the chosen body to which the United Nations has remitted detailed disarmament negotiations. There should be no question of rushing at such a conference and risking wasting a great deal of time and money on a conference that was not appropriately prepared. A badly prepared conference could by its very failure set back the cause of disarmament. Meanwhile, disarmament does not in any way go by default, or suffer from neglect, as I think my opening catalogue of achievements and prospects made clear. The constraints on further progress lie less in the inappropriateness of the institutions we have devised, or in the lack of

political goodwill or determination of individual nations, than in the realities of the world we live in and in the international tensions that are, unfortunately, all too familiar to delegations in this Assembly.

54. But there is another point in relation to the timing of the conference. We have just taken steps in this very Assembly to admit the representatives of the Government of a quarter of the human race. We must not rush hastily on, as our very first action after this event, to commit this Assembly to proceeding by this or that route to a conference at such and such a time before it has been possible to bring those representatives fully into the essential processes of consultation and to take due and reasonable account of their views.

55. All this, in my view, points to the need for thorough examination of this question and to the need for careful consideration. I am glad to see that the wording of the Soviet draft resolution [*A/L.631 and Add.1*], not all of whose language is entirely acceptable to my delegation, at least proposes that time should be allowed for full consultations between States on the timing, work and organization of the conference. If such a proposal is agreed these consultations should draw fully on the experience of the Committee on Disarmament, but should not necessarily be confined to those currently taking part in the deliberations of that body.

56. In the light of such discussions and exchanges and of developments in the intervening period, the twenty-seventh General Assembly should review the whole question. I believe it would be premature to decide already—now—that such a conference should definitely be held. It would be wrong to tie our hands in advance and to fail to take account of the factors I have mentioned by setting a predetermined date, agenda, form or composition for such a conference. This task should be the subject of the exchanges I have suggested and should be judged against the sole criterion of the need to advance the prospects for real disarmament, concretely and significantly. In the meantime, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and other forums where disarmament measures are being worked out should be urged to quicken their pace in negotiating new international instruments to which the world community could and should subscribe. It is new measures of disarmament that should be our aim rather than the creation of new bodies where our goals could be discussed. A world disarmament conference within the framework of the United Nations could advance such goals; but let us ensure that the conditions and preparations are right before deciding too hastily to embark on such a course.

57. Mr. TANAKA (Japan): I should like to express briefly the basic views of my delegation on the item entitled "World Disarmament Conference".

58. The progress of disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, is an urgent problem, and the question we are facing is what kind of approach is proper for the achievement of this objective. My delegation is prepared to support, in principle, the proposal of the Soviet Union to convene a world disarmament conference, if this would really expedite the realization of concrete measures of

disarmament and if a majority of the Members of the United Nations favours this proposal. However, I deem it necessary to stress the need for taking into account the following points.

59. First, I must point out that this type of conference would lose its significance if it could not secure the participation of all the nuclear-weapon States. Also, according to the proposal of the Soviet Union, such a conference would be held outside the framework of the United Nations. However, with the participation of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations, all nuclear-weapon States are now represented in the Organization, and those States outside the United Nations are few in number. Furthermore, the United Nations could seek the participation of non-Member States with the general agreement of the Organization. Therefore, my delegation considers that it is more logical and natural to have the proposed conference held under the auspices of the United Nations.

60. Next, I should like to refer to the relationship between a world disarmament conference and the existing forums for disarmament negotiations. At present, as the forums for disarmament negotiations, we have, needless to say, the General Assembly of the United Nations and also the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which is a negotiating body for concrete disarmament measures, faced with urgent pending questions—the comprehensive ban of nuclear tests is a typical example. Therefore it is the view of my delegation that progress in disarmament negotiations in those forums should not in any way be slowed down by the political and psychological effects of the convening of a world disarmament conference.

61. For a world disarmament conference to succeed, I believe that elaborate preparations are required. We should therefore approach the convening of such a conference with a flexible attitude, in order to have a consensus of the countries of the world regarding the determination of the time for the convocation of the conference.

62. I am also concerned because this type of conference tends to become a forum of polemics and political propaganda, against the wishes of the majority of the participating countries. Instead, I sincerely hope that it should contribute positively to creating a friendly atmosphere to expedite the progress of disarmament.

63. The proposal of the Soviet Union is to create a new forum for disarmament. However, what is necessary, in my view, is to take action for the progress of disarmament. And this involves the primary responsibilities of nuclear-weapon States. The main obstacles to the achievement of nuclear disarmament have been made clear through the past disarmament discussions for many years. My delegation earnestly hopes that positive efforts for the progress of disarmament will be made by nuclear-weapon States, regardless of when such a conference is held.

64. Mr. BANERJEE (India): On behalf of the delegation of India, I should like to welcome the participation of the delegation of the People's Republic of China in our work in the General Assembly and, in particular, in our discussions on the question of disarmament.

65. The problem of disarmament is the most vital and urgent problem that faces mankind in this nuclear age. The ever-mounting arms race poses the supreme question of the survival of mankind; it causes international tensions, threatens world peace and diverts valuable resources from the much needed economic and social development to unproductive and destructive purposes.

66. However, mankind has never known disarmament before. The achievement of disarmament is also made difficult by the existence of deep-seated mistrust and deep-rooted suspicion among nations. Besides any efforts that Governments might make, there is an imperative need to mobilize world public opinion in favour of disarmament.

67. A question that is particularly relevant at the present moment is the future of the organization of disarmament discussions so that the best possible results can be obtained. Our experience of the long history of disarmament discussions has taught us that it is essential to have such discussions on two planes: a deliberative plane and a negotiating plane.

68. A deliberative plane is needed so that all States of the world can have the opportunity of taking part in disarmament discussions and are enabled to express their views on the various disarmament questions. Furthermore, the international community could give guidelines for concrete negotiations on various measures in the field of disarmament. The need for the attainment of world security through disarmament demands the universality of participation of all States in a deliberative forum.

69. A negotiating plane is also essential so that serious and concrete negotiations can be conducted in a business-like manner with a view to reaching agreements on treaties and other internationally binding instruments. Disarmament questions and the various steps to be taken to deal with them are highly complicated matters requiring a great deal of detailed, if not dedicated, work. It is not possible to negotiate in large gatherings. Detailed and hard negotiations can only be undertaken in a small body, preferably away from the glare of publicity and the pressure of propaganda.

70. In recent years disarmament discussions have borne some fruit, and this has in no small measure been due to the fact that disarmament discussions have been conducted on two planes, namely, the deliberative plane and the negotiating plane.

71. The General Assembly has held discussions every year on disarmament questions, and the Disarmament Commission has also met on a few occasions. Their deliberations have provided a direction and a sense of purpose, and have also established guidelines for concrete negotiations. But the actual negotiations have been conducted in a small body, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. The link between the deliberative forum and the negotiating body has been maintained, since the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has taken the guidelines for its work from the General Assembly and, in its turn, the General Assembly has reviewed the work of the Conference and has charted the path for further work.

72. It has now been suggested that a world disarmament conference be convened so that disarmament discussions

can be speeded up. India has, together with all the other non-aligned States, supported the idea of convening a world disarmament conference in such meetings as the Conferences of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade in 1961, Cairo in 1964 and Lusaka in 1970. The ministerial consultative meeting of non-aligned countries held only recently in New York made similar recommendations. The General Assembly of the United Nations, in its resolution 2030 (XX) of 1965 endorsed the proposal of the non-aligned States. However, such a conference could not be convened, although various informal discussions took place from time to time, in 1965 and 1966 especially.

73. The delegation of India is in favour of further efforts being made to reach agreement on the convening of a world disarmament conference. The delegation of India, therefore, fully supports the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union in documents A/L.631 and Add.1. The universal participation of all States, whether or not they are Members of the United Nations, and the need for careful preparation are the two essential conditions for the success of a world disarmament conference, particularly in order to ensure that the results of such a conference will provide a real impetus and a guideline to negotiations on meaningful measures of actual disarmament.

74. In keeping with its basic approach to the question of the organization of disarmament discussion, the delegation of India remains firmly convinced that while every effort should be made to convene a world disarmament conference nothing should be done which might in any way retard or hamper the work of the existing negotiating body on disarmament, namely the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. In fact, every effort should be made to strengthen that negotiating body by securing the participation of France and the People's Republic of China in its work and through an improvement in its procedure of work. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament is doing useful work, though progress has been slow. There is need for maximum co-operation and assistance in the work of the Conference.

75. The delegation of India accords its support to the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet delegation and it is our hope that the decade of the 1970s will be a decade of disarmament, continued progress and stable peace.

76. Mr. BITSIOS (Greece) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation has studied very carefully the document in which the Soviet Government submitted its proposal concerning the convening of a world disarmament conference [A/8491]. We share the view of the Soviet Government that "Among the problems which arouse the concern of all the peoples of the world and which require the speediest possible solution, the problem of disarmament is one of the highest priority."

77. It is with this conviction that Greece has participated actively in United Nations action concerning disarmament measures. The Greek Government has acceded to the various treaties that have been prepared under the auspices of the United Nations and, in particular, the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere and under water, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

and the Treaty prohibiting the emplacement of nuclear weapons on the sea-bed and the ocean floor.

78. That, then, is the state of mind in which we studied the new Soviet initiative.

79. My delegation has followed very carefully the present debate before even asking for the floor. We hope also to be further enlightened before deciding how to vote. We would like, however, to note forthwith that, despite the unanimity concerning the general desire to put an end to the arms race, views appear divided as to whether the time is appropriate for the convening of a world conference.

80. Does that mean that the question is not ripe for a fresh effort on a world-wide scale? Some think that a world conference convened in the very near future might hamper the work of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva which, despite its slow pace, has done useful work. Others hold the opinion that such a conference could not deal successfully with questions concerning the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, as enunciated in the letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, so long as the nuclear Powers themselves—and I refer to all the nuclear Powers—have not declared that they are ready to participate in a positive and constructive manner in negotiations concerning the reduction and even the abolition of weapons of mass destruction.

81. Moreover, certain delegations have observed, and rightly, that any further initiative on disarmament should remain within the framework of the United Nations and that the world conference, if convened, should be held under the aegis of our Organization.

82. In his statement in the general debate the head of our delegation, Mr. Palamas, speaking of the holding of conferences on disarmament, said:

"We are ready to participate, as we have done in the past. However, we think that the process of disarmament is essentially political in nature. We must resolve differences by negotiation, abandon dreams of domination, avoid confrontation and bring about *détente*, through tolerance and the promotion of a climate propitious to psychological and emotional disarmament. Without this, disarmament will remain in the realm of fiction and polemics. No one disarms in a climate of mistrust." [1959th meeting, para. 43.]

Perhaps in these few words we will find the most deep-rooted reasons why the idea of a world disarmament conference has not heretofore evoked this unanimous wave of support which alone will guarantee its success.

83. However, I repeat, we still hope that the debate under way will bring out more clearly the opinions of the participants and will channel along constructive lines the unanimous desire to succeed in bringing about a reduction of armaments and gradually to achieve general and complete disarmament.

84. The presence in our midst of the delegation of the People's Republic of China and its participation in our work is undoubtedly a positive factor and increases the

chances of greater success than our earlier efforts for disarmament enjoyed.

85. In any event, we side with those delegations which have emphasized that careful preparation for the world disarmament conference is of the utmost importance. We would be wise to adopt the suggestion of the representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt [1985th meeting], who proposed that if the General Assembly decided to recommend the convening of such a conference, it could ask the Secretary-General to inquire as to the opinions of participating States, and particularly those of the permanent members of the Security Council, and to submit his report for our consideration at the twenty-seventh session of the Assembly. We would then be in a position to judge objectively whether the time had come to go ahead.

86. My delegation also expresses the hope that the authors of the draft resolution contained in documents A/L.631 and Add.1 will be good enough to take into account the ideas that emerge from the present debate so that the resolution eventually to be adopted by the General Assembly will reflect a consensus and the aspirations of all Member States.

87. Mr. DIAZ CASANUEVA (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Chile welcomes and firmly supports the proposal of the Soviet Union for the convocation of a world disarmament conference.

88. Chile has always contributed to any action designed to bring about universal disarmament, and now more than ever, in accordance with the ideology which inspires our people and in keeping with the plans that my Government is carrying out to bring about social and economic transformations and friendship and co-operation with other nations. We possess armed forces designed only to safeguard our sovereignty and they participate actively and effectively in the economic, technical and social development of the country.

89. We are aware that in a historically interdependent world such as ours today, our destiny is linked to that of both large and small Powers. Any international happening has repercussions on our own internal life. Everything that occurs and affects other peoples of the world affects us seriously. Accordingly, we must proclaim our right and at the same time assume our responsibility to participate in and contribute to any effort, any undertaking, designed to shake off the phantom of war and to strengthen international peace and security.

90. We must join the collective will to provide a solution to the problem of disarmament in order to avoid a thermonuclear catastrophe, to destroy the means of extermination, to halt the arms race, to end the policies of world hegemonies, of strategic balance of power and of peace based on dissuasion founded on nuclear terror, aggression and pressure. We must become part of a great collective decision to deflect to the tasks of peace and development the resources which now are squandered on perfecting and accumulating conventional and nuclear weapons. We would not wish to be pessimistic or apocalyptic in our thinking, nor to appear too candid or excessively subject to illusions; we only express our confidence that all

peoples—both the developed and the less developed nations—will impose their will on the interests of certain capitalistic military-industrial monopolies so that mankind can acquire the necessary degree of wisdom in order to launch ourselves on the great adventure of peace that is not an armed peace, but true and creative peace.

91. Accordingly, we are concerned to ensure that the world disarmament conference should be broad and universal; that it should examine all the problems inherent in disarmament, such as those deriving from the conditions and scope of disarmament; and that all countries, large and small, whether Members of the United Nations or not, should be invited to the conference, for peace is not the monopoly of one or several great Powers; nor can that peace be imposed by those Powers in accordance with their own ideas on the rest of mankind. This, of course, I say without detracting from the very real fact that the major responsibility rests upon the great nuclear Powers and the Powers possessing great military forces. For example, one fundamental condition for the conference should be the active participation of France and the People's Republic of China. The latter country, fortunately, has been incorporated into our Organization precisely at the time when we are discussing the proposal concerning a world disarmament conference.

92. We should like to draw attention to three prior considerations which, in our opinion, must be taken into account in order to ensure the success of the conference. That conference should not be intended to substitute for the activities of other organs, such as the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, or other undertakings such as the bilateral conversations between the United States and the Soviet Union, or the treaties already in existence—both worldwide and regional—on specific aspects of disarmament. The proposed conference should not be just one more parallel undertaking, but rather a more general act of broader vision, offering great and new prospects with the utmost degree of universality, at the highest level, with the greatest authority and of the widest scope.

93. The second consideration concerns an increase in the efforts to be made to restore the confidence of the peoples of the world and to prove to them that we are proceeding to a conference of this magnitude with sincere intentions.

94. I should like to emphasize the ending of the war in Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia; the withdrawal of foreign troops from occupied territories; the dissolution of military blocs and bases; the relieving of tensions; the ending of the policy of intimidation or aggression, either military or economic; the ending of military and economic assistance to South Africa and Rhodesia—aid which only perpetuates colonialism and racial discrimination; progress in the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security [resolution 2734 (XXV)]. Apart from this, we think that the conference must be prepared very carefully and the interest of the world be drawn to it.

95. The world disarmament conference should provide fresh impetus and offer fresh hopes to a disbelieving mankind. To many, general and complete disarmament has a Utopian sound—it seems like a dream of paradise far removed from reality. In the era of the fascists and nazis,

people came to glorify war; now one part of the world condemns it—another suffers from fatalism and apathy. In truth, mankind finds itself confronted with a terrible vicious circle: insecurity engenders the arms race, and in turn, the arms race feeds insecurity. In this way vast resources are wasted; scientific and technological discoveries are applied to perfect nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction; scientists and engineers participate directly or indirectly in war industries, while the whole of mankind lives either in terror or in conditions of hunger and poverty. The capitalist consortium of the war industry constitutes political and economic pressure groups while engaging in propaganda to justify the arms race, the maintenance of a policy of tension and aggression and resistance to the transforming of the industrial war machine into a national and international plan for peace. With irresistible logic we must go to the very root of the problem of disarmament, which is complicated and multi-faceted and must be tackled in all of its dimensions and in all its magnitude.

96. My delegation considers that an international forum such as that proposed by the Soviet Union, after proceeding to a detailed consideration of all the aspects of the problem, should reach a position where it has worked out urgent practical measures, not imposed by the majority vote of the conference, but rather accepted by all States, in order to attain the first stage along a long and winding road. The conference should also be the first step of important and continuing international negotiations. Many of the specific difficulties cannot be resolved in the heat of resonant recommendations but rather in terms of patience and serenity in subsequent conversations. We are convinced that a world disarmament conference could contribute to new forms of international relations in which the countries of the third world and the non-aligned countries will play an important role. Thus in the best possible terms we shall show the absolute need for peaceful coexistence as a prerequisite and the goal of disarmament, and disarmament as one of the fundamental conditions and one of the most likely prospects for overcoming the poverty, subjugation and injustice in which the major portion of mankind vegetates.

97. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation wishes to associate itself with all those other delegations that have taken the floor to congratulate the delegation of the Soviet Union on the very worthy initiative it took in requesting the inclusion in the agenda of the item now under consideration [A/8491]. The importance of the Soviet proposal has in fact been long apparent. I might remind the Assembly that our Minister for Foreign Affairs mentioned it in his statement during the general debate [1940th meeting], and yesterday in the First Committee the head of my delegation, Princess Ashraf Pahlavi, mentioned the Soviet proposal and said how highly we thought of it.

98. My delegation's position on the problem of disarmament is too well known for me to have to go over it again here. Besides, the debate on disarmament is now under way in the First Committee, and this is not the place to reopen it. May I simply recall that the intensification of the arms race is an alarming feature of our time. I should also like to

say that the results obtained thus far, despite their value and importance, fall far short of the needs.

99. In these circumstances, it is natural that we should welcome sympathetically any step which might help to bring about general and controlled disarmament.

100. It seems to us that the holding of a world disarmament conference would be a substantial step in that direction. In addition, in an age when weapons of mass destruction are being accumulated, such a conference can awaken world opinion and create a favourable climate for the promotion of practical solutions. Inaction and slow progress have created a bleak and ominous atmosphere which in the long run may prove harmful. The Secretary-General himself, in the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization, rightly emphasizes this when he says:

“As the years go by, a most unfortunate tendency appears to have developed for nations and peoples to be lulled into accepting the steadily mounting weapon stockpiles and the drastically escalating military budgets as tolerable features of modern life, or ones which they are incapable of changing.” [A/8401/Add.1, para. 46.]

101. A world conference may dispel that resignation. Furthermore, it may help to ease tensions and to strengthen international security. As my delegation has often repeated, the problem of disarmament cannot be solved without solving the problem of security, which is itself endangered by acts ranging from the use of brute force to that of insidious subversion.

102. For all the reasons I have mentioned my delegation considers it would be useful to hold a disarmament conference, but for the same reasons it would be unfortunate if a conference of this magnitude should fail to produce tangible results—if only as the beginnings of action. If a meeting of this kind should end in failure the already precarious confidence in the United Nations would receive a death blow.

103. Accordingly, we share the view of many other delegations as to the necessity for very careful preparation. And on this point we find very interesting the ideas developed the other day by the representative of Egypt taken up later by others, particularly the representatives of Sweden [1989th meeting] and this afternoon by Austria.

104. At the same time we must not lose sight of the fact that the conference should cover all categories of armaments, including nuclear weapons. Like other delegations, mine considers it necessary that all nuclear Powers should take an active part so as to spare the world the dangers of escalation in the nuclear arms race. But it is clear that all countries great and small must co-operate to achieve general and controlled disarmament—such as everyone desires—and also to stop the arms race, nuclear or conventional.

105. Furthermore, it does not seem to us to be desirable to scatter our disarmament efforts. In any event it would be disastrous to compromise work already under way, even if its results are minimal. Accordingly, my delegation feels

that any disarmament conference must be envisaged within the framework and under the auspices of the United Nations. With the presence of the representatives of the People's Republic of China in the Organization, the United Nations is truly tending towards universality—the universality that we have always wanted to achieve.

106. These are the comments my delegation wished to make at this stage. I know they are in line with much that has been said in the course of this debate, and we hope they will be borne in mind.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.

