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Chairman: Mr. Andrés AGUILAR M. (Venezuela).

AGENDA ITEMS 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 93 AND 94

- Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (continued) (A/7958, A/7960 and Corr.1, A/7961, A/8059-DC/233, A/C.1/1001 and 1010)
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Status of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2456 B (XXIII) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco) (continued) (A/7993 and Add.1 and 2, A/8076, A/C.1/L.522)

Economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security (continued) (A/7994)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. TSEGHE (Ethiopia): The happy coincidence of the launching of the Disarmament Decade and the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations provides an opportune moment for sombre reflection on the past and imaginative vision towards the future.

2. In disarmament, the past, we all know, has been modest in terms of concrete achievements. The few measures of agreement arrived at have been either partial or preventive in nature. In themselves they have proved inadequate to control or limit the existing trend of the ever-expanding spiral of the arms race. In each of those agreements or treaties there is nevertheless compelling reason for a substantial and energetic search for wider and more meaningful measures of disarmament.

3. The coming into force in March this year of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII), annex] and the solemn commitment of its provisions, particularly of its article VI, make it incumbent upon States signatories to the Treaty, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to continue negotiations on further effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament. Ethiopia has always believed that the viability of this Treaty lies in the speed with which the nuclear-weapon Powers will follow up this agreement with real measures of nuclear disarmament.

4. In this connexion, I wish once again to welcome the initiation of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the Soviet Union and the United States. Notwithstanding the arduous and time-consuming nature of the talks, we hope and expect that a positive result will eventually emerge to reverse the strategic arms race and to open new avenues for other measures of nuclear disarmament, which has hitherto been deadlocked.

5. Meanwhile, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament continues its deliberations on a number of important collateral measures, as well as on general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

6. In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 2602 F (XXIV), which called upon the Conference, *inter alia*, to take into account all the proposals and suggestions put forward at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly in the elaboration of a draft treaty on the sea-bed, the Committee devoted a substantial amount of its time to reviewing and examining afresh the question of the prohibition of the arms race on the sea-bed and ocean floor. Happily, those efforts have proved productive.

7. The report of the Conference this year [A/8059-DC/233] contains in its annex a revised version of the draft 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. Unlike its predecessor, the present draft is a synthesis of all suggestions and proposals advanced both here in the General Assembly and at the Conference in Geneva.

8. One of its principal articles dealing with the vital issue of verification, and its discriminatory overtone, has prompted many suggestions and proposals. We are gratified to note that article III, as worded at present, alleviates the legitimate concern that some of us were compelled to express. As it stands now, the revised article provides an opportunity for all States, big or small, nuclear or non-nuclear, to carry out verification processes using their own individual means, or with the full or partial assistance of any other State party to the treaty, and makes possible, as well, resort to appropriate international procedures within the framework of the United Nations.

9. Furthermore, the present draft treaty contains a new article, namely article V, which was included in the draft after long and arduous negotiations. Like its counterpart, article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty, article V of the draft treaty before us establishes a link between the present provisions and further measures of prevention of an arms race on the sea-bed to be negotiated in good faith.

10. These are only two examples of the numerous changes and improvements negotiated and incorporated into the draft. Not only has the spirit of collaboration and reciprocal accommodation which prevailed throughout the negotiation of the draft treaty helped to produce a well-balanced and, in our opinion, broadly acceptable draft but has also led to a feeling of renewed confidence in the prospect of meaningful negotiations on other measures of disarmament. We hope and trust that this Committee will commend the draft treaty for signature.

11. Another important disarmament measure that the Conference has come to grips with is the question of the prohibition of the production and stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons. The discussions on this subject have been extremely informative and enlightening. The technical complexities, the methods of approach, and the definitions of the weapons have all been thoroughly explored.

12. Apart from the draft treaties presented, on the one hand, by the United Kingdom [*ibid.*, annex C, sect. 2] and, on the other, by nine socialist countries,¹ the Conference

has been assisted by a number of expert reports, including the report of the Secretary-General entitled *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use*.² A number of delegations have also made available to the Committee the benefit of their expert studies in the form of technical working papers.

13. In an attempt to clarify further the complex issues involved in dealing with these weapons, the Committee had useful informal exchanges of views, including briefings by well-known experts in the field.

14. While all these have contributed towards a better understanding of the issues involved, the modalities of approach for a single trend of thought continue to pose serious difficulties. There are, on the one hand, those who believe that the prohibition of the production and stockpiling of biological weapons can be agreed upon independently of that of chemical weapons. On the other hand, there are those who believe that both types of weapons are inseparable and, therefore, must be dealt with together. I need not at this juncture go into the arguments advanced by each of the parties in support of its position. The only common element discernible in these trends of thought is the desire, in both cases, to strengthen the 1925 Geneva Protocol³ by prohibiting the production and stockpiling of one or both types of weapons.

15. The Ethiopian delegation in this respect continues to believe that, in order to strengthen the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the Committee should, first of all, proceed to seek universal adherence to the Protocol in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2603 B (XXIV), investigate ways and means of removing all reservations of States signatories to the Protocol, and agree upon a broad definition of the scope of the weapons in question. Once this is done, the question of dealing with a single or combined approach will be greatly simplified.

16. This leads me to another item that has been the subject of long years of discussion, namely the question of a comprehensive test ban. The General Assembly continues to demand, with increasing urgency, a solution to this problem. In the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, as well as in various sessions of the General Assembly, a number of concrete suggestions and proposals have been formulated in order to facilitate agreement. Despite all these proposals, however, a comprehensive test-ban treaty continues to be difficult to agree upon, not only because of the inadequacy of the proposals but also because of a lack of the political will which is an essential prerequisite for any agreement, particularly for a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Pending the evolution of that political will, as the representative of Canada remarked in this Committee last Monday [1749th meeting], the General Assembly and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament can fruitfully continue to investigate ways and means of perfecting the procedures for adequate verification of a comprehensive test ban.

² United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24.

³ 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).

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes*, agenda items 29, 30, 31 and 104, document A/7655.

17. As a result of a Canadian initiative, the General Assembly adopted last year resolution 2604 A (XXIV) for a world-wide exchange of seismological data. We are grateful in this respect to the Canadian delegation for making available to us the preliminary assessment of the replies /see A/7967/Rev.1/ to the questionnaires sent to a number of States in accordance with the resolution.

18. We hope that work along this line will continue and that all Member States will not only collaborate in the exchange of seismological data but also help to perfect and standardize the means of detection.

19. Until recently disarmament negotiations had been proceeding without a clear definition of scope and a coherent programme of action. In declaring the 1970s a Disarmament Decade, General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) requested the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament "to work out... a comprehensive programme, dealing with all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under effective international control...".

20. The Ethiopian delegation welcomes this new initiative of the General Assembly and will collaborate with other interested countries in the elaboration of the necessary programme.

21. The Ethiopian delegation also welcomes the initiative already taken by some members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in presenting some basic thoughts that could constitute a coherent programme for disarmament. In this connexion, however, I should like to point out that the preparation of such a programme needs to be handled with the utmost care so that disarmament and other political issues can be seen in their proper perspectives. Any programme that would tend to divert attention away from the real issues of disarmament within the context of general and complete disarmament under effective international control would be contrary to its purpose.

22. Finally, in the opinion of the Ethiopian delegation the question of conventional armament on the regional level can be best considered within the context of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

23. Mr. VINCI (Italy): Last year in this Committee we started our deliberations on the problems related to disarmament on a hopeful note, in the wake of the long expected opening of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). This year we have resumed our discussions on the eve of the reconvening of those talks between the two nuclear super-Powers at Helsinki. This is, indeed, a gratifying coincidence, and I wish to recall the great importance attached by the Italian Government to the Helsinki negotiations and to express the sincere wish of the Italian delegation for their complete success—because, with the prospect of broader and more effective action for disarmament on a multilateral basis, they cannot help but have most significant effects going far beyond the relations between the two Powers directly engaged in them.

24. But we should be closing our eyes to reality if we were to ignore the difficulties disclosed by the sluggish pace of

the talks, and even more if we were to forget that, while the efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union are aimed at containing the race in the field of weapons of mass destruction, in the field of conventional armaments the race is still escalating in many areas of the world. The figures available present a sad picture. Last year again, over \$180,000 million were spent on armaments; military expenditures have grown lately at an over-all rate of 30 per cent in four years; huge human and material resources have been diverted from the much more urgent needs of all human societies, and especially of those belonging to the developing world.

25. This reality should, first of all, prompt us to intensify our striving for progress, both in this house in order to agree on guidelines for the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, and in Geneva within the framework of the Conference itself. Secondly, it should remind us that our attention, far from being polarized by the negotiations on the prevention and limitation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, must again be focused as well on the reduction of nuclear arsenals and the problem of general and complete disarmament, including the reduction of conventional armaments. That is all the more true during this celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the world Organization, when our debate, starting shortly after the commemorative session, must not fall short in discharging what we consider to be a necessary double duty: a review of the work already accomplished, and a reappraisal of our purposes in the light of the demanding tasks still lying ahead of us.

26. Indeed, I wish to recall that disarmament is and will remain one of the fundamental and institutional tasks of the United Nations. The Charter itself solemnly commits us to carry out that task. The success of our Organization, therefore, must and will be evaluated, also, in the light of the progress we are able to make towards achieving a disarmed and thus peaceful world.

27. In reviewing briefly the efforts and achievements of the United Nations in the field of disarmament during these first 25 years, we have to admit that, unfortunately, the results have fallen short both of the magnitude of our efforts and of the generosity of our resolve.

28. The arms race has not been halted. On the contrary, it has accelerated, especially from the early 1960s onwards. Increasing amounts of economic resources—nowadays nearly 7 per cent of the annual world total—are devoted to the production and development of old and new weapons. The quality—if one can talk of "quality" in this field—of the most destructive systems of armaments is undergoing a continuous process of sophistication whilst the destructive potentiality of the stocks that are being piled up in the arsenals, particularly in those of the major Powers, is continually increasing. No wonder that this entire process and the words which accompany it—megatons, overkill capacity and so on—have received a special definition: sophisticated insanity.

29. This is perhaps the best opportunity, while celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of our Organization, to reflect upon the inadequacy of the results so far achieved. Such an investigation might well represent a basis for a thorough

review of the most appropriate ways and means to overcome the obstacles that stand in our way.

30. Disarmament negotiations in the last 25 years have moved through two distinct stages, each characterized by different prospects of work. The first stage covers the period more or less from the beginning of the negotiations after the war until 1963-1964; the second stage, the period from 1963-1964 to the present time.

31. As we all know, we started with great disarmament plans, which were debated in various forums: in the Commission for Conventional Armaments and the Atomic Energy Commission, in the Sub-Committee on Disarmament established by the Disarmament Commission, in the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament and the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament—apart, of course, from the deliberations in the General Assembly. All such plans, while differing in their origin and formulation, have one common feature: the attempt to set forth the disarmament process, either totally or partially, in a systematic form, within a coherent and comprehensive framework. After the adoption of the historic General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI) of December 1961, those efforts culminated in the elaboration of the two plans on general and complete disarmament submitted by the Governments of the Soviet Union⁴ and the United States⁵ respectively, in March and April 1962. They were comprehensive and far-reaching plans which, had it been possible to put them into effect, would have solved all the problems we still face today. The story of the debates on those plans is also the story of the insurmountable difficulties that arose in the course of the negotiations. Indeed, it soon became clear that the global goal set by General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI)—that is, general and complete disarmament—could be effectively pursued only within the context of a more peaceful world. This context did not prevail at the time; neither, unfortunately, does it prevail in the present international situation.

32. The hindering of the talks on the two plans for general and complete disarmament unfortunately led to the abandonment of all negotiations on any comprehensive plan. This crisis of confidence was a contributory factor in directing Governments towards different methods, which could realistically reflect the contingent reality of international relations. Negotiations were thus concentrated on single specific measures: in other words, on the so-called collateral measures. This method of tackling problems in a fragmentary way has undoubtedly enabled us to attain some valuable results. But it is right to emphasize that such results have been strictly confined to measures concerning non-armament or the prevention of armaments. I will not deal *in extenso* with the importance of some of the agreements which it has thereby been possible to finalize; of them all, I should like only to mention the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*]. The non-proliferation Treaty represents, without any doubt, a target attained, but its value would prove negligible, were it not to constitute, in its turn, a premise for further progress, through the cessation of the nuclear arms race and the beginning of negotiations on

disarmament. In fact, it is above all in this latter field of actual disarmament that the urgent need for progress is strongly felt.

33. Disarmament was, and must remain, the irreplaceable goal of our negotiations. The greatest danger we must be aware of today is that of relying too much on ill-conceived realism, and of restricting ourselves, in the name of realism, to negotiations on marginal measures not directly connected with the reduction of armaments. This approach could eventually lead to a passive and resigned acceptance of the inescapable, the outmoded game of power politics. What must not happen is that, under a purely formal reiteration of the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament and the parallel motivation that it is not yet negotiable we, *de facto*, end up by limiting our final objective. This would be tantamount to abandoning the effort for disarmament in favour of a different goal, which might precisely be presented as the only realistic one, that of rendering the arms race tolerable through appropriate arrangements.

34. This would in fact mean that we would drop the idea of peace and replace it with another one, that of rendering tolerable a permanent state of conflict. We might be led towards this extremely unsatisfactory result as a consequence of having been practically squeezed between a goal which is far away—that of general and complete disarmament—and negotiations aiming at measures which do not bring about a reduction of armaments. We should not use the formula of general and complete disarmament, just as an alibi, screening a reality that is not consistent either with the expectations of the peoples or with the reaffirmed determination of the Governments. No compromise is acceptable on such a paramount issue. In the opinion of the Italian Government, the action for disarmament must therefore be resumed in concrete and effective terms.

35. It might be true that the general plans on disarmament, as they have been drafted since the early sixties, perhaps had the fault of being too abstract in their ambitious scope. But it is equally true that untied negotiations on partial and marginal measures, as they have actually been carried out, made us lose sight of our real objective of effective reductions of armaments.

36. In order to make a new start in the negotiations on disarmament, it is therefore necessary, in our view, to find a middle course, confirming clearly the objective of general and complete disarmament and outlining the path to follow by reorienting our negotiations towards effective measures on gradual and balanced reductions of armaments. It is necessary, in other words, to bridge the gap that has developed within the disarmament agenda between, on the one side, the final objective and, on the other side, the immediate reality of partial and marginal measures that are negotiable today. This vacuum could, in our opinion, be effectively filled by a programme which should be elaborated in order to combine the various elements of the action to be carried out.

37. This approach towards the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament was successfully endorsed by the General Assembly during its twenty-fourth session. Resolution 2602 E (XXIV), which marked an

⁴ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January 1961 to December 1962, document DC/203, annex I, sect. C.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, sect. F.

important turning point in this direction, was the result of an action conducted mainly by medium and small nations, which have a propulsive role to play in the disarmament negotiations that they cannot and must not abdicate. In this connexion, I should like to say in passing that the basic concepts contained in the draft resolution prepared by the Romanian delegation on the economic and social consequences of the arms race seem consistent with the goals set by resolution 2602 E (XXIV) and in principle are therefore supported by my Government.

38. In this year, which marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the General Assembly should maintain and intensify its efforts, through which the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament may again devote itself to the main task entrusted to it, which is that of negotiating reductions of armaments. We were gratified by the support that such an approach found in the statements of previous speakers and we are grateful to those representatives, particularly the representatives of Japan, the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Netherlands, who recalled the Italian action to that end.

39. This session of the General Assembly is not only the occasion for a global review of the action for disarmament in the last 25 years; it is also the forum wherein to draw short-term conclusions on the work for disarmament accomplished during last year.

40. The document on disarmament bearing the greatest importance is once again the report presented to this Assembly by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [A/8059-DC/233].

41. As the report points out clearly, one of the main subjects debated in the Conference, in accordance with the decisions taken last year by the General Assembly, was that of the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

42. The Italian delegation wishes to express its satisfaction at the suggestions put forward by many delegations on this subject, and at the great interest this problem now arouses not only in the Geneva forum, but also in this Committee which reflects the expectations of world public opinion.

43. May I recall that the idea of a comprehensive disarmament programme was first advanced by the Italian delegation in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament approximately one and a half years ago, in March 1969, with the statement made in Geneva by the then Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Mario Zagari.⁶

44. Since then, Italy has continued in every appropriate international forum to stress the importance of drawing up a comprehensive programme, with a view to enhancing decisively the action taken by Governments on the question of disarmament.

45. In this connexion, I wish to recall the initiative of the Italian delegation, in co-operation with other interested delegations, especially of Ireland and Japan, to which we feel sincerely indebted, during the last session of the

General Assembly. This action led to the adoption of the aforementioned resolution 2602 E (XXIV), which still remains the main landmark for our discussion of the problem.

46. During the last session of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, we were gratified to note an increasing interest in the proposal for a disarmament programme. We were particularly happy to see that our initiative in 1969, which some delegations at that time viewed rather sceptically, was gaining a broader consensus and that useful contributions and suggestions were submitted to the Conference by many delegations.

47. The discussions in the plenary meetings of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament had been prepared for restricted meetings held by a group of delegations, irrespective of their geographical and political alignments—delegations that were more directly interested in the problem of the programme. The Italian delegation contributed its ideas with a view to stimulating an active exchange of views and suggestions. Our contribution is reflected in a working paper [*ibid.*, annex C, sect. 38], which we submitted during the final phase of the session. In drafting that working paper our intention was, on the one hand, to inform the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament of the results achieved together with other delegations and, on the other, to express our own point of view on the matter by making further specific suggestions.

48. During the debate in this Committee, representatives have already paid attention to the draft programme on disarmament submitted to the Conference towards the end of its session by the delegations of Mexico, Sweden and Yugoslavia [*ibid.*, sect. 42], which had previously joined us in our efforts at Geneva. It is a wide-ranging document, which, in our view, could contribute usefully towards the elaboration of the programme entrusted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament by the General Assembly.

49. I do not think this is the time to go into details of the elaboration of the disarmament programme. The Italian delegation feels that in order to prepare, facilitate and lay down the basis for negotiations on the reduction of forces it would be indispensable to start concrete and systematic studies now on the problems that will have to be faced within such negotiations. Those studies would contribute greatly to putting together the necessary building blocks in order to enable us to proceed to the actual negotiations. Moreover, Member States should commit themselves to undertaking, as soon as possible, negotiations on a first round of reductions of conventional forces and armaments.

50. In our view, that commitment, which would necessarily be a flexible one, would serve the purpose of reaffirming, in the most appropriate way and within the adequate institutional framework constituted by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, the political will of Governments to proceed to real negotiations on disarmament. That reaffirmation would also serve the purpose of encouraging world public opinion which, after so many years of negotiative measures no longer directly connected with armament reductions, is becoming dubious about the real objective of our negotiations. That same

⁶ See document ENDC/PV.397.

commitment would also contribute to focusing, within a clearer and more concrete framework, on the main task of the Conference, which we believe still remains that of negotiating disarmament measures. For the same reason it could contribute to ensuring a better balance among the different categories of measures that are being negotiated by the Conference. In fact, the emphasis would no longer be put—as it has been up till now—only on the prevention and limitation of armaments, but also on the reduction of armaments, even though—for the time being, at least—it would only be through the adoption of a specific commitment to negotiate.

51. The Italian delegation attaches considerable importance to the establishment of a better balance among the various categories of measures negotiated by the Conference. The commitment which we have suggested could therefore be—from this particular point of view also—of considerable practical significance.

52. At this stage I do not wish to make specific suggestions on the procedure to be followed in order to further the elaboration of the programme of disarmament. For the time being, I shall limit myself to what I have said on the two elements which, in the view of my delegation, should represent important provisions of the programme itself. It would be useful if other delegations expressed their opinion on such questions during this debate, thus providing valuable indications for continuing our work on a problem of such paramount importance.

53. With regard to the other fields of activity to which the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament relates, we are pleased to acknowledge that this year again the Geneva Conference on Disarmament has not spared any effort in trying to achieve concrete results.

54. The text of the draft 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, which is contained in annex A of the report, in our opinion represents a decisive improvement over the previous draft,⁷ which the General Assembly thoroughly examined at its last session. Some misgivings that we ourselves had felt with respect to the previous text, particularly regarding the verification procedures it envisaged, have now been dispelled. The Italian delegation therefore expresses the hope that the General Assembly, by adopting the relevant draft resolution, which will certainly be co-sponsored by many members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, including Italy, will commend the treaty to Governments and request that it be open for signature and ratification at the earliest possible date. We believe that the present text of the draft treaty offers a valuable and realistic solution to the problems concerning the limitation of armaments on the sea-bed. It constitutes, moreover, a brilliant example of the results that can be attained through constructive co-operation between the United Nations General Assembly and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

55. Article V of the draft provides for future negotiations aimed at further disarmament measures affecting the

sea-bed. The Italian Government hopes that those negotiations may eventually lead to new and effective agreements; it wishes to state, however, that the definition of the areas to which new agreements would be applied will necessarily vary in relation to the various kinds of amendments involved.

56. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has devoted a considerable part of its work to the discussion of the important problem of chemical and biological weapons. The discussions have been exhaustive and certainly have contributed to clarifying many aspects related to the prohibition, production, development and stockpiling of both chemical and biological weapons. Nevertheless, it appeared clearly that, while an agreement on the prohibition of biological weapons would not entail considerable difficulty—from the point of view of its practical application—there still exist, on the other hand, significant obstacles to the elaboration of a more general agreement, which would include the prohibition of the production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. In the latter connexion it was generally agreed that it is important to reach a solution encompassing also a system of verification that would, at the same time, be effective and realistically applicable.

57. The Italian delegation at Geneva made its own contribution with a view to clarifying some aspects related to the institution of an appropriate system of verification. I wish, however, to reaffirm that the Italian Government fully supports the draft convention for the prohibition of biological methods of warfare submitted by the United Kingdom delegation at Geneva [*ibid.*, sect. 2]. Indeed, we could not share the opinions of those delegations which opposed any agreement that did not comprehend both chemical and biological weapons. In our view, it is in fact important that concrete results, though partial, be obtained as soon as possible in such a delicate field. We do not see why today we should renounce real progress and instead wait for a future agreement inclusive of a broader range of weapons, since we all know that the negotiation of such an agreement is still encountering considerable difficulties.

58. With regard to the problem of chemical and biological weapons, the decision of the President of the United States to submit the Geneva Protocol of 1925⁸ for ratification by the Senate represents a further very important and favourable development. I think that that is an extremely important step towards the universalization of the obligations and commitments embodied in the Protocol.

59. Such a development should be viewed as particularly significant, especially if we take into consideration the fact that President Nixon suggested that the United States Senate ratify the Protocol without the reservation made, at the moment of its ratification, by several other States aimed at restricting the scope of the obligations contracted only for the benefit of the other parties to the Protocol. The Italian delegation—as is related in the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament—believes that all those States which at the moment of acceding to

⁷ Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969, document DC/232, annex A.

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).

the Protocol made the so-called reservation *intra partes*, restricting thereby only their obligations vis-à-vis the other parties to the Protocol—should withdraw it as soon as possible thus giving a universal character to their commitments.

60. Turning to another point, also covered by the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, I wish to underline once again the great importance and urgency that, in our view, must be ascribed to two measures that can now be considered ripe for a solution. I am referring to the problem of extending a nuclear test ban to underground experiments and the problem of the cessation of the production of fissionable material for military purposes.

61. In that field, unfortunately, the results achieved in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament have not been encouraging. We think, however, that the studies carried out in pursuance of resolution 2604 A (XXIV) on the possibility of an exchange of seismological data among States have been of real importance for a possible agreement on a comprehensive test ban. We do not see any reason why Governments should not all co-operate in an international programme for the exchange of these data.

62. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations offers us an appropriate occasion not only to review the results that have been achieved, but also to reiterate solemnly our firm will to pursue our efforts towards disarmament, without departing from its original aims. Our action will be all the more effective if other Governments, which up till now have not joined us in our negotiations, do so presently in these discussions.

63. On our part, we shall increase our efforts to build an effective and solid basis of understanding, which should represent a condition for the subsequent development of the negotiations on disarmament. In our work, we must be guided by the necessary criteria of realism which alone can assure the success of the negotiations, but we must not remain indifferent to the ideal motivations which alone, in their turn, may mobilize the indispensable support of the peoples for our efforts, along the difficult and thorny path leading to disarmament.

64. Mr. OGBU (Nigeria): In joining the debate on disarmament in this Committee, I should like to express my delegation's appreciation of the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [A/8059-DC/233]. In the first place the form and contents of the report constitute yet a further improvement on the reports of previous years. Secondly, it is gratifying to note that in response, perhaps, to the criticisms which I, among others, voiced regarding the lateness of the submission of last year's report, this year's report has been made available early enough to enable delegations to study its contents and consult with their Governments before the beginning of the debate.

65. The successful negotiation by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament of a draft treaty prohibiting the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof [*ibid.*, annex A] is a most welcome development. The Nigerian delegation feels privileged to have

participated in and made some contribution to the negotiations.

66. The significance of the draft treaty cannot be over-emphasized. The development of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction constitute a generally acknowledged threat to mankind. It therefore behoves us all, while we are grappling, without much success perhaps, with the task of stopping or de-escalating the existing nuclear arms race, to ensure that the race does not extend to spheres where it has not yet begun. That is one reason why my delegation welcomes the draft treaty, because its adoption will constitute a first step towards preventing the arms race on the sea-bed, which represents a substantial proportion of the surface of the earth. There is yet another reason—why my delegation considers the successful negotiation of the draft treaty significant. The negotiations, as is clear from the records of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, were conducted in a spirit of conciliation and co-operation. The ceaseless efforts of the co-Chairmen of the Committee to accommodate each other's views as well as the views and suggestions of the other delegations, including mine, augur well for the future. Disarmament is, indeed, a complex and difficult matter, particularly since it bears on the security of States. But the essence of negotiation is not to attain a unanimity of views, but rather a synthesis, or a reconciliation, of initially divergent views. The true spirit of negotiation evinced by the co-Chairmen of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament is, therefore, commendable and I sincerely hope that that spirit will be brought into active play again, particularly in regard to positive disarmament measures as distinct from the non-armament measures of the sea-bed treaty.

67. The draft treaty now presented to this Committee is, in the view of my delegation, an improvement on the initial draft presented last year.⁹ It provides reasonable safeguards for the rights of coastal States; it provides for consultations with any State whose activities are suspected and for possible inspection of the object of those activities at the invitation of the suspected States; it provides that verification pursuant to the treaty could be undertaken by a State using its own means, with the assistance of any other State or through appropriate international procedures within the framework of the United Nations and in accordance with its Charter. There is a provision for recourse to the Security Council where doubts persist after verification, and finally, it includes an undertaking in Article V "to continue negotiations in good faith concerning further measures in the field of disarmament for the prevention of an arms race on the sea-bed". The draft treaty is not, of course, ideal. In fact, it falls short of our initial hopes for a treaty that would ban the arms race, both nuclear and conventional, from the sea-bed. Nevertheless, the draft as it now stands is, in the opinion of my delegation, a tolerable synthesis of the views that have been expressed both here in the General Assembly and in the Conference of the Committee for Disarmament. It is balanced and therefore acceptable to Nigeria and my delegation recommends its adoption by the General Assembly.

68. On 5 March 1970 the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*],

⁹ Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969, document DC/232, annex A.

which had taken years to negotiate, happily entered into force. Although it is a non-armament as distinct from a disarmament measure, it is indeed one of the most important measures of arms control on which agreement has yet been reached. The coming into force of the Treaty, which required ratification by at least a third of the international community, symbolizes the genuine desire of humanity for peace and security. However, the search for peace in the context of the non-proliferation Treaty cannot be fully guaranteed or realized until the Treaty achieves universality. That is why my delegation would like to renew its appeal to those countries that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible. The pursuit of nuclear military power as a means of guaranteeing security is a will-o'-the-wisp. The paradox of our present-day world is that, far from guaranteeing national security, the acquisition of nuclear weapons by a State increases the insecurity of all of us.

69. While we express satisfaction over the coming into force of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, we must note with regret that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has made little or no progress in negotiating a treaty to ban underground nuclear tests. As I have repeatedly pointed out at previous sessions, the lack of progress in this field constitutes a breach of faith by the nuclear Powers, since such a treaty is, as it were, the *quid pro quo* for the obligations which we, the non-nuclear States, have assumed under the non-proliferation Treaty.

70. The greatest stumbling block to concluding a comprehensive test ban still remains the question of verification. While we hopefully expect that a successful conclusion of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) between the USSR and the United States of America will facilitate the negotiations on a comprehensive test ban, we also believe that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament should nevertheless continue its independent initiatives. Just as the outcome of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks may facilitate the negotiations in the Committee, so too can a break-through in the latter have a beneficial impact on the talks. That is why, despite the seeming lack of progress in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, we are appreciative of the untiring efforts of that Committee to devise a verification system that will be sufficiently reliable to be widely acceptable.

71. It is true that the conclusion of any disarmament agreement is principally a political action and therefore presupposes the existence of the necessary political will on the part of all concerned. It is also true, however, that political judgement or will cannot be exercised in a vacuum, particularly when, as in disarmament questions, such an exercise touches on national security. The reliability or credibility of the control system is necessarily an important factor. I realize, of course, that no control system can be absolutely foolproof and that in the final analysis the political will to take certain risks may be the deciding factor.

72. Those were the considerations we had in mind when last year we supported the Canadian initiative regarding the establishment of a world-wide seismic data exchange. We believed, and still believe, that such a system not only will eschew the need for intrusive on-site inspections, which are

unacceptable to some, but will provide relatively reliable control upon which a treaty can be built. We are therefore pleased to see the encouraging response [see A/7967/Rev.1] to the Secretary-General's questionnaire on the exchange of seismic data, based on resolution 2604 A (XXIV). We are also grateful to the Canadian delegation for its analysis [A/8059-DC/233, annex C, sect. 34] of the replies to the questionnaire.

73. Assessment of the replies indicates that there is room for improvement in many national seismic stations and, thereby, for the improvement of world-wide detection capability. My delegation would therefore appeal to those Governments which are capable of doing so to improve the efficiency of their stations. Furthermore, we would urge that those Governments which are in a position to assist others in improving their stations should give favourable consideration to any such requests. In this way a reliable and widely acceptable system can be evolved, which would expedite the conclusion of the highly desirable comprehensive test ban treaty.

74. We are convinced that any system of off-site seismic control must necessarily involve the standardization and exchange of seismic data, whether that exchange is undertaken through a central agency or not. My delegation would therefore urge that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament should continue its study of this issue, and we sincerely hope that all Governments will co-operate.

75. Before I turn to another subject, may I once again reiterate the urgent need for a comprehensive test ban. All possible proposals have, I think, been exhausted and unless the super-Powers are politically willing to commit themselves to at least one of the existing proposals, we shall soon reach an impassable stalemate, if we have not already done so. The analysis of the responses to the Secretary-General has again confirmed that, even with the level of efficiency of the existing seismic stations, explosions above magnitude 4.5 can be detected seismologically. I would therefore renew the appeal to the nuclear super-Powers that, granting the inadequacy of the existing seismic system in detecting all explosions, they should, as a first step, accept a threshold ban.

76. I am aware of the argument that the super-Powers have acquired so much nuclear experience and knowledge since such a ban was first mooted that it may not now contribute much to the cessation of the nuclear arms race. That argument may be valid, but, in my own view, the situation regarding a comprehensive test ban is becoming desperate and a start, however limited in scope, should be made if only to avoid utter despair and its dire consequences. A threshold ban, therefore, offers such an opportunity. It will constitute an earnest of the genuine desire of the super-Powers for the cessation of nuclear explosions for military purposes and engender new hope for a total ban. What is more, it may, I opine, give a fillip to accessions to the non-proliferation Treaty. It is pertinent to note that expert opinion considers a threshold ban possible and desirable.

77. I now come to the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) methods of warfare. It is unfortunate that, in spite of the hard work the Conference of the

Committee on Disarmament has put into this subject matter, no substantial progress seems to have been achieved.

78. Last year, the General Assembly had before it two draft conventions pertaining to biological and chemical weapons. One was a draft convention submitted by nine socialist countries on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons;¹⁰ the other was a draft convention submitted by the United Kingdom on the prohibition of biological methods of warfare.¹¹ The General Assembly, it will be recalled, directed that the two draft conventions be referred to the Committee on Disarmament for consideration with a view to submitting this year a report on all aspects of the problem of the elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

79. An examination of the records of the Committee on Disarmament reveals that the obstacles to reaching an agreement on these two weapons were threefold, namely, first, the question of whether negotiations should cover the two weapons simultaneously or be undertaken serially, dealing first with biological weapons; secondly, the issue, partially related to the above, of whether the agreement on the weapons should be embodied in a single document or more; and thirdly, the problems of verification, particularly with regard to chemical weapons.

80. On the question of simultaneous coverage of the two weapons, it has been argued that, while the case is different for chemical weapons, immediate total elimination of biological weapons could be undertaken without effective monitoring and inspection provisions and a convention along the lines of the United Kingdom draft could therefore be negotiated now. Negotiations covering both biological and chemical weapons would, on the other hand, take a long time, because chemical weapons have greater tactical military significance and their prohibition must therefore be accompanied by reliable and complex verification arrangements which might take quite a time to negotiate. While my delegation appreciates the good faith of those who have advanced these arguments, we remain unconvinced. In the first place, the two weapons form a whole and they have been considered as such not only in the Geneva Protocol of 1925¹² but also in the special studies that have been undertaken by the United Nations Secretary-General, the World Health Organization and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Negotiations on the two weapons should therefore be simultaneous. Secondly, if, as it has been argued, admittedly from knowledge of the subject, biological weapons have little military value while chemical weapons have tremendous tactical value, then there should be no urgency about negotiating an agreement on biological weapons.

¹⁰ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes*, agenda items 29, 30, 31 and 104, document A/7655.

¹¹ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969*, document DC/232, annex C, sect. 20.

¹² 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).

Rather, negotiations on the militarily more valuable chemical weapons should be embarked upon immediately with a view to banning the two weapons simultaneously.

81. The question of whether the ban on the two weapons should be embodied in a single legal document or not is, in the view of my delegation, a procedural matter which should await a decision until the framework of the agreement on the two weapons shall have been negotiated. It is only then that one can usefully discuss the legal form the agreement should take.

82. The question of verification with regard to chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons is, as in all disarmament measures, very important. As I stated earlier while discussing the comprehensive test ban, the political will to subscribe to a disarmament measure cannot be dissociated from the acceptability of the control system. It is therefore not surprising that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has devoted a lot of time to the question of verification.

83. We are glad to note that there seems to have been some measure of agreement in the Conference on the verification method that could be applied to biological agents—verification by challenge. Chemical weapons, however, pose problems of a different nature from those pertaining to biological weapons, which in fact make verification by challenge inadequate. Some members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament had indicated, during the discussion there, that nothing short of a highly intrusive on-site inspection could be acceptable. My delegation disagrees with this view. In the first place, if the motivation is the establishment of a foolproof control system, that in any case is unattainable in any disarmament measure. Secondly, if on-site inspection could ensure 100 per cent certainty, it would only be so if every industrial establishment that produces or handles chemical agents were subject to continuous or constant inspection. That, of course, would be physically and financially impossible because of the number of establishments that would be involved. On the other hand, my delegation also disagrees with the notion that national self-control should, by itself, constitute an adequate verification measure. We believe that a happy medium between these two extreme positions could be found, which would ensure a level of control reliable enough to be acceptable to all. This was why the Nigerian delegation, in association with 11 other delegations, sponsored the memorandum on the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) methods of warfare [*ibid.*, annex C, sect. 39]. That document recommends that “a verification should be based on a combination of appropriate national and international measures, which would complement and supplement each other, thereby providing in acceptable system which would ensure effective implementation of the prohibition”. My delegation still stands by that view. Suggestions were made in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament regarding the possible contents of the proposed combined measures but, as the representative of Canada pointed out in his statement of 2 November [1749th meeting], it has not been possible to determine precisely what form the measures might take. We hope that the General Assembly will give the weight of its support to the recommendations contained in the joint memorandum, so that the Confer-

ence of the Committee on Disarmament may, at its next session, address itself urgently to defining precisely the form the combined measures should take.

84. At its twenty-fourth session, in resolution 2602 E (XXIV), the General Assembly requested the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to work out “a comprehensive programme, dealing with all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under effective international control, which would provide the Conference with a guideline to chart the course of its further work and its negotiations”.

85. Nigeria has always held the view that while the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament could not be said to have lost sight of its ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament there has, nevertheless, been a discernible concentration on collateral and non-armament measures while no progress has been made in the field of real disarmament. We therefore supported General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV), because we considered that the preparation of a programme to serve as a guideline would tend to bring the various aspects of disarmament into proper perspective and serve as an incentive to maintaining a balance in the various kinds of disarmament measures—non-armament, arms limitation and real disarmament.

86. Our own conception of a programme is that it should be flexible; it should not set target dates but should assign priority to nuclear weapons; it should recognize the interrelationship between disarmament and international security and, above all, the programme should serve as a guideline rather than a firm commitment. It is on this basis that we welcome the draft programme submitted in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament by Mexico, Sweden and Yugoslavia [*A/8059-DC/233, annex C, sect. 42*]. We have our reservations about the expediency of one or two of the proposals contained in the programme. However, we consider it to be a commendable effort, which offers an acceptable basis for negotiation. We do hope that the necessary negotiations will be undertaken and completed at this session of the General Assembly so that the programme may be adopted without referring it back to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

87. The questions of the cessation of the arms race and of disarmament have assumed such urgency that all of us, both small and big nations, should direct our efforts and policies towards facilitating the achievement of our immediate objective of nuclear disarmament and of our ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. Nigeria is dedicated to contributing its best. We should all appreciate, nevertheless, that, however devoted we may be to the cause of disarmament, our efforts will at best only meet with partial success unless all nuclear Powers are associated or identified with those efforts. That is why my delegation feels it is high time that renewed and sustained efforts were made to ensure the admission of China to the United Nations and the active participation of that country and France in our disarmament efforts.

88. Mr. FORTHOMME (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): “It is not necessary to hope in order to act nor to succeed in order to persevere.” That was the motto

attributed to William of Orange, one of the founding fathers of the Netherlands. It would appear however that it is wrong to attribute it to him, since it is a trifle long for one who was known as William the Taciturn. Whatever the outcome of this historical controversy, the motto might be applied to the work of disarmament which our Committee is undertaking.

89. I was struck by the tone of disillusionment, almost of pessimism, adopted by a number of speakers in the debate. It is true that, considering the immensity of the task before us, the progress achieved by the United Nations since its inception might appear to be insignificant. Yet in the past 12 years or so we have had the 1959 Antarctic Treaty,¹³ the partial test-ban Treaty,¹⁴ the Treaty on outer space,¹⁵ as well as the Treaty of Tlatelolco¹⁶ and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*]. It is little, I know, and the representative of Sweden was right when she said that we have taken measures of non-armament and not of disarmament. However, I see no reason for discouragement. On the contrary, if we consider that in the course of the life of the League of Nations, before the last world war, and during the first 15 years of the life of our Organization, practically nothing was done in the field of disarmament, I think we can be gratified at the relative success achieved in the last few years.

90. The problem of general and complete disarmament is so vast, because of its political, economic and social implications, that it was impossible to solve it globally. Moreover, its solution is complicated by the following fundamental contradiction: no disarmament without mutual trust and assured peace, and no peace and trust without disarmament. If to this we add the almost insoluble problem of control, we can understand why disarmament policy is marking time.

91. But for some years now, our Organization has adopted a new approach, that of seeking to solve problems by splitting them up and trying to achieve partial solutions to specific situations. It is from this point of view that my delegation is pleased to express its appreciation of the work done in Geneva and to pay a tribute to the members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, who are fulfilling their mandate with the competence and zeal worthy of such a noble task. But there are also other areas where some progress towards disarmament can be achieved. We know that the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the Soviet Union and the United States have been resumed at Helsinki. We are also aware of the world-wide importance of these negotiations, and we sincerely hope that, cognizant of their responsibilities, these two great nations will arrive at solutions consistent with their interests and those of mankind, and consistent as well with the obligations deriving from the Treaty on non-proliferation.

¹³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 402 (1961), No. 5778.

¹⁴ Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 480 (1963), No. 6964).

¹⁵ Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 2222 (XXI), annex).

¹⁶ Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634 (1968), No. 9068).

92. I should also like to recall the importance that my country, as well as many other European countries, attaches to the reduction of military forces in Europe. We participated in the call for a study of the possibilities in this field, and we hope that our call will be heeded.

93. My delegation would like to state its position with specific reference to the items on the Committee's agenda. My country views as an encouraging step the presentation of a new draft 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 sub-soil thereof [A/8059-DC/233, annex A]. In such a complex and new field the combined efforts of the countries most directly concerned, and of members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and of the General Assembly, have led to the drafting of a new text, which should be an important milestone on the road that we have been following. While lacking the importance or scope of the Treaty on non-proliferation, it will certainly be included among the achievements of our Organization in the search for general and complete disarmament. However, it falls short of the expectations of my delegation as well as of a number of others.

94. Science and technology are opening up a new world for mankind and it is to be hoped that the experience of the past would help us to avoid extending to the sea-bed the rivalries and the conflicts that all too often have marked the discovery of new worlds. Reason, history and a sense of humanity make it imperative that we should ensure peace for the sea-bed as well and reserve it exclusively for peaceful purposes.

95. The treaty, which is confined to weapons of mass destruction, is only the first step. However, we are particularly pleased with the new drafting of Article V, which holds promise for the future. We have noted the statements made by a number of delegations which, as do we, would like to prevent an arms race on the sea-bed. While this draft does not meet all our hopes, at least it stands as an example that might serve for other endeavours and other achievements.

96. It is through the co-operation of all delegations, by taking into account all the contributions, that it was possible to draft a text that should command the adherence of the great majority of the Assembly. It now constitutes a balanced whole, and I am specifically thinking of the new wording of article III, which made it possible for my delegation to accept it with satisfaction and to recommend it for adoption by the General Assembly and by all the Member Governments of our Organization.

97. While we can take pleasure in the concrete though limited success with respect to the sea-bed, it would appear that the underground areas are still closed to our peaceful initiatives. Everyone agrees on the need to put an end to nuclear tests which can lead only to further sophistication of the ways of destroying civilization and, doubtless, mankind itself. Alas, we know the reason for the stalemate, and we know also that the problem of control is the basis of any disarmament measure or even of a halt to the arms race.

98. No sophistry, no naive desire can change the harsh reality of our divided world. But here again the gradual

approach should allow some progress to take place. That is why Belgium has associated itself with the efforts to ensure the general application of the partial test-ban Treaty, as well as with the efforts to complete that partial Treaty—efforts that are given concrete form in General Assembly resolution 2604 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969.

99. My Government attaches particular importance to the aim of resolution 2604 A (XXIV), which is designed to establish and develop international co-operation for a world-wide exchange of seismological data. Technical progress gives us reason to hope that better knowledge of seismological phenomena and the wide dissemination of information thereon would open the door to a system of control over underground nuclear and thermonuclear explosions. We are happy to note that, if our information is up to date, almost 90 Governments have replied to the questionnaire of the Secretary-General [see A/7967/Rev.1]. Belgium's reply appears in document A/7967/Add.4. This technical information furnished by a very large majority of the Members of our Organization will now have to be studied by the experts and the result of those studies will have to be analysed to determine the practical use that can be made of them. The task, therefore, is far from having been accomplished. That is why my delegation noted with satisfaction the statement made by the representative of Canada that his country intends to make proposals "which might serve as a useful focus for support for further progress in clarifying the potential role of a seismic data exchange system in the verification process of a comprehensive ban". [1749th meeting, para. 18.] Certainly, the work undertaken should be pursued, and my Government views with active interest any new efforts undertaken to that end.

100. On the same subject, my delegation has noted and examined the United Kingdom proposal concerning the possibilities of creating an international network of seismic stations capable of detecting explosions of more than 10 kilotons. The cost of such an operation, which would be about \$36 million, does not seem excessive if we compare it with the amounts that are spent annually on armaments all over the world. We are fully aware that the threshold of 10 kilotons would leave many loopholes in the system. Nevertheless, the question warrants deeper study. We express the hope that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament will continue its work along the lines indicated.

101. While my delegation has been gratified at the relative progress achieved in some limited sectors of nuclear disarmament—or, rather, non-armament—the same is not true of other weapons of mass destruction, and I am referring to chemical and bacteriological weapons. We cannot disguise the fact that since the Geneva Protocol of 1925,¹⁷ progress in this field has been extremely limited. It is true that there have been some new accessions to the Protocol. We are particularly happy to note that the President of the United States has recommended its ratification to the United States Congress. We also note the unilateral declarations of renunciation of the use of bacteriological weapons made by a number of countries,

¹⁷ 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).

including the United States. Those are statements of principle which certainly have some value but cannot fully replace the obligations arising from one or more multilateral instruments.

102. Unfortunately, we are far from the desired result in this regard. We know the arguments that have been adduced and we know that in this specific field, as in other disarmament questions, we are faced with the thorny problem of control. With regard to chemical weapons, that problem is further complicated by the difficulty of defining with precision which products are to be prohibited. The possibility of chemical or bacteriological warfare is too ghastly for us to be satisfied with mere declarations of principle, even if they are of a multilateral nature. Yet that is precisely what a treaty would be if it covered the two aspects without containing the guarantees and safeguards of control that such a treaty should embody. Unfortunately, the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament so far has not made it possible to work out a system of guarantees with respect to chemical weapons. These weapons are so sophisticated and so closely linked to the legitimate chemical industry that it has not been possible to envisage any control machinery that would not be either too inquisitorial or too weak.

103. The same disadvantages do not apply to biological weapons, whose conditions of use and methods of production are entirely different. However, the progress of science in this field—if we can still call it progress—gives ground for fear that very soon the conditions of production, stockpiling and use of these weapons might be completely modified.

104. Therefore, it is urgent that measures be immediately taken to stop the arms race in this field by considering the two types of weapons separately. It is no less urgent to continue research and exchanges of view on chemical warfare, to whose dangers and horrors we cannot shut our eyes. Therefore, in the present state of affairs, my delegation considers it necessary to urge the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to continue its work in these two directions, with the firm hope that it will be able to submit concrete solutions to the next session of the General Assembly.

105. Resolution 2602 E (XXIV) of 16 December 1969 quite correctly drew the attention of the world to the advisability of drawing up a detailed programme for general and complete disarmament. Indeed, the fragmentary approach, which has had some results, must not lead us to overlook the final goal which we have set for ourselves. The work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has brought out—if it were still necessary to do so—the infinite complexity of these problems, of which we find a kind of inventory in paragraph 59 of the report [A/8959-DC/233]. It would be otiose to reiterate that here and thus to repeat the Geneva debates. However, my delegation would like to stress the close connexion between questions concerning international peace and security and disarmament problems.

106. This is a matter to which I have referred in the past, and that is why we continue to believe that we must try to solve the problems gradually.

107. Furthermore we attribute specific importance to the possibilities opened up by the regional disarmament measures that have been adopted.

108. We have also given special attention to the possibilities of diverting to peaceful purposes resources released by disarmament, particularly in the field of assistance for development. However, these are only a few of the many problems raised by the concept of general and complete disarmament that deserve thorough study both in our Committee and in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

109. To that end, the document submitted by Mexico, Sweden and Yugoslavia on 27 August 1970 constitutes a very important step towards disarmament [*ibid.*, annex C, sect. 42]. If the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has succeeded in identifying the problem, it must be followed through in order to take into account the debates of our own Committee and to weigh the documents submitted—particularly that of the three countries I have just mentioned.

110. The 1960s were a decade of some achievements in disarmament. They may appear slight in comparison with what remains to be done, and are certainly far from meeting the aspirations of peoples and the imperatives dictated by reason and logic. All over the world, and particularly here, declarations are repeatedly made of peaceful intentions and the desire to live together as good neighbours. The Declaration adopted on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations quite justifiably once again reaffirmed, among other important principles of the Charter and international law, the renunciation of the use or threat of force by nations, but as Mr. Harmel, the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, said from the rostrum of the General Assembly on 1 October this year:

“What purpose does it really serve to declare solemnly that we renounce the use of force, if we continue to pile up the instruments of force? It follows that the renunciation of force and the reduction of armaments are two indivisible elements.” [*1856th plenary meeting, para. 206.*]

111. Our actions must match our words if the decade of the 1970s is truly to be the Disarmament Decade.

112. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): The list of speakers for this morning's meeting is exhausted and I have no speakers listed for this afternoon's meeting. It is therefore cancelled.

113. Before adjourning this meeting, I would remind all representatives that, as agreed at the previous meeting, the list of speakers for the debate on the disarmament items will be closed at 1 p.m. I therefore urge all delegations who wish to participate in this debate to put their names on the speaker's list as soon as possible.

114. Concerning our work next week, I should like to inform the Committee that two meetings have been scheduled for Monday, 9 November—one at 10.30 a.m., the other at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.