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GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. FACK (Netherlands): Once again the General Assembly has before it the annual report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [A/8457] and, as on previous occasions, the Committee on Disarmament is in a position to record some welcome progress in the field of arms control and disarmament. My delegation, representing a State member of that Committee, cannot help feeling a modest measure of gratification at the success achieved this year and we are sure that other members of the Disarmament Committee tend to share this sentiment.

2. On the other hand, my delegation has no desire to fall victim to a sense of euphoria resulting from some limited success, or to lose sight of the world situation in the armament field as it presents itself to us today. Recent publications on the subject show that we are still living in a world replete with armaments and that the spread of arms all over the world through production and trade is still increasing instead of decreasing. Cold figures available to all of us assembled here should be enough to bring us all back to reality—if such a sobering step were necessary.

3. The expansion and modernization of nuclear weaponry and forces continue on a world-wide scale. The picture of the relationship between defence expenditures and national economies becomes increasingly disturbing. Many countries, including a number of developing States, are spending over five per cent of their gross national product on military defence.

4. Even though the picture I paint is fairly dismal, it is not my intention to belittle what has been achieved in the field of arms control. Nor do I want to sum up the positive results in this field achieved over the past decade. Those results are well known and they prove that we are on the right track. However, the road before us is long and arduous, and we shall need not only perseverance and imagination but also a great deal of confidence and ingenuity to move on towards our final goal.

5. I should like to say a few words about the encouraging events of the past year. Let me start with the general consensus achieved in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament on a draft convention on the prohibition of

the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and on their destruction [*ibid.*, *annex A*].

6. My delegation welcomes the new draft convention. My country was one of the sponsors of the draft convention submitted to the Disarmament Committee. We believe that its aims and objectives are worth-while and that its adoption would mean another step forward. The convention would, in fact, constitute a first real disarmament measure, implying at the same time the promise of possible further agreements on effective disarmament measures.

7. The draft convention stipulates clearly in its preamble the determination, for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of biological agents and toxins being used as weapons, thereby strengthening the Geneva Protocol of 1925.¹ There has been a lot of discussion in the Committee on Disarmament on the question whether the prohibitions of the Geneva Protocol have to be repeated in the present draft convention. Many delegations feared that such a repetition would undermine the Geneva Protocol. We for our part believe that the present draft is a useful compromise, because the text makes it abundantly clear that the draft convention is aiming at a complete banning of biological and toxin weapons, now and forever. We attach great importance in this respect to the inclusion of the words “never in any circumstances” in article I. This inclusion has been interpreted by the principal authors of the draft convention as meaning not only that the convention will remain valid in time of war but also that for the parties to the convention the reservations to the Geneva Protocol have lost their practical meaning. Mr. Leonard of the United States and Mr. Roschin of the Soviet Union made this clear in their statements to the Disarmament Committee on 28 September last [*CCD/PV.542*]. If this interpretation is adhered to by all parties to the convention—and we believe it should be—then we can say that we have reached the important understanding that, even for the purpose of retaliation, biological weapons remain forbidden weapons. That would mean an additional strengthening, in our view, of the Geneva Protocol.

8. Article V of the draft convention deals with the question of how to solve problems which may arise in relation to the objective of, or in the application of the provisions of the draft convention. We believe that the addition of the words “in relation to the objective of” is a useful one, because it gives a broad scope to the undertaking of the parties to the convention to consult one another and to co-operate. Article V also opens the possibility of effecting consultation and co-operation through the intermediary of a third party or organ, which might even embrace a procedure for impartial fact-finding prior to recourse to the Security Council in accordance with article VI. We would have preferred the principle of separation of the functions of investigation and political judgement to be incorporated in article VI. Such a procedure could also avoid complaints becoming political and perhaps incriminating at an early stage.

9. An important feature of the draft convention, which we are pleased to see included, is the assistance clause of article VII. Assistance should be available to a party which, in abiding by the prohibitions of the draft convention, becomes vulnerable to dangers as a result of a violation of the convention.

10. We attach particular importance to article IX, containing the obligation to continue negotiations in good faith with a view to reaching early agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of the production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. For a variety of reasons, the risks of proliferation of chemical weapons and of their actual use constitute a more serious threat than those of biological weapons. An effective prohibition of the production and possession of chemical weapons will be the best possible strengthening of the ban on their use as embodied in the Geneva Protocol. Accordingly, we share the conviction laid down in the joint memorandum of the group of 12 non-aligned countries [*A/8457, annex C, sect. 33*] that the Committee on Disarmament should proceed with the task of elaborating, as a high priority item, agreed provisions for such a prohibition. As a member of the Disarmament Committee my country will make its contribution towards achieving that aim.

11. In concluding my remarks on the draft convention on biological weapons, I want to express the hope that it will receive the unanimous approval of the General Assembly. That would be a clear demonstration of our joint will and ability to achieve concrete results in the Disarmament Decade we have just entered.

12. The report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to the General Assembly devotes a special and substantial part to the question of a treaty banning underground nuclear weapon tests. My delegation is happy with this innovation which it regards as a response to the request of the General Assembly, in resolution 2663 (XXV), to submit to the Assembly at its twenty-sixth session a special report on the result of the deliberations of the Conference on that question.

13. Obviously, the General Assembly's request for a special report was born out of a feeling of impatience over our continued failure to achieve a comprehensive test ban. We must admit that this failure is one of the most frustrating aspects of the disarmament efforts of our time. As we all know, negotiations for the cessation of nuclear weapon tests started as far back as 1958. It took almost five years before they produced their first, and so far only, result: the partial test ban Treaty,² signed in Moscow in August 1963. This Treaty had the avowed character of an interim measure, and the signatories pledged their determination to seek to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time. Yet, more than eight years have passed since the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty without success in achieving a comprehensive test ban. While this Committee has talked year after year about what it calls “the urgent need” of a complete test ban, the world has been an uneasy witness to the continuous testing

¹ Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV, 1929, No. 2138).

² Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 480 (1963), No. 6964).

of nuclear devices. The significance of the Moscow Treaty itself as an arms control measure was thus gradually eroded.

14. Even recently, both the Soviet Union and the United States have thought it necessary to test nuclear weapons in the multi-megaton range. Those tests demonstrate that the qualitative arms race in the field of strategic weapons is going on. This is a state of affairs which my Government deeply regrets. Years ago we spoke of the dangerous fact that developments in the technology of armaments were taking shape which, unless checked in time, could lead to a new escalation in the strategic nuclear arms race and even diminish world security by upsetting the precarious equilibrium of deterrence. Moreover, we have said more than once that, in the long run, it will be hard to prevent a horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons if the vertical proliferation of existing nuclear arsenals is not curbed. In this context I wish to express the expectation of my Government that the nuclear weapon Powers, in deciding on the carrying out of test explosions, will give full attention to the arms control aspects involved, such as the possible implications which a continuation of the qualitative strategic arms race may have for the endeavours towards non-proliferation of nuclear armaments.

15. I should like to re-state here my Government's basic attitude to the problem of a comprehensive test ban. I need not stress the urgency of halting nuclear weapon tests in all environments by all States. That is our common starting point, I hope. However, success has been blocked over the years by different views on the problem of verifying such a ban. The position of the Netherlands with regard to this problem is based essentially on the following considerations.

16. First, none of the proposed verification systems would make it possible to identify all types of underground nuclear explosions; secondly, when discussing requirements for a comprehensive test ban, both seismic and non-seismic observation possibilities have to be taken into account; thirdly, the principal aim of verification is deterrence of evasion; fourthly, the possibility of on-site inspection can enhance deterrence; and fifthly, the risks that may arise from the partial evasion of a test ban by a rival Power have to be weighed against the risks arising from the continuation of underground tests without restriction.

17. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has held ample discussions on the technical aspects of the verification problem. The seismological capabilities for the detection and identification of underground explosions now seem to be explored to an extent which makes it doubtful whether essentially new insights can be gained by further continuation of the scientific debate. In addition, the always thorny issue of on-site inspections has been scaled down to a problem of more modest dimensions. The range of nuclear explosions in regard to which on-site inspections could be of practical value has shrunk significantly and would do so even more after the installation of special seismic instruments. If this is correct, the test ban problem now lends itself to a political rather than a technical approach. Therefore, we think that the time has come for the Powers most directly concerned to make such political decisions as are needed in order to achieve the speedy conclusion of an international agreement for the

prohibition of underground nuclear weapon tests. Indeed, we fervently hope that such an agreement will be reached within a year from now.

18. As to the question of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, my delegation holds the opinion that this question should not be allowed to hamper or delay the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting underground nuclear weapon tests. Putting a brake on the technological arms race has an evident priority over the development of the peaceful application of nuclear explosions. In view of the present state of such development, which still seems to be of an experimental character, we favour a separate agreement on peaceful nuclear explosions to be negotiated after the completion of a treaty banning underground testing for weapons purposes. Such a separate agreement would not only have to be in strict conformity with all relevant provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*]; it would also have to contain guarantees to minimize the danger of peaceful nuclear explosions being used for the purpose of weapons development.

19. I now turn to the talks between the two principal nuclear weapon Powers on the limitation of their strategic armaments. Two years have passed since the United States and the Soviet Union entered into those Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) negotiations. So far those talks have resulted in two collateral agreements, one on preventing nuclear accidents from leading to war, the other on improving the "hot line" communications between Washington and Moscow. As to the substance of arms limitation itself, the two Governments reached a procedural arrangement in May to the effect that they would concentrate during 1971 on working out an agreement for the limitation of the deployment of antiballistic missile systems as well as certain measures with respect to the limitation of offensive strategic weapons. My delegation does not fail to appreciate these developments on their own merits. Nor are we unaware of the problems that have to be tackled in negotiations on such a vital and complex issue as the mutually acceptable ratio of nuclear forces between the two Powers directly involved. On the other hand, we cannot but note with some sense of desolation that, while negotiations are going on in Helsinki and Vienna, the nuclear arms race sustains its rapid pace. We therefore hope that the SALT discussions, which have been resumed recently, will in due course lead to effective arrangements limiting the further build-up of strategic arsenals.

20. The Fourth International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy held at Geneva in September 1971 was a clear manifestation of the important role which nuclear power continues to play. This also highlights the growing importance of the application of safeguards under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

21. We feel gratified at the constructive work of the Safeguards Committee, which was created last year by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and which succeeded this year in making unanimous recommendations on the agreements to be negotiated and concluded under article III of the non-proliferation Treaty. This remarkable achievement has greatly facilitated the task of the parties to the negotia-

tions. Recently representatives of the European Commission, together with representatives of the five European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) countries signatories to the non-proliferation Treaty, entered into negotiations with the Secretariat of IAEA on an agreement that should enable the Agency to provide assurance that no diversion of nuclear material is taking place in those five countries. My delegation is convinced that, starting from the recommendations of the Safeguards Committee, it will prove possible to draw up an agreement that will enable the Agency to carry out this responsibility exactly as adequately as it should with regard to other parties to the non-proliferation Treaty.

22. Turning now to matters of a regional character, I should like to touch upon the question of mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe. Members of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact have now declared their readiness to discuss the possibility of force reductions in this region. The NATO countries concerned, including my own, recently appointed a representative to conduct exploratory talks with the Government of the Soviet Union and other interested Governments. This decision reflects the belief they expressed last June in Lisbon that reduction of the military confrontation in Europe is essential for increased security and stability. It is satisfying to note that the possibility of bringing this about seems to be more real now than at any other time in, say, the last 20 years. My delegation expresses the hope that the exploratory talks will soon begin and that they will eventually lead to successful negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions.

23. Another regional project in which my Government is directly involved is the denuclearization of Latin America. On 26 July last the Kingdom of the Netherlands deposited its instrument of ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,³ thereby accepting the Treaty's statute of denuclearization for Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles, in accordance with the wishes expressed by these two autonomous parts of the Kingdom that are situated within the area concerned.

24. A new item on our agenda is the proposal of Ceylon [A/8492 and Add.1] to declare the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. We feel sympathy for every effort to diminish tension in the world and in certain areas. My delegation is inclined to think that it would be not only in the interest of the regional Powers but of many other countries as well if a competitive build-up of rival forces in and around the Indian Ocean could be avoided. We are therefore prepared to approach the initiative of Ceylon in a constructive spirit. However, its subject matter is, in our view, too complicated and far-reaching to allow the General Assembly to arrive at a mature decision during its present session. It should in our view be left to the countries involved to study the whole range of possible military restraints that would preserve and guarantee a stable and secure situation in the Indian Ocean area. Such a prudent course of action has also been taken by the General Assembly in the case of the denuclearization of Latin America. At its eighteenth session the Assembly, in resolution 1911 (XVIII), merely took note of the initiative

of a number of Latin American countries and expressed the hope that the States in that region would initiate studies as they deemed appropriate concerning the measures that should be agreed upon with a view to achieving the aims expressed by the Latin American countries. With this example in mind and in view also of some highly controversial aspects of the Ceylonese proposal, we believe that it would not be wise to press for a decision by the General Assembly.

25. A few weeks ago we received the report of the Secretary-General on the economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its harmful effects on world peace and security [A/8469 and Add.1]. We feel indebted to the expert consultants who assisted the Secretary-General in the preparation of the report and we welcome the fact that they succeeded in reaching unanimous conclusions. There is little point in quoting from this impressive document. No doubt it will receive broad and general publicity. In our view, such publicity would be particularly useful, as public awareness of what is at stake—not only in relation to world peace and security but, I would like to stress, also with regard to the problems we are facing in the context of the Second Development Decade—may lead to greater support for all disarmament efforts and to a common understanding that the threat of ultimate disaster generated by the arms race is, as the report says in paragraph 112, “by far the most dangerous single peril the world faces today—far more dangerous than poverty or disease, far more dangerous than either the population explosion or pollution”.

26. In general, my delegation believes it to be useful and even indispensable that the public at large should be well aware of the relevant developments in the field of arms control and disarmament. In this respect, I should like to pay tribute to the Secretariat, which has provided us not only with an up-to-date revision of the well known publication *The United Nations and Disarmament*,⁴ but which has also prepared new publications in this field. One of them, called *Basic Problems of Disarmament*,⁵ is a recent publication containing the three reports prepared at the request of the General Assembly in the 1960s with the assistance of highly qualified consultant experts from many countries. Another publication is a booklet called *Disarmament: Imperative of Peace*,⁶ which relates in a nutshell the activities of the United Nations in the disarmament field from 1959 to 1970. In this context I should like to mention that my Government attaches much value to the information of the Netherlands public concerning questions of disarmament, security and peace. Periodically, my Government publishes extensive documentation on the developments in this field. This month it will publish a review of the developments during the period 1969-1970, comprising a descriptive review of 90 pages followed by nearly 200 pages of documentation, such as treaties, proposals, working documents, speeches, and so on. Furthermore, my Government has published Netherlands translations of the reports of the Secretary-General on nuclear weapons and on chemical and biological weapons, and it will no doubt also publish a Netherlands translation of the

³ Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634 (1968), No. 9068).

⁴ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.70.IX.1.

⁵ *Idem*, Sales No. E.70.I.14.

⁶ *Idem*, Sales No. E.70.I.27.

recent report on the economic and social consequences of the arms race.

27. In conclusion, I should like to revert to my initial observation. We are a member of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and, as such, we feel a small measure of gratification at the modest advances made this year in the field of arms control and disarmament. Certain well-known factors have had an inhibiting effect on our efforts, but in view of a recent, extremely important decision of the General Assembly, my delegation is hopeful that those factors are now to lose their validity and that a brighter period lies ahead of us. Both here and in the Conference—and indeed in any other forum—my Government is prepared to contribute to the best of its ability.

28. Mr. TSEGHE (Ethiopia): Inasmuch as I am speaking in this Committee for the first time during the current session of the General Assembly, I find it a most agreeable duty to welcome your election to preside over and guide our deliberations. Representatives who have spoken before me having already lauded in eloquent terms your particular competence for the task, I am afraid there is hardly anything left for me to add, except to associate my delegation fully with what has been so aptly expressed. But I might be permitted to add that the decorum and seriousness of purpose with which our discussions have been conducted heretofore are clear testimony to the confidence which we have all, fortunately, reposed in your person.

29. My delegation also wishes to extend its sincere congratulations to Mr. Ramphul, the Vice-Chairman and to Mr. Migliuolo, our Rapporteur. My delegation is convinced that in you, Mr. Chairman, and your colleagues in the Bureau, we have a strong working team which, to say the least, augurs well for the constructive and effective discharge of the important duties of this Committee.

30. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I should like, at this juncture, to express, in the name of the Ethiopian delegation, a few words of warm welcome to the first representatives of the People's Republic of China in the First Committee. It is a fact that my Government has for a very long time felt that the absence of the representatives of that great people from the counsels of nations had deprived the international community of the benefits of their proverbial wisdom. Their taking up of their rightful place in our midst just as we embark on the discussion of disarmament items and during the first year of the Disarmament Decade is, in the view of my delegation, particularly symbolic. At long last, our discussion of disarmament items and the other common problems can now have wider participation and, hence, become even more meaningful. It is also our ardent hope that the representatives of the People's Republic of China will contribute their fair share towards resolving all outstanding international problems.

31. In my participation in the debate on agenda items 27 to 31, relating to disarmament matters, I propose to speak briefly on some of the items in the order in which they were outlined by you, Mr. Chairman, at the 1803rd meeting of the Committee. On this basis, the first item I should come to grips with is "General and complete disarmament:

report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament".

32. Careful scrutiny of that section of document A/8457, devoted especially to general and complete disarmament, does not, unfortunately, reveal any substantial progress towards that ever-elusive objective of general and complete disarmament. Twenty-six years after the founding of the United Nations and almost a decade after the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament first convened in Geneva, it would seem somewhat ironic that that Committee should be unable to make much progress vis-à-vis general and complete disarmament. But perhaps some of the reasons are not far to seek.

33. While the sequence of cause and effect may often be open to controversy, I think most people will agree that the prevailing international situation—the cold war, the mutual distrust and suspicion between Power groupings and the resultant antagonisms and distrust—have only too often vitiated genuine progress towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament. What little has been accomplished in the 1960s in the field of certain collateral and partial arms control measures, though significant and a welcome development, is, of course, very far from the objective of general and complete disarmament.

34. It was the realization of this persistent deadlock as regards a comprehensive programme for disarmament which prompted a number of delegations in the Conference to voice their concern and to recommend certain positive actions. The First Committee needs to devote particular attention to those proposals with a view to generating a new momentum. Of the various suggestions which were advanced in the last session of the Conference in Geneva the Ethiopian delegation finds at least three commendable for closer examination and possible action by the General Assembly at its current session.

35. The Indian delegation, for example, had suggested, among other matters, that it would be useful if the Soviet Union and the United States were to submit revised draft treaties on general and complete disarmament. My delegation considers this suggestion very sound, perhaps with some necessary modifications.

36. The Italian suggestion to the effect that the Conference should, in the main, concentrate on general and complete disarmament at its next session is, we believe, an equally constructive proposal.

37. Yet a third suggestion which must be taken into consideration is the one made by the delegation of Romania to start negotiations for the drafting of an actual treaty on general and complete disarmament.

38. My delegation considers the time opportune to make a move towards definite measures of disarmament rather than to restrict ourselves to measures of arms prevention and limitation alone. The time the super-Powers have devoted to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) will, we hope, act as a basis for greater mutual trust and understanding. If, coupled with this, the People's Republic of China should be ready to make its contribution and France should resume its active participation in the Conference, we

are convinced that we could start to move in the right direction. We believe this is a must, because the sooner we start work on a comprehensive programme of disarmament the better we shall have taken advantage of the relatively improved atmosphere in international relations.

39. Moreover, while some partial measures have been achieved in the field of nuclear tests in certain environments, it is an open secret that the accumulation and sophistication of conventional weapons proceeds undeterred. We fear that this situation is unlikely to be checked except within measures of a programme for comprehensive disarmament under effective international control and inspection.

40. To conclude this part of my statement, I should like to borrow the words of Secretary-General U Thant in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization, in which he says:

“There is much work to be done in both the nuclear and conventional fields. If momentum is to be maintained during the Disarmament Decade, and indeed it must be not only maintained but increased, then simultaneous consideration must be given to more than one or two disarmament measures at a time. Progress should be made in respect of collateral measures leading towards the goal of general and complete disarmament.”⁷

41. Let us, therefore, at least achieve something concrete in the field of general and complete disarmament during the current Disarmament Decade.

42. One positive development of the 1971 session of the Conference was obviously the formulation of a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological and toxin weapons and on their destruction. The text of this draft convention appears as annex A to the report of the Conference.

43. The Committee on Disarmament and its Co-Chairmen certainly deserve our appreciation for the efforts exerted to expedite agreement on this particularly vital field of arms control. But before I proceed any further in my observations on this item, I beg the Committee's indulgence to explain briefly the position of my Government.

44. Ever since the United Kingdom representatives proposed, both here and in Geneva, that a separate agreement should be attempted on bacteriological weapons—that is to say, leaving the question of chemical weapons to future negotiations—my Government has had serious reservations and misgivings on the matter. These reservations and misgivings arose out of our deep, fundamental concern and anxiety.

45. As everyone knows, the Geneva Protocol of 1925,⁸ which is still binding on the parties, prohibits the use in war of both bacteriological and chemical weapons. Much as that

Protocol failed to spare my own people the horrors of chemical warfare, my Government none the less felt that the conclusion of a new international agreement on bacteriological weapons, to the exclusion of chemical weapons, would tend to undermine the all-inclusive Geneva Protocol.

46. For this reason we suggested in this Committee and in Geneva that it would be far more useful and more effective if the Geneva Protocol were to be re-enforced. To this end we suggested and pleaded two courses of action. First, that the Protocol of 1925 should gain universal adherence and, secondly, where the Protocol could be considered insufficient for the exigencies of our era, that it should be re-enforced and strengthened by a supplementary instrument, for example, an additional or supplementary Protocol.

47. Our preference for such a step was no less motivated by the frustrating experience of the partial test ban Treaty⁹ and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*]. In spite of the fact that both these Treaties were, at the time of their conclusion, believed to be only preludes to a total test ban agreement in all environments, to our profound regret some eight years after the conclusion of the partial test ban Treaty we seem to be no nearer to reaching a total test ban agreement in all environments. Much as we realize the difficulties, real and imagined, in the way of a total test ban treaty, it is none the less ironic that both Treaties should have obliged the nuclear Powers to pursue in good faith negotiations towards an agreement for the reduction and subsequent elimination of nuclear weapons. And yet we have not, up to now, even managed to achieve the total ban on test explosions.

48. Nor is this all. Even as we struggle against odds for the total ban on test explosions, two nuclear Powers, not being parties to the partial test ban Treaty, are at liberty to carry on their test explosions in all environments. Our misgivings concerning the usefulness of a separate convention on bacteriological and toxin weapons, to the exclusion of chemical weapons, were therefore founded on real experience and genuine apprehensions.

49. However, there was neither the mood nor the will to learn a lesson from the hard facts of experience and to tackle the more complex problem by way of negotiating an agreement on the prohibition and destruction of both bacteriological and chemical weapons. As a result, the Ethiopian representatives in the Committee on Disarmament had little option but to co-operate in the negotiation of the draft convention now before the Committee.

50. The present draft convention obviously leaves much to be desired. On the other hand, when we consider that it was essentially an outcome of mutual accommodation and compromise, it strikes us as a sound instrument as far as it goes. Some of its preambular paragraphs reaffirm the continuing validity of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, while one paragraph contains the now familiar promise to the

⁷ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 1A*, para. 192.

⁸ Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV, 1929, No. 2138).

⁹ Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 480 (1963), No. 6964).

effect that the present convention represents a first possible step towards the achievement of agreement on effective measures also for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons.

51. To the extent that the part I have quoted from the text of the draft convention is ambiguous, I must frankly state that our misgivings are not completely allayed. In this respect, I should make particular reference to the joint memorandum of the non-aligned countries in the Committee on Disarmament, presented to the Committee on 28 September 1971 [A/8457, annex C, sect. 33]. This joint memorandum stresses in no uncertain terms the immense importance and urgency of reaching agreement on the elimination of chemical weapons and offers the essential elements for negotiation. As a representative of Ethiopia in this Committee, and in view of our continuing apprehensions, it is my duty to urge that action should be taken on the joint memorandum of the non-aligned countries during the current session of the General Assembly.

52. Furthermore, the non-aligned group in Geneva did not limit its initiative to the joint memorandum alone. Together, the representatives of the group have submitted detailed amendments [*ibid.*, sect. 23 and 28] to the initial draft convention, and we are happy to note that some of those amendments are incorporated in the present draft before the Committee. But two key amendments were not accepted. The first is the one pertaining to the savings which would accrue from measures in the disarmament field. This amendment, which was proposed for insertion in the preamble of the draft convention, merely sought to ensure that the savings derived from disarmament measures would be devoted to promoting economic and social development, particularly in the developing countries. The second amendment sought to redraft the text of article IX in the present draft convention. The intention of the redrafting was no more than to obtain a definite commitment from each State Party to the Convention with regard to the speedy elimination of chemical weapons.

53. These amendments were, unfortunately, not incorporated in the text of the present draft convention. In both instances, the non-aligned countries were only endeavouring to do their utmost to strengthen the draft convention at its very formulation and thus give the final convention broader purpose and render it more effective. In the circumstances, my delegation ventures to suggest that this Committee should not lose sight of the spirit of these amendments.

54. In turning my attention to agenda item 29, I must at the outset stress the fact that my delegation attaches no less importance to a comprehensive test ban agreement than to the elimination for all time of bacteriological and chemical weapons from military arsenals. We attach equal and compelling urgency to both types of disarmament measures because both are comparable in their indiscriminately disastrous consequences. In terms of annihilating potentiality and horrifying effect, I should like to think that none of us would have a preference for one over the other. Also in terms of the security and well-being of mankind, they are at once the source of the continuing insecurity and the cause of an enormous drain of resources, albeit in different proportions, which could best be utilized to alleviate the misery of the millions on this planet who are in dire need of the most basic requirements of life.

55. It is with this conviction that the Ethiopian delegation has carefully studied and considered the various approaches made in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to the urgent necessity of a comprehensive test ban agreement.

56. The special report of the Conference on the question of a treaty banning underground nuclear weapon tests [A/8457, part III] contains a number of constructive ideas. The suggestions which were advanced during the general discussion on a comprehensive test ban surely deserve serious consideration by all the nuclear weapon Powers. Suggestions such as a phasing-out period for nuclear weapon tests, advanced by Sweden, the threshold approach, the possible need for interim measures or restraints are but some of the constructive ideas which have emerged during the last session of the Conference.

57. As regards the threshold approach, the Ethiopian representative on the Conference has already indicated in Geneva a possible difficulty inherent in such an approach. In substance, the view as expressed at the 498th meeting of the Conference was that a threshold approach might lead to a situation in which tests for the perfection of smaller nuclear weapons could continue for a long time to come. It is our view that a standstill of test explosions which is limited to the larger-yield nuclear weapons alone will not solve the basic problem. What will solve the problem is obviously the total cessation of all test explosions for weapons purposes.

58. In their statements in this Committee at the 1827th meeting, the representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States remarked on recent developments in the field of seismic detection devices. But in the same statements they also reiterated their respective positions in regard to verification.

59. One side is of the view that, to reach agreement on the banning of underground nuclear tests, a minimum number of on-site inspections is indispensable.

60. The other side maintains that, in view of spectacular advances achieved in seismology, there is absolutely no need for on-site inspections: that national means of verification are quite sufficient.

61. Let us face it, and face it squarely. This divergent standpoint of the two nuclear Powers has been the rock on which all proposals for the underground test ban have been shattered. The ingenious "black box" devices, the ideas for inspection by challenge, resort to the Security Council and a detection club—all these constructive suggestions have heretofore failed to move the Powers from their long-held divergent positions. At one stage there had, of course, appeared some hope that an agreement could be arrived at on a minimum number of on-site inspections acceptable to both sides.

62. The reiteration of past positions during the current debate would therefore seem to have serious implications—indeed, constitute a setback—for the disarmament effort. As such, this new development must remain a grave concern to the entire membership of the United Nations. This is so because it would be naïve to think that any meaningful progress can be made towards general and complete

disarmament so long as the impasse on verification methods for a comprehensive test ban persists.

63. Time and again it has been stated in these halls that the security of nations and international security cannot be totally guaranteed by the awesome weapons amassed in the arsenals of the few. We are confident that the great Powers are amongst the first to recognize this reality. Moreover, the great Powers also cannot be oblivious of their immense responsibilities towards their own peoples and towards humanity at large. In the circumstances, a breakthrough must be found somehow out of the present deadlock. This could perhaps be best achieved through bilateral talks and within the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. The knowledge that the fate of humanity is in their hands must surely generate a greater spirit of mutual accommodation in the consideration of this basic problem.

64. Having said this, I should like to turn now to agenda item 32, which concerns the report of the Secretary-General on the economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security, contained in document A/8469 and Add.1. In this connexion, the Ethiopian delegation would like to take the liberty of expressing its gratitude to Secretary-General U Thant and the Group of Consultant Experts who have assisted him in the preparation of this invaluable report. To Mr. Chacko, who served as Chairman of the Group and whom we are fortunate to have as Secretary of the First Committee, we extend our special appreciation.

65. My delegation has found the report at once instructive in content and revealing in its depth. Because the report is so lucid in its analysis of the subject and in its conclusions, it would indeed be presumptuous of me to attempt a full appraisal of its contents. Nevertheless I should like, if I may, to dwell briefly on some of its salient features.

66. In chapter I, paragraph 9 of the report we are informed that, over the period 1961 to 1970, the estimated total for world military expenditures is the staggering sum of \$1,870 thousand million, at 1970 prices. In paragraph 24 it is pointed out that, during the decade under consideration, annual military expenditures "have increased more than \$50 thousand million to reach the present level of about \$200 thousand million". We are also informed that the figure quoted for last year "represents between 6 and 6.5 per cent of the total of world gross national product".

67. In terms of diversion of funds from other beneficial purposes—for example, economic and social development—the implication is so astoundingly clear and precise that it hardly requires any elaboration. It simply means that during the last decade mankind was denied the benefits which would accrue from the investment of \$1,870 thousand million for peaceful purposes. Nor should it be difficult to uncover the discrepancy between the funds which have been made available in the same period, through the United Nations, towards the amelioration of living conditions on our planet and the figure I have just quoted.

68. At this juncture it is pertinent that I should quote paragraph 5 of the introduction to the report. It reads:

"By far the largest part of the total of military expenditures which is devoted to equipment is, however,

consumed in the development, production and purchase of conventional weapons such as aircraft, tanks and guns, the weapons which have been used in the wars which have marred this last decade. This generalization applies as much to the nuclear Powers as to the non-nuclear States."

69. When the paragraph I have just quoted is correlated with the contents of chapter IV of the report, the adverse effects of the arms race, particularly on developing countries, are written clearly on the wall. The point to which I should like to draw attention is presented in a nutshell in paragraph 67 of the report:

"What all this means in terms of the denial of alternative opportunities is revealed clearly in an economic study on 44 developing countries over the period 1951 to 1965. This indicated that that part of their military expenditures which went to procurement diverted domestic and foreign resources equivalent to about 4 per cent of their gross capital formation. A reduction in military expenditure would permit at least part of this to serve the purposes of investment."

70. The text I have read speaks for itself, so that any elaboration on my part would be superfluous. It is a grave injustice that the developing countries should have to pay such a high price for the arms race, which is literally forced upon them by others, who, incidentally, happen to be able to afford the luxury. It is totally unfair that they should have to sacrifice and suffer so much, simply because they are caught in the viciousness of the arms race, which is not, in the first place, of their own making or choice. How much more of their meagre resources they have continued to sacrifice on the altars of the demon—that is, the arms race—since 1966 is, of course, anybody's guess. And if anyone had any doubts about the grave consequences of the arms race on all aspects of human life, surely the death knell of those doubts is clearly sounded by the sombre facts presented in the document to which I have referred briefly.

71. But what does all this mean? It means that the arms race, coupled with the very slow progress of disarmament negotiations, poses a serious threat to the future of mankind. Indeed, the danger of the very extinction of all that has been achieved throughout the ages—and the extinction of man himself—continues to be poised perilously over all our heads like the sword of Damocles.

72. What are we to do? When faced with grave danger, man has often risen to great heights of courage and action. Can we afford to fail to respond to a similar challenge?

73. What the entire membership of the United Nations will be able to achieve during the present Disarmament Decade to avert the common danger, to reverse the arms race, to attain the objective of general and complete disarmament, to reallocate the resources released from disarmament for development purposes must inevitably be determined by the measure of our own courage and will to survive and ensure the well-being of generations yet unborn.

74. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I should like to inform the members of the Committee that the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution on the question of the prohibition of chemical

and bacteriological (biological) weapons, contained in document A/C.1/L.580: Costa Rica, Honduras, Iceland, Jordan, Kuwait, Liberia, Malta, Nicaragua and Rwanda. Further, Malaysia wishes to become a sponsor of the draft resolution on the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons contained in document A/C.1/L.579, and the holding of the conference for the prohibition of the manufacture of such weapons.

75. A meeting of this Committee will be held tomorrow. So far there are three speakers on the list to speak on the question of disarmament. I am making this announcement early in the day because I hope I shall be able to persuade other representatives to speak tomorrow and so enable us to continue with our work. Some speakers are already on the list for Monday.

76. I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

77. Sir Laurence McINTYRE (Australia): There is little doubt that the series of items on the subject of disarmament that we are now considering include some of the more important issues on the agenda of this General Assembly. Because of the close relationship that exists between the work we are doing and the security of all of us, nations and peoples, and because national security is a prime concern of all Governments represented here, it is important that we should resist any temptation to regard our work on disarmament as an academic exercise, to be gone through each year as a routine prescribed by our agenda. On the contrary, the problems of arms control and disarmament, closely interwoven as they are with the whole fabric of national and international policy, clearly demand the most careful attention of all of us in this Committee.

78. This year we are having a disarmament debate with a difference. The difference, I need hardly say, is that the People's Republic of China is now seated in the United Nations and in this Committee. This means that for the first time the five nuclear weapon Powers are represented here. This, we may hope, will give us the chance to open a new door in our search for further effective measures of arms control.

79. Along with many other Governments, my Government has always felt that the nuclear weapon Powers, if only because they have developed what is at present the ultimate in weapons of mass destruction, have a special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and for this reason we consider that the People's Republic of China, as both a nuclear Power and the possessor of very large conventional forces, has a potential role of particular magnitude to play in our combined efforts to negotiate further effective measures of arms control that can be truly universal in their application.

80. In echoing the words of welcome already expressed by you, Mr. Chairman, and by other delegations to the representatives of the People's Republic of China, I should like to suggest that it is perhaps an omen for the future that the first subject to be debated in this Committee after they have taken their seat should be that of disarmament. We listened with great interest to the comments on disarmament in the course of the statement made by the representative of China in the General Assembly on

15 November [1983rd plenary meeting], and we hope that we may have some further amplification of these views during our current debate.

81. For the moment, my delegation would like to express the hope that we shall be able to create in the United Nations conditions in which the peoples of the world can look forward more confidently to accelerated progress towards the solution of problems of arms control and disarmament. But I can only repeat that, in the view of my Government, this will require from all the five Powers which are at once the nuclear Powers and the permanent members of the Security Council a full acceptance of their responsibilities in the field of disarmament, and with it a new and genuine spirit of co-operation and leadership.

82. Let me now refer briefly to the individual agenda items that we are invited to apply ourselves to in this debate; and I should like to speak first about chemical and bacteriological weapons—which we all know as “CBW”. With the advances made in science and technology in recent years, it has come to be increasingly recognized, as we all know, that the Geneva Protocol of 1925,¹⁰ historic and immensely valuable as it is, may no longer be entirely adequate as a means of eliminating the horrifying potential of chemical and biological methods of waging war. It is this recognition that has stimulated a searching and continuing debate, here in the United Nations, in the Committee on Disarmament and elsewhere, in an effort to devise further internationally agreed constraints against the development of a frightening category of weapons of mass destruction.

83. Although not a member of the Committee on Disarmament, where the detailed work of negotiation has taken place, Australia has supported these efforts wholeheartedly. We have approached the subject as a party to the Geneva Protocol, which we have been concerned to maintain as an effective instrument of international law demanding universal respect and support. To us it has seemed that there are two major difficulties in the way of negotiating any further instrument or instruments to reinforce and supplement the prohibitions laid down in the Geneva Protocol: first, the definition of the materials that would be covered, and second, the nature of the verification procedures. We have seen an essential link between these two problems, which is that the lower we set the threshold of prohibition, the greater will be the problems of verification.

84. The debate on these problems over the past two years brought to the surface important differences of approach. On the one hand, the United Kingdom, with support from some other countries, felt that it would be better to proceed by seeking first a prohibition of biological weapons of warfare, and to tackle later the more difficult problem of chemical warfare, which raises some problems of a different dimension. On the other hand, we had in the past the arguments of Eastern European and other representatives in the Committee on Disarmament in favour of treating both subjects together in a single convention.

¹⁰ Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV, 1929, No. 2138).

85. Against this background it is therefore all the more welcome that in its report this year in document A/8457, the Committee on Disarmament has been able to send to the Assembly for consideration a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons. In addition, the draft convention contains articles stating that it shall not be interpreted as in any way limiting or detracting from the provisions of the Geneva Protocol, and that parties to the convention would undertake to continue negotiations on prohibitions against chemical weapons. In the view of my delegation, this amounts to a very satisfactory step forward. I might recall that when speaking in this debate at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, I said that my delegation inclined towards an approach whereby we might work for a biological convention, on the understanding that efforts to deal effectively with chemical warfare would proceed independently and with appropriate urgency. We felt then that it might be possible to reach a consensus on a workable biological agreement, whereas if we were to wait for an instrument covering both chemical and biological warfare we might have to wait for a long time.

86. At this stage my delegation would like to make only two brief comments on the draft convention as it has emerged from the Committee on Disarmament. The first, in regard to article II, is that we consider it particularly important that stockpiled agents and materials should be disposed of in a manner that would cause no harm to the environment. We would prefer, if necessary, to have an extension of the nine-month time-scale for such disposal, so as to ensure that the environment does not suffer. The second comment, in respect of article VI, is that we feel that the Secretary-General would provide a better medium than the Security Council for investigation of disputes, and we see force in the views expressed by the representative of Ghana on this point at the 1829th meeting.

87. Subject to these comments, my delegation supports the draft biological convention and considers that the Assembly should adopt a resolution commending the convention to Governments for signature. This would enable us to look forward with renewed hope towards agreement on further effective controls over chemical methods of warfare.

88. A study of the proceedings in the Committee on Disarmament this year would seem to indicate that a number of countries have been expressing an increasing degree of frustration and, if I may say so, impatience at the inability of the Committee to make substantive progress towards agreement on a prohibition of underground nuclear testing to complement the provisions of the limited test ban Treaty of 1963.¹¹ As a littoral country of the Pacific Ocean, where nuclear tests have again taken place in the atmosphere this year—in disregard, I may say, of the bulk of world opinion as expressed in the limited test ban Treaty—Australia, as a party to that Treaty, maintains its opposition to atmospheric nuclear testing and its support for a comprehensive ban, effectively verified, on the testing

of nuclear weapons in all environments. At the same time, we would not want any comprehensive ban on nuclear weapon testing to prevent the conduct of *bona fide* nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

89. We are given to understand that the main obstacle to the conclusion of a ban on underground nuclear testing rests on differences of opinion between the major Powers regarding the means of verifying compliance with such a prohibition. Apparently the year under review has seen little progress in the direction of bridging this gap. In accordance with resolution 2663 (XXV), the Committee on Disarmament has presented to the Assembly this year a special report on the question of a treaty banning underground nuclear weapon tests [A/8457, part III]. This report indicates that, with the aim of narrowing differences of view within the Committee, several members have put forward ideas which they hope might open the way eventually to agreement on such a treaty. Their proposals fall essentially under three headings: threshold or partial test ban measures, interim measures or restraints, and international co-operation in the exchange of seismic data.

90. The report of the Committee on this subject is a valuable one, and my delegation would like to express its appreciation to those States whose representatives have obviously worked diligently and imaginatively to develop proposals that could smooth the path to agreement on a complete halt to nuclear weapon testing in any environment. We might note with some regret, however, that the Committee seems to have been able to reach only a brief and general conclusion to the effect that it would take into consideration in its future work the discussion of possible approaches to a treaty banning underground testing and the various proposals put forward during the 1971 session of the Committee.

91. To carry the point further: at the two previous sessions of the General Assembly, my delegation was among the sponsors of resolutions which aimed at an improvement in the world-wide capabilities of seismology, with the aim of helping to police a comprehensive test ban by seismological means. We did so because we have seen that developments in seismology have been influencing consideration of a test ban to an increasing degree in recent years, and we have hoped that this technology might be put to good use with the objective of narrowing, if not necessarily closing, the verification gap. We shall continue to welcome proposals for exchange and analysis of seismic data, because it seems to us clearly desirable that States should have access to necessary data if a verification system is to be effective. We were interested, once again, to hear the remarks of the representative of Canada on this subject in his statement at the 1829th meeting.

92. Having said that, we have taken note that the information examined in the Committee on Disarmament suggests that there is still a significant point below which underground nuclear weapon tests cannot be distinguished from natural subterranean disturbances. For this reason, therefore, we are not yet convinced that any underground test ban agreement that might be concluded at this stage would provide adequate assurance that the parties to it were honouring their obligations unless it made some provision for on-site inspection. We can only hope that

¹¹ Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 480 (1963), No. 6964).

further efforts to resolve existing disagreements over the question of verification will succeed in 1972 and will enable the Committee on Disarmament to reach agreement on a comprehensive test ban that would enjoy widespread support, especially from the nuclear weapon Powers.

93. At the twenty-fifth session the General Assembly commended to Governments, for their consideration and signature, the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof [*resolution 2660 (XXV), annex*]. I might remind the Committee that the Treaty was opened for signature on 11 February last; Australia signed it on that day. As with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*], we would like to hope that this Treaty will eventually attract the support of the nuclear and also the so-called "near-nuclear" States. If it becomes an effective instrument of international law it will constitute, we hope, a barrier against the spread of the nuclear arms race to a large area of man's environment.

94. My delegation is pleased to note the agreement reached between the United States and the Soviet Union last May as part of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) between the two Governments, which have just resumed in Vienna, to the effect that they would concentrate this year on working out an agreement for the limitation of the deployment of antiballistic missile systems. They appear also to have decided that if they can reach agreement to limit those systems they could also agree on measures with respect to the limitation of offensive strategic weapons. It goes without saying that we welcome progress in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, because we believe that a balanced and verifiable limitation on strategic weapons—both offensive and defensive—is good for the prospects of world peace and security. It is in the same context that we also welcome the agreements reached between the United States and the Soviet Union, and signed last September, on measures to reduce the risk of nuclear warfare and to improve the direct communications link between them.

95. Turning to another subject, we see that the 14 Expert Consultants appointed by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2667 (XXV) to study the economic and social consequences of the arms race have submitted a unanimous report, which is before us in document A/8469. That report contains material which will be of value both to Governments and to the Committee on Disarmament in their work, and it is, of course, always an occasion for welcome when a group of specialists drawn from a wide range of States is able to present an agreed report on such an important subject. At the same time, although fully sympathizing with the experts in the magnitude of their task, my delegation is bound to say that the study does not really tell us a great deal that is new. In effect, the experts conclude that a reduction of military expenditures should be brought about as soon as possible; that measures of disarmament will help towards general and complete disarmament; that all countries share the responsibility of working towards this goal; and that a halt in the arms race and a reduction of military expenditures would help the development of all countries and increase possibilities for

providing aid to developing countries. The self-evident force of these conclusions is obvious to us, but, with respect, they do not seem to carry us a great deal further in terms of present-day realities.

96. My delegation does not want at this stage to comment in detail on item 98 of the agenda, the suggested declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. We may wish to do so later; for the moment all I would say is that, of course, Australia, as a littoral country, would like to see the Indian Ocean remain a zone of peace. But, as the representative of the Netherlands reminded us this morning, there are difficulties in the way of giving practical effect to this concept. Apart from this, however, I would only wish to note, with the representative of Argentina, that document A/8492, which requested the inscription of this item on our agenda, refers to the Antarctic Treaty¹² as an example of a trend in international law and practice towards "the principle that areas not assimilated to national jurisdiction constitute an international domain that should be subject to international regulation and international responsibility". My delegation would simply wish to point out that Australia exercises sovereignty over a substantial part of the Antarctic continent, and that the explanatory memorandum is therefore incorrect when it implies that Antarctica is an area not assimilated to national jurisdiction.

97. These are the preliminary comments my delegation would like to make on the disarmament items that are at present under consideration in this Committee.

98. Mr. FRAZAO (Brazil): Year in, year out, we have been conducting in the General Assembly a debate on the ever-growing collection of items on disarmament. Up to now this debate has yielded rather meagre results. And I say "meagre" because they add up to no more than a handful of collateral and non-armament measures; our first and foremost goal remains remote and unattainable. In the course of many years of continuous effort we have heard solemn announcements and even allegations of "special responsibilities" on the part of the nuclear Powers. Unfortunately, no real progress has matched these allegations; no progress whatsoever has been obtained towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control and, in particular, nuclear disarmament. Paradoxically, we seem to be farther from our goal nowadays than we were at the inception of this Organization. Yet, it was precisely the realization that no stone should be left unturned and no endeavour should be withheld that inspired the establishment of the machinery for disarmament negotiations and, more specifically, led to the creation of what is now the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. Contrary to what became a belief often utilized *pro como*, it is disarmament, and disarmament alone, as the key element of the process of strengthening international security, that can provide greater security for all nations—bar none—rather than the security that the accumulation of arms or, for that matter, the arms limitation measures can barely supply.

99. If we were led to believe that the adoption of collateral and non-armament ancillary measures would

¹² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 402 (1961), No. 5778.

generate confidence, alleviate tension and propitiate disarmament, we would not refrain from recognizing that the results so far achieved are scanty and, to put it in a rather understated manner, do not warrant optimism. In point of fact, prevailing trends do not show concrete signs of impending breakthroughs leading to sustained progress in disarmament negotiations. It is perhaps opportune to remark that in this most important field there has been so far no spill-over from the intense and sometimes spectacular diplomatic activity characteristic of the early 1970s.

100. Rhetoric and hortatory language aside, the sobering facts are that during the last decade world expenditures in the arms race have shot up roughly from \$150,000 million to \$200,000 million per annum; and the prospects are that by 1980 between \$300,000 million and \$350,000 million will be spent for such purposes—at 1970 prices. Nuclear warheads, as well as their delivery systems, continue to increase in numbers, and, what is equally alarming, the nuclear devices currently deployed have been made immeasurably more lethal through qualitative refinements, a disquieting process, which continued unabated after the signature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII), annex], which was hailed by the parties thereto as a fundamental measure for world disarmament.

101. During the current session of the General Assembly, this Committee will be afforded an opportunity to discuss the economic and social consequences of the arms race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security, as well as to examine the report on this item prepared by the Secretary-General [A/8469] with the assistance of consultant experts, following the initiative taken last year by the delegation of Romania. My delegation intends to make a separate statement on this question. May I say now that the delegation of Brazil has found some chapters of the report most useful and hopes that the General Assembly will in some way benefit from its contents.

102. Although the current international situation remains unstable and fraught with tension, there are those who foresee in the not-too-distant future the possibility of the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. To substantiate this forecast, the argument is adduced that the actual testing of nuclear weapons may soon become unnecessary for the purposes of further refining such weaponry and of assuring the planned performance of their warheads. Following the logic behind this type of argument, technological advances obtained through intensive testing would eventually render further testing unnecessary for the most advanced nuclear Powers. Due to these new developments, the comprehensive nuclear weapon test ban would have become feasible, at least from the standpoint of the super-Powers, since it would not, properly speaking, restrain the sophistication of nuclear arsenals. It would be reduced rather to the dimension of a confidence-building marginal agreement, though with obvious implications for the development of the peaceful nuclear capabilities of the non-nuclear-weapon States. It would certainly be an understatement to add that in any nuclear test ban treaty, and in order to avoid any kind of interpretation to the contrary, adequate provision should be made to assure the possibility of development of nuclear explosive devices for peaceful purposes.

103. It is the considered opinion of the delegation of Brazil that unless certain disturbing trends are reversed it will be very difficult to discuss the comprehensive test ban issue in an objective and orderly way. The net result of the current approach to this question is that the discussion of the basic implications of the comprehensive nuclear weapon test ban has been relegated to the background.

104. The Conference allotted a section of its report to the question of a treaty banning underground nuclear weapon tests, where reference is made to a number of specific suggestions by members of the Committee. Those suggestions relate to questions such as the nature of a possible comprehensive test ban, the concept of threshold or partial measures, interim measures or restraints, verification procedures and the exchange of seismic data.

105. There are reasons for fear that the continuing search for half-way houses and indirect approaches may end up by weakening the indispensable political resolve to achieve the comprehensive nuclear weapon test ban.

106. The present state of affairs being what it is, we are not in a position to underestimate any sign, however flimsy, that may foretell positive developments. Without lulling ourselves into complacency or hoping for the millennium, we have all followed with renewed interest some symptoms of peaceful accommodation among the nuclear Powers and their progressive realization that negotiations on matters pertaining to the very core of their strategic establishment could be undertaken without endangering their security. We could not but welcome such developments, since for us—as we emphasized during the debates on the strengthening of international security—peace can be built only on the firm adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter and never on the inherently unstable accumulation of ever-more-sophisticated instruments of “mega-death”. Nor can peace rely merely on accommodation and understanding amongst the major Powers with the object of coming perhaps to a precarious balance at a lower level of expenditures and immediate risks. The nuclear and veto-wielding Powers would indulge in their endless game of power politics; an utterly precarious equilibrium would continue to be maintained through threats and counter-threats and would always be subject either to escalation on very short notice or to complete and final reversal. This is hardly a promising situation. It can only be redressed when power is no longer thought of as the single organizing principle of international life and when power ceases to be equated with wisdom.

107. Our fundamental aims and objectives cannot be reduced to the level of *ad hoc* measures dealing with the ever-present possibility of accidental crises, even though we recognize that they may be accepted as necessary stop-gaps or survival agreements. Nevertheless, my delegation insists that, while measures of that nature should continue to be negotiated, general and complete disarmament under effective international control should not be relegated to general and complete oblivion.

108. In their opening statements on this issue at the 1827th meeting, the representatives of the United States and of the Soviet Union found it proper to refresh the collective memory of the Committee on the information

made available during the past year regarding the contents of the bilateral Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). We are thankful to those representatives for their business-like recapitulation of the exceedingly sparse information on those talks, where—as my delegation has already had occasion to remark—“the negotiators of the super-Powers play with the destiny of us all”. I feel I should not conceal our apprehension at the fact that while SALT proceeds with the slowness to which unfortunately we have become accustomed—and, by the way, those talks are now entering their sixth round—there has been in practice a shift away from the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which appears deprived of the possibility of discussing in a more objective manner the question of nuclear disarmament, undoubtedly the single most important and urgent item on its agenda.

109. Fragmentary as the information on SALT is, the international community learned some time ago that the two Governments had decided to concentrate this year on working out an agreement for the limitation of the development of antiballistic missile systems and also that they had concurred that alongside with the conclusion of that agreement they would agree on certain measures with respect to the limitation of offensive strategic weapons.

110. No matter how one chooses to describe these preliminary understandings, it will not escape this Committee that considerable doubts still remain as to the ultimate significance of SALT in the field of nuclear disarmament. Such doubts would be even more justified if SALT were allowed to amount merely to the co-ordinated regulation of the future development of the nuclear arsenals of the super-Powers. The same degree of apprehension would apply also if the scope of SALT were to be reduced to no more than the quantitative limitation of antiballistic missiles and their delivery systems. The aim of present-day efforts towards peace, security and disarmament is certainly not that of simply diverting the arms race entirely to the field of qualitative improvements. The delegation of Brazil cannot but share the concern of other delegations which believe that any process entailing the devaluation and down-grading of the nuclear disarmament negotiations should be avoided at all costs.

111. We are still hoping for the best to come out of these bilateral talks. We hope, further, that the other nuclear Powers may also be able to contribute to those attempts to curb the nuclear arms race, for on the nuclear Powers as a whole rests the main obligation to disarm.

112. In this context, allow me to express the conviction of my delegation that a normative framework for disarmament should be laid down under the auspices of the United Nations. This fundamental task should be accomplished with the participation of all States, for the simple reason that all of us are directly concerned with the harmful effects of the nuclear arms race and that all of us could benefit, in one way or another, from disarmament. This should be one of the criteria for the evaluation of the proposal for the convening of a world disarmament conference now before the General Assembly. Due regard must also be paid to the possibility of achieving concrete results through international conferences, where the participation of States would be contingent on the needs of the

negotiations. The same criteria should also be applied, in the course of the preparation of a world disarmament conference, to the consideration of the possibility of activating other international forums, such as the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference of the Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, for action concerning specific problems of disarmament.

113. In this connexion, I should comment on the role that the Committee on Disarmament and the General Assembly are supposed to play in so far as disarmament negotiations are concerned. As to the Committee on Disarmament, my delegation continues to assess it as a valuable and necessary forum for negotiations, despite the uniqueness of its procedures. Of course, its machinery is capable of improvement and adjustment. Doubtless, it serves as a body where many disarmament items are prepared for subsequent consideration by the General Assembly. The Committee on Disarmament is a forum where the diverse conceptions of disarmament are represented and where a group of 12 States not belonging either to NATO or to the Warsaw Pact discharge very useful functions apart from seeking to articulate the positions of the medium and small Powers of all continents regarding disarmament.

114. Full use must be made of the negotiating machinery provided for in the Committee on Disarmament. If, for example, the General Assembly still believes that general and complete disarmament under effective international control continues to deserve the first priority in our efforts, it should enable the Committee on Disarmament to pursue its work in accordance with our understanding of this matter. Perhaps I should add that my delegation is of the opinion that the delicate question of the conventional arms limitation should be pursued within the framework of the negotiations for general and complete disarmament, due regard being given to the unchallengeable priority accorded to nuclear disarmament negotiations.

115. Needless to say, important as the role of the Committee on Disarmament may be, it does not pre-empt the functions of the General Assembly, which should not be confined to a yearly review of developments or to the adoption of merely procedural decisions. On the contrary, the General Assembly, relying particularly on the assistance of this Committee, is perfectly entitled to examine the substance of the disarmament issues as well as to make recommendations on priorities for their discussion.

116. The most important result achieved by the Committee on Disarmament during the past year has no doubt been the agreement reached on 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]. At a later stage in the present debate my delegation intends to revert to this subject. At this time, however, I wish to state that despite the fact that biological weapons have not an effective military function nowadays, one can still envisage the draft convention as a step in the right direction and, technically speaking, as the first disarmament measure of our time. For this reason, in the context of the endorsement of the draft convention by the General Assembly, the delegation of Brazil is convinced that it would be appropriate to reaffirm the general principle that a substantial portion of the

savings derived from measures in the field of disarmament should be devoted to promote economic and social development, particularly in developing countries.

117. In addition, I should stress that Brazil has always favoured the comprehensive prohibition of both biological and chemical weapons and the adoption of a mechanism for the settlement of disputes more equitable than the one incorporated in the draft convention, which does not go beyond mere recourse to the Security Council, where certain members enjoy the prerogatives attributed to them by Articles 23 and 27 of the Charter. It is our conviction, however, that these last circumstances should not prevent us from approving the draft convention before us, which, although limited and less than perfect, is the result of considerable effort and intensive negotiations.

118. As we are all aware, there are many useful and important proposals in the field of disarmament still awaiting implementation or even serious consideration. These are the cases of such measures as the cut-off of the production of special fissionable materials for use in warheads, the question of the fund of special fissionable materials for peaceful purposes, the reinforcement of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and, more specifically, the establishment, within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, of an international service for nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes under appropriate international control. Reverting to the last-mentioned subject, which is an item of our agenda, I wish to reiterate the support of my Government for the establishment of such an international service, within the framework of the Agency, that is, under the provisions of its Statutes.

119. It is a matter of regret for my delegation that the very important item on the implementation of the results of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States was removed from the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly on the initiative of certain delegations represented in the General Committee. The General Assembly had adopted resolutions 2605 A (XXIV) and 2664 (XXV) on this subject, containing many important recommendations. The fact that those recommendations now appear to be somewhat forgotten neither detracts from their political value nor renders them less responsive to actually felt needs. Let me substantiate this assertion with one example. In accordance with a study prepared by the secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a definite trend is being observed in many developing countries towards the utilization of nuclear energy for the purpose of meeting their power requirements. Under these conditions and taking into consideration the size of the potential market for nuclear facilities which exists in the developing countries, we welcome the recommendation made in resolution 2664 (XXV) that the international sources of finance keep under review their policies regarding the financing of meritorious nuclear projects, bearing in mind not only the short-range but also the long-range contribution such projects may make to economic and technical development. For the same reasons, we would like to see a gradual but continuous strengthening of the technical assistance programmes financed through the regular budget of the Agency. Considering the importance of these matters for the developing countries, my delega-

tion would view with the utmost favour the inclusion of the item on the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States in the agenda of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

120. These were the general observations that my delegation wished to bring to the debate and we shall intervene again on specific disarmament items when they come up for discussion.

121. We shall not shirk our responsibilities in this debate, for we regard disarmament as one of the central problems facing the creative imagination of the States Members of the United Nations. On our capacity to use this creative imagination depend, to say the least, peace and security. If we are to meet the awesome challenges posed by disarmament, we must exercise our collective will to avail ourselves of the opportunities now open in international life. Together, within the normative framework of the Organization, we must devise comprehensive solutions acceptable to all Member States and capable of putting an end to the insanity of the arms race.

Mr. Ramphul (Mauritius), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

122. Princess Ashraf PAHLAVI (Iran) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. Chairman, first of all I should like to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. Everyone is familiar with your many contributions to our Organization and there is no need for me to dwell on this. My congratulations go also to the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur.

123. It is not without a certain feeling of unease that I take the floor today in the disarmament debate, for, as the years go by, the problem, so far from disappearing, seems on the contrary to be growing steadily worse despite practical achievements whose importance cannot be denied. A reading of the introduction to the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization this year does nothing to reduce this impression. On the contrary, the Secretary-General, with his customary lucidity, looking back on his 10 years of service to the international community, sketches a picture as sombre as it is realistic.

124. I know that all members of the Committee have read this report carefully, but, with your permission, I should like to quote some brief passages from it:

“Not only have the nations of the world failed to halt or slow down the arms race . . . but they have escalated this disastrous course at a greater rate and to a higher level than ever before in history. During this period, world military expenditures have increased from \$120,000 million to over \$200,000 million per year.”¹³

The Secretary-General goes on to say:

“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

¹³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 1A, para. 42.*

as tolerable features of modern life, or ones which they are incapable of changing.”¹⁴

125. One cannot but endorse the Secretary-General's judgement despite the despair it implies. I will even go further than he has and say that the elements of hope which still remained in our Organization are being constantly reduced before the inadequacy of the progress achieved in relation to the enormity of the needs in the disarmament field.

126. We have learned to live with the weapons of death, just as one learns to live with volcanoes, unfortunately forgetting that if volcanoes are the creation of nature, by contrast it is we who manufacture weapons of destruction; and if we chose, it would be possible for us, by common agreement, to prevent their proliferation.

127. Last year, speaking on the same subject in this same room, I was obliged to note that the long years of discussion and of effort have yielded rather negative results.

128. But we should not look only on the dark side when considering the problem of disarmament in the absolute sense. On the contrary, we must look at it in terms of political reality, and from this standpoint one must recognize that so long as the security of States is threatened, no real progress will be made towards disarmament. The question is to some extent twofold. The problem of disarmament cannot be resolved without at the same time solving the problem of international security in the broadest sense. That security, as we must recognize, is endangered by all kinds of manifestations of aggression. These manifestations cover a range of possibilities from brute force to insidious propaganda campaigns and to armed subversion and terrorism in the pay of foreigners.

129. This is why the Organization must endeavour at the same time to strengthen international security while reaffirming its role in the peaceful solution of problems confronting the world. This is also why the Organization must find effective means of bridging the scandalous gap that separates the rich and poor countries. As the Secretary-General says in his report:

“Both the Disarmament Decade and the Second United Nations Development Decade have related objectives; progress in each of them will have a beneficial effect on the other and will facilitate the establishment of conditions of peace, justice and progress in the world.”¹⁵

130. When we look at the problem of disarmament from this realistic angle, our initial pessimism is to a large extent dispelled. In present circumstances achievements over the past few years are unmistakable and, moreover, potential areas of agreement are now emerging. We are, for instance, convinced that so far as an agreement on a halt to nuclear tests is concerned, tangible progress can and must still be made.

131. From the standpoint of modern technology there is no valid reason why the nuclear nations, which under

article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*] have morally and legally committed themselves “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date”, should delay negotiations on this subject any longer.

132. There may perhaps be some technical snags that complicate the interpretation of data on explosions below a certain order of magnitude. However, relations between nations must not be based solely on a technical filing system but also, above all, on a minimum of mutual trust. I am therefore convinced it is infinitely preferable in present circumstances to establish an agreement to eliminate all nuclear tests—even if with today's technology some low-yield test explosions cannot be properly verified and identified—rather than to continue underground tests unrestricted. We ardently hope that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament will do everything possible in the pursuit of this course, analysing all the suggestions presented and taking appropriate measures.

133. It is generally recognized that the question of a halt to nuclear tests is closely bound up with the result of the negotiations on strategic arms limitation—that is to say, a freeze and reduction in the stockpile of nuclear devices. If such a freeze is secured, it must necessarily be followed by a halt to nuclear tests, thus preventing other nations from joining the sinister club known as the “nuclear club”.

134. One element of optimism may be seen in recent developments concerning chemical and bacteriological weapons. It is of vital importance for mankind to eliminate the menace of these weapons. We support the idea that the ban should extend not only to utilization but also to the manufacture and stockpiling of such weapons.

135. We now have before the Committee a draft treaty on the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and on their destruction [*A/8457, annex A*]. We welcome the progress made by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in this area. My delegation would have preferred to see before it a single convention covering both biological and chemical weapons, but we shall be happy to support the present draft provided it is only an interim measure pending definitive agreement on both biological and chemical weapons.

136. Speaking of biological weapons, I cannot refrain from mentioning here a promising event which took place in the United States on 18 October last, when President Nixon announced at Fort Detrick in Maryland that military installations hitherto used for the manufacture of bacteriological weapons would henceforward be used in the fight against cancer; and that the scientists and technicians employed at those installations could henceforth dedicate themselves entirely to saving rather than destroying life. I should like to take this opportunity of expressing, through the delegation of the United States of America, our appreciation to President Nixon, and, while hailing this initiative, to express the hope that this meaningful gesture will be followed by many others in all countries.

137. These are some of the elements which, to our view, are grounds for some measure of hope. But the progress

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 46.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 50.

made in this direction should not prevent us from considering the basic question, which is that of general and controlled disarmament. At its fourth session the General Assembly set itself the target of complete disarmament under international control. Unfortunately, this work has fallen into the most complete oblivion since 1964. The time has come seriously to reactivate the question.

138. It was in this spirit that last year we congratulated the delegations of Mexico, Sweden and Yugoslavia for the excellent document they submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.¹⁶ We think that this document can usefully serve in the discussions of the Committee on Disarmament with a view to preparing a disarmament programme. Furthermore, the revision or updating of the draft treaty submitted by the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as the preparation of any other draft, is of vital importance. We think here that it would be necessary to reactivate the United Nations Disarmament Commission and to call periodic conferences on global disarmament.

139. For some years now there have been glimpses of a possible world conference on disarmament. Today, upon the initiative of the Soviet Union, the question has been placed on the Assembly's agenda. My delegation warmly welcomes this proposal provided it takes place within the framework of the United Nations.

140. Another important aspect of disarmament is to be found in regional measures such as the creation of nuclear-free zones. Here I should recall that in recent years Iran has repeatedly proposed that the Middle East should be declared a nuclear-free zone. My country will warmly welcome any suggestions from other States in the pursuit of this objective. Iran also warmly supports the initiative of the Ceylonese delegation on the declaring of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace [A/8492 and Add.1].

141. These are the remarks that I wished to place before the Committee on the problem now before us.

142. As I said at the beginning of my statement, in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization the Secretary-General, looking back over the 10 years of his tenure, gave us a realistic and not very encouraging picture. If I had to use one word to describe the 10 years in question, I would say that they were the age of suspicion. The nations of the world, and particularly the most powerful among them, have in fact been unable to rise above their fears and their mutual mistrust. On the whole, rivalry among nations continues to be the dominant factor in international life, and this is also the reason why so many promising beginnings have come to nothing and why our achievements fall so very far short of the hopes and aspirations of the international community.

143. Furthermore, at a press conference held in New York on 22 May 1970 the Secretary-General reminded us that "If we are to make real progress toward disarmament, Governments must approach this subject in a new spirit. They

must stop questioning the seriousness of purpose of others and think how they can demonstrate their own." Yes, what we must do is to introduce a new spirit of co-operation into the mutual respect of nations. It would perhaps be well to conclude with these words of Camus: "My friend, I am going to teach you a great secret. Don't wait for the last judgement, because it takes place every day." Indeed, every one of our decisions, each one of our gestures in these critical moments in the history of mankind helps to shape our future and our destiny, and "judgement" is passed every day on ourselves by ourselves.

144. The CHAIRMAN: If I hear no objection I propose to adjourn the meeting. Before doing so I would like to remind the Committee that our next meeting will be held at 10.30 a.m. tomorrow.

145. I give the floor to the representative of Kuwait.

146. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): As you know, for Moslems all over the world, here, in Pakistan, in Arabia, in Indonesia and everywhere tomorrow is a holiday. So I would appeal to the Committee to suspend its meeting for tomorrow in response to this appeal which I am just making in the name of the Islamic countries here. I and all my Moslem colleagues would be appreciative of this gesture if the Committee responded to this appeal.

147. Mr. KHAN (Pakistan): I have taken the floor only to lend my support to the proposal made by the representative of Kuwait.

148. The CHAIRMAN: It is for the Committee, of course, to decide on what should be done.

149. Mr. DOSUMU-JOHNSON (Liberia): While I am inclined to sympathize with the representative of Kuwait in his request, this is another of those precedents that is likely to boomerang tomorrow. I am not at this stage prepared to support such a request, because once you have this sort of thing in the United Nations then we who are Christians will also be asking you to give us our own holidays and to suspend the work of the United Nations. We have been going along all right for 25 years and I do not think we should now seize upon a practice that is wholly foreign—at least to me—in this Organization. I feel that if we are to adopt this procedure now, then we may as well, when next Thursday comes along, ask you to give us a holiday for Thanksgiving. Then when other days come along we will ask you to do it again, because some of us have serious holidays. We are all religious, but let us keep our religious beliefs out of it, otherwise, speaking as a preacher, I may be moved at some time to ask you that before we open this meeting we should have prayers, and I am sure that every Christian will support me in this. The absence of prayer in this Organization is responsible for some of the mistrust, misapprehension and suspicion that exist here now.

150. Without further ado, I say let us consider this matter and decide in accordance with what the Secretariat may wish to tell us.

151. The CHAIRMAN: At this stage I would ask the representative of Kuwait whether, in the light of what the representative of Liberia has said, he insists on his proposal.

¹⁶ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1970*, document DC/233, annex C, sect. 42.

152. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): I want to point out two things. I assure my dear friend, Mr. Dosumu-Johnson, whom I have known for many years and with whom I have worked through many conferences, that if any day he comes to the Committee and suggests the suspension of the activities of that Committee for the purposes of a religious holiday, I will sponsor his proposal, I will second it and I will do my best to see that his proposal has the success he desires. Secondly, I assure you, Mr. Chairman, that I did not insist, I did not table a proposal, I did not table a suggestion, I made an appeal, and an appeal is by no means binding. You are a legal man and you know these things. I made an appeal and I do not insist on it. I said it would be a nice gesture on the part of this Committee if it responded favourably; otherwise I will not insist at all.

153. The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Kuwait and I apologize to him for having used the word "proposal" and not "appeal".

154. Mr. KHAN (Pakistan): When I lent my support, as a matter of fact, I meant the appeal that has been made by my friend from Kuwait. If it is not inconvenient, I beg to make this appeal to the members of the Committee, that if the meeting could start later I believe that we could come back by 10.30 or 11.00 o'clock after completion of our prayers.

155. The CHAIRMAN: Would it be agreeable to the Committee that we start the meeting at 11 o'clock rather than at 10.30? Would that be agreeable to the representatives of Kuwait and Pakistan?

156. Mr. DOSUMO-JOHNSON (Liberia): Let us not try to get around a principle that would be wholly inconsistent. If, Mr. Chairman, this had not come up and you had postponed the meeting to 12 o'clock, or even cancelled the meeting, it would have been meaningful. But now you are

asked to suspend or postpone the meeting, and on what is it predicated? It is predicated on the fact that tomorrow is a Moslem holiday and the Moslems must go and pray. This is what I am objecting to: I do not think you should try to get around this. The crux of the matter is that you are establishing a religious holiday within the United Nations, and that is what I am objecting to.

157. I would like you to put off the meeting altogether, but it must not be predicated on this. I should like to have the whole day as a holiday tomorrow, so far as that is concerned. I do not want to come here. But let us not predicate it on a religious holiday. That is my point. You are at liberty to do what you like, but when this is raised again and this is quoted as a precedent in this Organization I do not want the Chairman to shirk the responsibility of acknowledging it.

158. The CHAIRMAN: I would point out that the Chairman has no intention of creating any precedent.

159. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): I had no wish to stir up a drama here. I am in complete sympathy with the proposal which my colleague from Pakistan has just made, that the meeting should start at 11 o'clock instead of 10.30. I also am an orthodox Moslem and have to go and pray. I am sure that my dear friend Mr. Dosumo-Johnson will support me in that.

160. The CHAIRMAN: May I take it that, in a spirit of solidarity, the Committee would agree to meeting at 11 rather than 10.30 tomorrow morning? If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee so decides.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.