United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-THIRD SESSION
*Official Records**

FIRST COMMITTEE
5th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 18 October 1989
at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela)

CONTENTS

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/44/PV.5
20 October 1989
ENGLISH

89-63027 3667V (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have heard with great distress and sorrow reports of the earthquake that struck the city of San Francisco yesterday. I am sure that I voice the feelings of the First Committee when I express to the delegation of the United States of America our solidarity with the people and Government of the United States, and I extend our sincere condolences to the victims of the earthquake.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 TO 69 AND 151 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call first upon the current Chairman of the Conference on Disarmament, who will introduce the report of the Conference for this year to the First Committee.

Mr. BENHIMA (Morocco), President of the Conference on Disarmament (interpretation from French): It is a pleasure for me to express to you, Sir, on my own behalf and as current Chairman of the Conference on Disarmament, my warm congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. Your long diplomatic career, one that has been marked by important functions in multilateral diplomacy and especially in the field of disarmament, in which your abilities as an able negotiator have been greatly appreciated, augurs well for the success of this important Committee.

I have asked to speak as Chairman of the Conference on Disarmament to introduce the report of the Conference on its 1989 session. The report, document CD/956, is published as Supplement 27 to the Official Records of the General Assembly, document A/44/27.

Chapter II of the report covers the organization of work. The Conference held its 1989 session from 7 February to 27 April and from 13 June to 31 August. That

(Mr. Benhima, President, Conference on Disarmament)

chapter also contains a summary of different issues in the field, including the attendance and participation of member States in the work of the Conference, the agenda and programme of work of the annual session, the attendance and participation of States not members of the Conference, the expansion of the membership of the Conference and the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. It also covers measures adopted by the Conference relating to the financial situation of the United Nations and communications from non-governmental organizations.

The substantive work of the Conference during its 1989 session is the subject of chapter III of the report. That part of the report lists the documents made available to members. It summarizes the deliberations of the Conference on the various questions before it and the positions expressed by groups and delegations on all the agenda items.

At the 1989 session individual consultations were held on an informal basis by the Chairman for the month of March, Ambassador Yamada of Japan, with a view to reaching a consensus on the terms of the mandate of an ad hoc committee to be established under agenda item 1, "Nuclear-test ban". Substantial progress was achieved in those consultations. Indeed, it was possible to reduce considerably the differences among delegations and to harmonize positions. Therefore, as noted in paragraph 38 of the report, many members of the Conference expressed the view that such consultations should continue until agreement was reached on a mandate for the ad hoc committee.

For its part, the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events continued its deliberations on plans for a large-scale experiment known as the Group of Scientific Experts' Technical Test (GSETT-2), aimed at testing the proposed

(Mr. Benhima, President, Conference on Disarmament)

initial concepts for a modern international seismic data exchange system to be established within the framework of a nuclear-test-ban treaty, in accordance with the terms of reference given to the Ad Hoc Group in 1979.

Consultations also continued in the Conference on the procedures to be followed in consideration of agenda item 2, "Cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament" and agenda item 3, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters". Unfortunately, it was not possible to reach agreement on an appropriate structure for the consideration of those agenda items. The discussions that took place on those subjects, as well as the discussions on the substantive issues under those items, are reflected in the relevant sections of the annual report.

(Mr. Benhima, President, Conference on Disarmament)

The historic consensus achieved at the Paris Conference of States Parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and of other States concerned, held at the beginning of the year, brought about a major breakthrough in the negotiations conducted for a decade now in the Conference on Disarmament with a view to concluding a convention on prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction. The success of the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, held recently in Canberra, and the recent statements in the General Assembly, especially the statements made by the two great Powers, warrant high hopes that the negotiations in Geneva on the draft convention on chemical weapons will be intensified.

The report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons is contained in paragraph 87 of the Conference's annual report. Appendix I contains the preliminary structure of a convention on chemical weapons and other relevant documents. The documents contained in appendix II reflect the results of work undertaken on questions relating to the convention, and this work will serve as a basis for the future work of that Ad Hoc Committee.

I would like to stress, in this respect, that the work on the convention, work presided over competently by Ambassador Pierre Morel of France, will resume in open-ended consultations from 28 November to 14 December, as well as in a session of limited duration of the Ad Hoc Committee, to be held from 16 January to 1 February 1990.

As is reflected in the report, the Conference on Disarmament also established subsidiary bodies to deal with the following agenda items: item 5: Prevention of an arms race in outer space; item 6: Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapon; item 7: New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such

(Mr. Benhima, President, Conference on Disarmament)

weapons; radiological weapons; and item 8: Comprehensive programme of disarmament. The deliberations of the Conference and of its Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space are contained in paragraph 88 of the annual report. These deliberations particularly emphasized the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space, especially since all delegations have declared their readiness to work towards the attainment of that shared objective. Towards this end, the Ad Hoc Committee recommended in its conclusions, contained in paragraph 78 of its report, that the Conference on Disarmament re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee at the beginning of the 1990 session, and that it give it an appropriate mandate, taking into account all relevant factors, including the work done by the Committee since 1985.

The report of the Ad Hoc Committee on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is contained in paragraph 93 of the annual report of the Conference. In paragraph 13 of its report, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends to the Conference that ways and means should continue to be explored to overcome the difficulties encountered in its work in carrying out negotiations on this question. It was also agreed that the Ad Hoc Committee should be re-established at the beginning of the 1990 session.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons, whose deliberations are reflected in paragraph 96 of the report, continued its work in two Contact Groups. Group A considered the question of the prohibition of radiological weapons in the traditional sense, and Group B considered the question of the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities. In the conclusions and recommendations that it adopted in paragraph 12 of its report, the Ad hoc Committee declares that the work conducted in 1989 was useful in that it contributed to clarify and make more

(Mr. Benhima, President, Conference on Disarmament)

concise the different approaches with regard to these two important subjects. It also recommended that the Ad Hoc Committee be re-established at the beginning of the 1990 session and that it draw upon the annexes to its report of 1989 as a basis for its future work.

Lastly, the report of the Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament is contained in paragraph 100 of the report of the Conference. During 1989, the Ad Hoc Committee continued its negotiations on this programme with the firm intention of completing the elaboration of the Programme for its submission to the General Assembly at this session. Although progress was achieved on certain subjects, it was not possible to reconcile differences on other issues, and it was therefore impossible to complete the elaboration of the programme this year. In paragraph 7 of its report the Ad Hoc Committee, bearing in mind the terms of its mandate, agreed to submit to the General Assembly the results of its work, and to resume work with a view to resolving the outstanding issues in the near future, when circumstances were more conducive to making progress in this regard.

By way of conclusion to this introduction to the report of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to emphasize the excellent climate in which the 1989 session was conducted. It is true that East-West détente and the dialogue that has been prevailing in international relations for some time, as well as the beginnings of political settlement to many regional conflicts, contributed greatly to the serenity of the debates in the Conference. A bolder political will and a more resolute spirit of responsibility also emerged, and this was a valuable contribution on the part of all the members of the Conference.

It is this firmer commitment to the common cause of disarmament that made it possible for slow but steady progress to be achieved under the terms of the mandate of the Committee on the prohibition of nuclear weapons. And it is that same

(Mr. Benhima, President, Conference on Disarmament)

commitment that made it possible substantially to improve the draft text of a convention on chemical weapons. We hope that that same commitment will make it possible for the Conference to progress in its efforts to accomplish the mission given it by the General Assembly. The annual report of the Conference which I have just introduced reflects the collective efforts of the members of the Conference. It also reflects their will to succeed, in spite of existing differences, in achieving a growing harmonization of our views on disarmament.

May the report bring to the First Committee of the General Assembly elements that will enrich its debates and help in the adoption of resolutions that will meet the expectations of the international community in the field of disarmament.

I would like my last words to be words of gratitude to all the members of the Conference on Disarmament, the Chairmen of its Ad Hoc Committees and all of the secretariat. Their unanimous support and their co-operation were of great help to me and facilitated my task, especially that ever-difficult task of preparing the annual report of the Conference.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the current President of the Conference on Disarmament for introducing the report of the Conference.

Mr. LEHMAN (United States of America): I wish to express my gratitude, Mr. Chairman, for your extension of condolences to the victims of the earthquake in northern California. I say this not simply because that is my home, but because your expression of sympathy reflects the finest instincts of humanity. Again, I thank you.

I also wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. On behalf of the entire United States delegation, I wish you well as you lead us through a challenging and comprehensive agenda.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

The United States delegation welcomes this opportunity to share views with other delegations on the full range of arms limitation and disarmament issues. We hope to expand common ground where consensus can be achieved, and to understand better the concerns of other Member States when differences must remain.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

The United States of America is proud of its central role in achieving numerous historic agreements in behalf of arms control and disarmament. The rapid pace in recent months continues to demonstrate strong American leadership in this revolutionary process. At the same time, we recognize that success has only been possible because other parties to these negotiations have been willing to work towards resolution of differences on matters of great importance. In particular, the major nuclear Powers and their allies have set examples in dealing with global and regional security problems which are worthy of emulation by all nations.

At the end of this session, when each delegation evaluates the significance of the votes taken and statements made, let us recognize also that deeds are to be weighed more heavily than words. The time has come in the First Committee for all nations to move beyond posturing and polemics. There are hopeful signs in this regard. The talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on arms control, security and human rights are more honest and serious than at any other time in the past 45 years. Furthermore, the clear, more concise and more moderate declaration of the ninth non-aligned summit, recently concluded in Belgrade, augurs well for a more constructive exchange of views in the First Committee.

When President Bush returned to the United Nations last month to address the General Assembly, he said that open and innovative measures can move disarmament forward and also ease international tensions. As we carry out our work in the First Committee, let us search for those innovative and realistic ideas that can be used to move disarmament forward.

For the first time in many generations, the prospects for genuine peace on a global basis seem promising. Unfortunately, even as major progress continues in negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear weapons and in negotiations between East and West on conventional armed forces in Europe,

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

longstanding disputes and tensions that threaten the peace persist among other nations and in other regions.

The time has come for progress in the peace process in the Middle East, in Africa, in Asia - everywhere. The time has come to bring the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and its Protocols, fully into force. The time has come for all nations to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The time has come for an end to tolerance of any violations of the prohibitions of the 1925 Geneva Protocol against chemical and biological weapons use. Indeed, the time has come to turn rhetoric on the reduction and elimination of chemical weapons into bold actions, such as President Bush has already demonstrated the United States is prepared to undertake unilaterally, bilaterally and multilaterally. Our work at the United Nations this fall can stimulate and give impetus to the broad, innovative steps that are required by our times.

For all the people of the globe, arms limitation and disarmament is serious business, for it deals with fundamental precepts of security. The first concern of any prudent nation is to provide for its security. The United Nations Charter and customary international law recognize the right of all nations to defend themselves from aggression. The right of States to join together in arrangements for their collective security is also guaranteed.

The United States itself maintains a substantial defence establishment to defend its Constitution, its citizens and its allies. To the extent that the threats to these vital interests can be reduced or eliminated through negotiations and positive unilateral actions, the United States stands ready to reduce or adjust its military capabilities accordingly. In a democratic society, such as we have in the United States, where issues are debated openly and freely, we do not maintain an excessive military capability. Our people would not support it and our Congress

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

would not fund it. The American public and the United States Congress expect our defence policy and our arms control endeavours to serve the same purposes, that is, to enhance our security, promote peace and reduce the burdens of armament. This in turn requires that we work together with other nations in seeking these goals.

An excellent example of how nations with great differences can nevertheless work together was provided by the recent Wyoming ministerial meeting. The discussions between American Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze took place in the high country of the American West, in the midst of clean air and clear water. The setting was most appropriate. The discussions cleared the way for a number of additional agreements to be signed and for the completion of others to be accelerated. At the Wyoming meeting itself, a number of important new agreements were concluded.

First, an agreement on advance notification of strategic exercises was signed that will further expand the use of the nuclear risk reduction centres established in 1987. This new agreement also complements the agreement on advance notification of strategic ballistic missile launches, signed last year, and the milestone agreement on the prevention of dangerous military activities, signed this year.

Secondly, Secretary Baker and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze signed a joint statement on a uniform interpretation of rules of international law governing innocent passage in the territorial sea, which should help reduce misunderstandings.

Thirdly, to further the cause of confidence-building, predictability and stability, the United States extended an invitation for a group of Soviet experts to visit two research and testing facilities associated with the United States Strategic Defence Initiative.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

Fourthly, in the same spirit, the two Ministers signed an umbrella agreement on verification and stability proposed by the Soviet Union in response to President Bush's initiative designed to expedite conclusion of a strategic-arms reduction treaty and to provide greater confidence and stability even prior to conclusion of that treaty. In this regard, the United States has proposed a halt to ballistic missile telemetry data denial, including encryption; the early exchange of data; early establishment of on-site perimeter/portal monitoring of missile production facilities; demonstration of missile tagging and ballistic missile warhead counting; and an approach to the problem of short time-of-flight submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

In advance of the Foreign Ministers' meeting, Secretary Baker announced a new United States position on mobile land-based missiles. Subsequently, additional elements of common ground on verification of mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles were agreed which will help guide our negotiations in Geneva. Overall, discussions in Wyoming provided insight into a number of difficult questions, but important details remain to be resolved, and my experience as an arms control negotiator has reinforced my appreciation of the axiom that indeed the devil is in the details. However, the United States and the Soviet Union have reached a clear understanding that the time has come to bring the strategic arms negotiations to a successful conclusion. I can assure you that for its part the United States is making certain that the progress achieved in Wyoming is being translated into further action at the ongoing negotiations in Geneva.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

The Wyoming Foreign Ministers' meeting focused largely on bilateral negotiations, but the United States is a leader and an active participant in critical multilateral negotiations as well.

The 16 members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the seven members of the Warsaw Pact started new negotiations on conventional forces in Europe on 9 March of this year. The objective of that 23-nation negotiation is to strengthen stability and security in Europe through the establishment of a stable and secure balance of conventional forces at lower levels. To achieve that objective it will be necessary to eliminate disparities prejudicial to stability and security and to eliminate the capability for launching surprise attack and initiating large-scale offensive action.

On the first day of those negotiations, the West presented a proposal for substantial reductions in military equipment requiring each alliance system to reduce its holdings in Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, to 20,000 main battle tanks, 16,500 artillery pieces, and 28,000 armoured troop carriers. Two of those three ceilings have already been agreed to by the Eastern group of nations.

During the May 1989 Nato Summit, Western alliance leaders, at the initiative of President Bush, agreed to expand the Western proposal to call for reducing levels of land-based combat aircraft to 5,700 and land-based combat helicopters to 1,900 in Europe for each side, and for limiting United States and Soviet personnel stationed in Europe outside of their own national territories to 275,000 each. The enhanced NATO proposal also calls for the members of the two alliances to conclude a treaty in six to twelve months.

In order to expedite the achievement of that objective, the NATO side recently proposed provisions on information exchange, verification and stabilizing measures, and non-circumvention. Those proposals have resulted in a comprehensive Western proposal that provides a sound basis for a treaty on conventional forces in

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

Europe. The negotiations are well under way. We look forward to continued progress and to their prompt conclusion.

In addition to the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe, there are also negotiations in Vienna on confidence- and security-building measures. Those negotiations include the neutral and non-aligned European States in addition to the members of the two alliances - a total of 35 nations. The objective of those negotiations is to reduce mistrust and misunderstanding about military capabilities and intentions by increasing openness and predictability in the military environment.

The Western allies have presented in the 35-nation talks important proposals regarding data exchange and measures to evaluate information. The West has also proposed holding a seminar on military doctrine as it applies to actual-force deployments. While details remain to be worked out, all participants in the talks have agreed both to convene the military doctrine seminar and to a comprehensive information exchange. Those negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures are making progress towards the objective set by President Bush to lift the veil of secrecy from certain military activities and thus contribute to a more stable Europe.

The winds of change that are blowing through Europe and beyond provide unique opportunities to lift the veil of secrecy and encourage broader public dissemination of information on disarmament and related international security issues. In presenting his open-skies initiative this May, President Bush wanted to build on the long-standing Western tradition of transparency with regard to fundamental military intentions. He recognized the new attitudes regarding openness on the part of the East and sought to turn rhetoric into reality. He proposed that the Soviet Union and its allies open their skies to reciprocal, unarmed aerial surveillance flights, conducted routinely. We welcome the positive

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

response of the Soviet Union and look forward to working out the details of an open-skies régime in the near future. The United States also made an open-lands proposal with a view to opening more of the territory of the United States and the Soviet Union to diplomats of the other nation, thus increasing transparency.

Through the strategic review he initiated earlier this year, President Bush has clearly established the basic direction of United States policy on chemical weapons. The United States is committed to pursuing aggressively the elimination of chemical weapons from the Earth. The United States considers the early conclusion and entry into force of a multilateral convention to be one of the highest priorities for the international community and the means to halt and reverse the growing spread and use of those weapons of mass destruction.

In his statement to the General Assembly on 25 September, President Bush proposed several dramatic initiatives aimed at stimulating specific action on chemical-weapons arms control and energizing the multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. We will be meeting soon with the Soviet Union to discuss how we might work out additional bilateral arrangements for destroying tens of thousands of tons of chemical weapons - which would include more than 80 per cent of the current United States stockpile - starting now, in advance of the conclusion of a multilateral ban.

After a multilateral ban is concluded, which we hope will be soon, the United States is prepared to destroy 98 per cent of its current stockpile in the first eight years, provided that the Soviet Union joins the ban. That is significantly more than is called for in the current rolling text of the draft treaty under negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament. And, in the subsequent two years, if all nations capable of building chemical weapons have become party to the comprehensive chemical-weapons ban, the United States will have destroyed all of its chemical weapons and its chemical-weapons production facilities.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

The United States and the Soviet Union reaffirmed at the Foreign Ministers' meeting in Wyoming, just two days before President Bush addressed the United Nations last month, the objective of a multilateral ban that would eliminate all chemical weapons. The memorandum of understanding agreed to in Wyoming on a bilateral verification experiment involving the exchange of data on United States and Soviet Union chemical-weapons stockpiles, and visits and inspections of chemical-weapons sites to verify those data, should add immediate further impetus to those efforts.

Increasing international concern about the proliferation of chemical weapons and the urgent need for a global ban resulted in two recent international meetings - the Conference on restoring the international norms against chemical-weapons use, held in Paris in January of this year, and the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons held in Canberra last month. The United States was instrumental in bringing about both of those conferences and participated energetically in both.

At the Paris Conference, 149 States reaffirmed their commitment to the Geneva Protocol of 1925, endorsed negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a global chemical-weapons ban, expressed grave concern about the proliferation of chemical weapons, and confirmed their support for the Secretary-General in carrying out his responsibility for investigating alleged violations of the Geneva Protocol.

Subsequently, the group of qualified experts appointed by the Secretary-General completed its work on technical guidelines and procedures for investigation of possible use of chemical and biological or toxin weapons that may constitute a violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol or other relevant rules of customary international law. The United States delegation welcomes the report of the group of experts and will support its endorsement in an appropriate resolution.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

The Canberra Conference brought together for the first time representatives of some 70 Governments, as well as of the world's major chemical manufacturers. The world industry endorsed a global convention banning chemical weapons and announced plans for voluntary self-regulation to avoid the misuse of chemicals.

On behalf of my Government I want to extend a special word of thanks to both France and Australia for the constructive role that they have played this past year in hosting these important conferences and in providing leadership to restore the international norm against chemical-weapons use and to promote a comprehensive ban.

For arms control measures to remain effective they require continued care and attention. In this regard it is worth noting that the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will meet next year, just prior to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, to review the operation of the Treaty. That will be an important event, because the non-proliferation Treaty is an important undertaking that has served all members of the international community well. The United States looks forward to a full and fair review of all of the Treaty's provisions. We are confident that the parties will again reaffirm the role of the non-proliferation Treaty in helping to prevent nuclear proliferation, in assisting the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in contributing to the security of all nations, especially the non-nuclear-weapon States, some of which are located in the world's most troubled regions.

I should also like to note that the parties to the 1971 sea-bed Treaty conducted a review of that Treaty last month and again confirmed that it was functioning well and that no problems had arisen since the previous review in 1983. My Government urges those States that have signed the Treaty but not yet ratified it, and other non-parties, to study the Final Declaration of the recent Review Conference and give serious consideration to joining the 82 States already parties to the Treaty.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

My Government continues to hold the view that the success of arms control is dependent on compliance with all obligations. While arms-control treaties and other related measures stand on their own, damage to one agreement brought on by a lack of compliance can have a negative effect on others. That is one reason why so many States took an interest in restoring the international norms against the use of chemical weapons represented by the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Violation of those norms has highlighted the urgent need for conclusion of the negotiations on a comprehensive chemical-weapons ban. Confidence in the effectiveness of existing agreements is an important part of building the foundation for future agreements. Parties to arms-control treaties should welcome verification of their activities as an opportunity to demonstrate their full compliance, without leaving room for any doubts. Only under those circumstances - full compliance demonstrated and confirmed - are all parties able to realize the full benefits of arms-limitation and disarmament measures.

The United States is participating in the ongoing study of the role of the United Nations in arms-control verification. It is anticipated that the results of that study will be available next year, prior to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Last year the United States delegation did not support the relevant resolution. My Government remains opposed to the establishment of generic verification machinery within the United Nations. The responsibilities for verification of an agreement rest with the parties themselves. Should the parties call on the Secretary-General for assistance, however, as was the case in recent investigations of chemical-weapons use, it is entirely appropriate for the United Nations to play a role. However, for its part, the United States views such actions as ad hoc and exceptional, rather than the rule. Experts from the United States will continue to participate actively and constructively in the verification

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

study, but they will not support recommendations for new verification machinery in the United Nations that is independent from existing or future disarmament treaties.

The Conference on Disarmament has continued its work in the Ad Hoc Committee responsible for the consideration of outer space arms-control issues of global interest. That work has been carried out on the basis of a non-negotiating mandate. For its part, the United States has conducted a careful analysis of potential measures that might be feasible and desirable as the basis for negotiating further multilateral arms-control agreements that apply to outer space. However, we have neither identified any appropriate measures to propose nor seen any proposals from others that we believe are feasible, desirable and verifiable. The United States delegation is prepared to work for a realistic General Assembly resolution on outer-space arms control, but it cannot accept a call for multilateral negotiations when there is no agreement on the basis for such negotiations.

Similarly, my Government believes that global security interests would not be served by entering into comprehensive nuclear-test-ban negotiations now, in advance of other far-reaching arms-limitation and disarmament measures and while our security and that of our allies remain dependent on nuclear weapons. My Government shares the hopes of those who yearn for a better world in which it would not be necessary to maintain such a dependence on nuclear weapons. However, we must temper our hopes with realism and recognize that some demands, such as demands for an early comprehensive test-ban, in the absence of the necessary conditions, are unrealistic. Simply put, it would be irresponsible for the United States to forgo nuclear testing as long as our security relies on nuclear weapons to provide deterrence.

The United States delegation will, however, support resolutions that place the testing issue in its proper context and offer encouragement to the bilateral United

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

States-Soviet negotiations on protocols to the Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes and the Treaty on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests, which will permit effective verification of those two Treaties and lead to their ratification and entry into force. I am pleased to report that my Government believes that both of those important verification protocols should be completed and available for signature by the time of next year's summit meeting between President Bush and President Gorbachev.

The agenda of the First Committee is full. Some might even call it overflowing. It is reasonable for the world community to use the First Committee to gain an overview, once a year, of all that is going on in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. At the same time there is a question as to how effectively or wisely this limited amount of time is used. The United States supports the recent efforts to streamline the work of the First Committee and make it more efficient. However, further efforts are required. The resolutions that are adopted each autumn in the First Committee do not always convey an accurate picture of what is happening, nor do they reflect the true priorities of the international agenda. Again, as I mentioned at the outset, there are signs of greater realism. Indeed, there are signs of even further great progress among th major nuclear Powers and their allies. How many other nations can demonstrate comparable commitment to, and achievement of, real reductions in arms and tensions? Now is the time for each nation to move beyond easy words about peace and towards concrete achievements enhancing peace with both regional and global neighbours.

The United States delegation will move ahead in this spirit, seeking to mak innovative changes that are needed to make the work of the First Committee relev and productive and seeking to enhance the security of everyone.

Mr. BOURAVKIN (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The Byelorussion delegation associates itself with the congratulations offered to you, Sir, on your election to the important post of Chairman of the First Committee. We hope that the work of the Committee will be constructive and fruitful, and we are ready to make our contribution, in co-operation with other delegations.

We would like to express our condolences to the United States delegation on the earthquake which struck California.

In its statement today, the Byelorussian SSR intends to discuss some problems of nuclear disarmament. In characterizing the age we live in, we quite often call it the nuclear age. And this term, unfortunately, is understood to mean not only the peaceful, creative potential of nuclear energy, but also its tragic capacity for mass destruction, with devastating consequences for our civilization. That is why, of all the international security issues, we give special attention to the problems of nuclear disarmament. We are gratified that major positive changes have occurred and are continuing to occur in relations among States. Confidence based, inter alia, on mutual verification is becoming increasingly crucial; moreover, the predictability of action is now growing, and the defensive character of military doctrines is being strengthened in practice. In a word, relations between major political alliances are growing more stable. In general, it can be said that the risk of a military conflict directly involving the great Powers has lessened.

However, we cannot fail to see that the process of reducing the existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons is somewhat lagging behind the fundamentally new developments that are taking place. In a sense, this can be explained, but it still gives rise to legitimate concern and urgently calls for progress in nuclear disarmament as the central element in the area of military security.

(Mr. Bouravkin, Byelorussian SSR)

As members are aware, the Soviet-United States Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - is being successfully implemented. I would like to point out that missiles are also being eliminated on the territory of the Byelorussian SSR. It is clear that the historic breakthrough evidenced by the conclusion of that Treaty must be built on. The Soviet-United States talks on strategic offensive arms have a key role to play in this. The success of these talks and the achievement of 50 per cent reductions in corresponding United States and Soviet nuclear arsenals would not only further the nuclear disarmament process but would also signify, as it were, the transformation of this new quality of politics into a reduced quantity of arms. The road which these negotiations seem to be taking now is precisely the road that leads to an early and balanced solution of the complex problems facing the talks.

The logic of consistent nuclear disarmament presupposes that it embraces all nuclear States and all categories of nuclear weapons without exception at appropriate stages. Plans to modernize tactical missiles, which in fact would put them in a qualitatively different category, and, broadly speaking, programmes for building up and improving other types of nuclear weapons that are now being considered or implemented, are incompatible with that logic. At issue here are the modernization of nuclear artillery, dual-capable aircraft, development of new air-to-surface missiles, the planned build-up of sea-based nuclear systems in European waters and the redeployment across the Atlantic of nuclear aircraft to Europe. Should these plans and other programmes for building up nuclear forces in Europe be implemented, a thousand new nuclear systems would appear in Europe, systems similar to those now being eliminated under the Soviet-United States INF Treaty.

(Mr. Bouravkin, Byelorussian SSR)

We are convinced that there is now an urgent need for the early and unconditional commencement of negotiations on tactical nuclear systems.

As the Committee is aware, the Soviet Union has already taken unilateral steps to reduce its weapons in this category and is prepared to take further unilateral steps once negotiations begin. In full conformity with the imperatives of our times, the USSR has also exercised political restraint by stating that it is not modernizing its tactical nuclear missiles.

We hope that expanding the process of nuclear disarmament and progress in the Soviet-United States START negotiations will create a political and strategic environment in which modernization of and a build-up in any nuclear weapons whatsoever will become senseless. The Soviet-United States summit meeting due to take place next year could play an important part in creating such an environment.

Another increasingly important aspect of the nuclear problem is the cessation of production of weapons-grade fissionable materials. Here we must pay a tribute to the perspicacity of the General Assembly and its First Committee, which for years now has kept that problem within the purview of the world community, with the Canadian delegation playing a particularly active part. A truly unique and favourable situation has now developed for the reciprocal cessation of the production of fissionable materials. This opportunity must not be lost. The Soviet Union has defined its positive attitude to that idea and, in keeping with the new thinking, has this year launched unilateral measures to limit its own production of weapons-grade fissionable materials and is ready to call a complete halt to this kind of activity on the basis of reciprocity with the United States.

As members know, some time ago the United States also showed willingness to take such a step. We believe it to be important for the present United States Administration, as part of its in-depth foreign policy review, to reinstate that

(Mr. Bouravkin, Byelorussian SSR)

useful element and take it favourably into account when charting its course for practical action in this field.

Mutual cessation of weapons-grade nuclear materials production is another major step that is feasible within the context of new agreements cutting United States and Soviet nuclear arms dramatically. Moreover, it is verifiable; compliance with the relevant agreements can be verified using national technical means and on-site inspections, drawing on the experience of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

(Mr. Bouravkin, Byelorussian SSR)

The complete and strictly verifiable termination of the production of fissionable materials would, by the way, be among the guarantees that nuclear weapons would not re-emerge. Introducing a system of guarantees against their re-emergence in a future nuclear-free world is a serious challenge, and in this connection the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR reiterates the proposal it put forward at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, namely, that the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) should conduct a study of safeguards against the re-emergence of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction in a nuclear-free world.

The dialogue on nuclear problems cannot shirk the issue of nuclear deterrence. We continue to believe that this concept perpetuates nuclear terror and, in the final analysis, deters nuclear disarmament. None the less, since the concept is an active factor in today's political situation and looms over the nuclear disarmament talks it might be advisable to discuss the parameters for the potential minimization of nuclear deterrence so as to facilitate progress towards the goals of disarmament. This could be done at a meeting of experts from the nuclear Powers and other States having nuclear weapons on their territory.

Our planet is becoming an ever more dangerous place in which to live. Rampant drug abuse, the dangerous power and aggressiveness of the drug cartels, the frequent outbreaks of international terrorism, and the danger of nuclear and chemical weapons proliferation - all require a joint response from all States. The realities of today add a new and dangerous dimension: the spread of missiles and missile technology. What is needed is a multilateral mechanism that would on the one hand rule out the proliferation of missiles and, on the other, promote peaceful co-operation in the exploitation of outer space.

(Mr. Bouravkin, Byelorussian SSR)

We sometimes face a situation in which multilateral and bilateral approaches to disarmament measures are set against one another or are even mutually exclusive. We believe that this is wrong, and we are pleased to see signs of change for the better in attitudes to the capabilities of the United Nations not only in the field of regional conflicts but also in the field of disarmament. We are convinced that bilateral and multilateral approaches are complementary and mutually enriching. The banning of nuclear-weapon tests is an area where a combination of those approaches is urgently needed. While progress in the talks between the Soviet Union and the United States has been made, the continuing inactivity on the substance of the issue at the Conference on Disarmament is a great liability in multilateral efforts. Joint efforts are needed to break the deadlock and to consider in earnest the possibility of transforming the 1963 Moscow Treaty banning nuclear tests in the three environments into an instrument totally banning nuclear-weapon tests.

We recognize that the United Nations has a specific and indispensable role to play in many important disarmament issues concerning which our community, as a unique multilateral body, has great practical potential. This includes the adoption of measures to prevent nuclear war. It is obvious that an integrated system of such measures will be needed in the future, and now is the time to put in place the international legal and material elements of such a system.

We believe it to be advisable to start translating into practical action the proposals - particularly those of the Secretary-General - to set up a multilateral nuclear and war risk reduction centre, and ultimately a system of such centres, including regional ones. Steps in this direction are already being taken. I refer mainly to the establishment in the USSR and the United States, pursuant to the relevant agreement, of nuclear risk reduction centres whose functions are likely to be expanded in the future.

(Mr. Bouravkin, Byelorussian SSR)

A new and heartening accomplishment is the Soviet-American agreement preventing dangerous military activities, which was signed during the visit of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the USSR and will enter into force in a little more than two months. During that visit, the United States military experts also visited the Byelorussian military district.

The detailed proposal put forward by the USSR in 1988 on the setting up of a European regional war risk prevention centre was another important step in the right direction.

At this session of the General Assembly, the Soviet Union has proposed that all nuclear Powers conclude an agreement on measures to reduce the risk of nuclear war. Such an agreement could provide for, inter alia, hotlines, linking the capitals of all the nuclear Powers, for the transmission of urgent messages, notifications and requests for the speedy clarification of situations, and, accordingly, for national nuclear risk reduction centres in Great Britain, France and China similar to those of the USSR and the United States. Consultations among the permanent members of the Security Council would, in our view, provide an appropriate forum for discussion of the issue of drafting an agreement on measures to reduce the risk of nuclear war.

Systematic endeavours to prevent nuclear war call for concerted efforts at all levels of intergovernmental relations. Bilateral measures combined with national, regional and multilateral centres that are to develop into a nuclear and war risk reduction system are specific illustrations of the need for an organic symbiosis of bilateral and multilateral approaches. Such a system incorporating electronic communications could in future be used for early warning and the prevention of crises, for verifying accords on disarmament, and settling conflicts.

(Mr. Bouravkin, Byelorussian SSR)

The Byelorussian delegation once again calls on the international community to initiate practical efforts for the setting up of such centres, to be shaped into a system that would represent an important shift from crisis diplomacy, which reacts to circumstances, to preventive diplomacy, which shapes them. It is just that kind of imaginative and integrated diplomacy that a secure world really needs.

Mr. KENYON (United Kingdom): At the outset, Mr. Chairman, allow me to congratulate you on your election to your post. Your long experience and deep knowledge of the subject of arms control and disarmament will be of great assistance in guiding the work in this Committee. May I also add my delegation's expression of condolence to the United States delegation for last night's earthquake in northern California.

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

In our plenary debate on all the disarmament items on our agenda, it is usual to look back on the past year and to pick out the priorities for further efforts in the year ahead. In reviewing 1989, I believe we can say that those opportunities for progress that we identified in our debate last year have been vigorously pursued, the momentum has been maintained, and real progress has been achieved in many key bilateral, regional and multilateral areas. Measurable progress is manifest towards the achievement of all three of the top-priority arms control and disarmament objectives set by the British Government and its allies in 1987. Those are the establishment of stability and security at lower levels of conventional forces by the elimination of disparities in the whole of Europe; a 50 per cent reduction in the strategic offensive nuclear weapons of the United States and the Soviet Union; and the global elimination of chemical weapons.

Our first objective relates to conventional forces in Europe. Together with our partners in the Atlantic alliance, we are playing a full part in the negotiations on conventional armed forces (CFE) currently in their third round in Vienna. The talks have gone remarkably well, better than many of us had thought possible, and in a serious and workman-like atmosphere. Though the negotiations are less than eight months old, a considerable measure of agreement has already emerged. Both sides are agreed on the categories of forces to be covered, and that the conventional imbalance should be addressed through equal collective ceilings between the two alliances in those weapons systems relevant to surprise attack and large-scale offensive action, together with limits on the forces of individual participants and on those stationed outside national territory.

The CFE negotiations provide a renewed opportunity to address the key questions at the heart of European security, notably the massive conventional superiority of the Warsaw Pact. We are encouraged by the readiness of the Soviet

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

Union and its Warsaw Pact partners unilaterally to reduce their armed forces. We welcome the cuts announced over the past year as useful first steps towards redressing the conventional disparities in Europe, which the proposals submitted by the alliance in Vienna are designed to eliminate. As indicated in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit Declaration in May this year, it is our hope that a treaty can be concluded in the course of next year and be fully implemented by 1992 or 1993. We accept that this is an ambitious timetable, but we see no reason why it cannot be met, given political will on both sides and our belief that the prospects for progress on conventional armaments in Europe are better now than they have been for many years.

I turn next to the bilateral strategic negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. We heard yesterday and today reports from both sides on the negotiations, and we are encouraged by the progress being made towards an early strategic arms reduction treaty (START). As outlined, a START agreement would make a major contribution to international security and stability. We are glad that, at the recent meeting in Wyoming between the United States and Soviet Foreign Ministers, progress was registered on some of the problem areas that have been holding up an agreement. That applies to the defence and space negotiations as well. The avowed United States and Soviet aim of preventing an arms race in space is one to which we all subscribe. We hope that what has been agreed at Wyoming and during the negotiations in Geneva will provide a basis for the resolution of the outstanding issues. While we hope for an early agreement, we do not underestimate the importance of the issues that have not yet been resolved. Those must be worked out with the care and attention to detail which they deserve. That may take time, but we are confident that the United States and the Soviet Union will conclude an agreement which not only results in a substantial reduction in the size of their nuclear arsenals, but also provides for greater strategic stability.

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

These security agreements, though regional in coverage, will have a significant effect on the security of all States. The multilateral negotiation of arms control and disarmament measures of global application is another vital component in our security policy. That, of course, is the role of the Conference on Disarmament, where intensive work is in progress on our third objective - a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable ban on chemical weapons.

The world-wide concern and the shared determination to prevent any recourse to chemical weapons by completely eliminating them was shown by the participation of 149 States in the Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and Other Interested States, held in Paris in January. In its Final Declaration, adopted by consensus, the Conference called on the Conference on Disarmament to redouble its efforts to conclude a chemical weapons convention, and called on all States to contribute to the negotiations. As a necessary corollary, it expressed the belief that any State wishing to contribute to the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament should be able to do so. The United Kingdom was pleased that the Conference on Disarmament invited 26 non-member States that had so requested to participate as observers in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons at the 1989 session. We hope that the number will be even greater in 1990 and that the spirit of the Paris document will be fully applied. If we are to achieve a global convention, no State can be excluded from participating as an observer in the negotiations.

In its 1989 session, the Conference on Disarmament did indeed redouble its efforts towards a chemical weapons convention, under the able and vigorous leadership of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Mr. Pierre Morel of France. Some useful progress was made on important technical issues, but some key issues, particularly around the subject of verification, remain to be resolved. However, the trend towards practical problem-solving is welcome and has elicited a clearer

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

understanding of the problems and their possible solutions. All parties to the negotiation should now approach 1990 with the necessary determination to undertake the hard practical and technical work which resolving the remaining issues and achieving an effective convention will entail.

One component vital to real progress is confidence that the other parties to the negotiations share the same ends and are holding nothing back. In that context, we welcome the continuing series of bilateral discussions on chemical weapons between the United States and the Soviet Union. The latest fruit of those discussions, the agreement on data exchange signed in Wyoming last month, is a most important addition to that process of confidence-building, and should help to clear up my Government's well-known doubts about the size of the Soviet stockpiles. Addressing the General Assembly on 27 September, my Secretary of State welcomed the proposals on chemical weapons made to the Assembly by President Bush and the positive Soviet response to them. These should provide yet further impetus to the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

In the view of my Government, the key question to be solved remains that of an adequate system of verification. That must be no more and no less rigorous than is necessary to provide effective assurances of compliance. At the same time, there should be adequate safeguards to meet legitimate concerns about security unrelated to chemical weapons. The verification régime must ensure that legitimate production of chemicals, including some of particular concern, is not impeded, while maintaining confidence that they are not misused. And it must be capable of deterring or detecting clandestine production, or any other failure of compliance.

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

This year there has been valuable debate in Geneva on the vital concept of challenge inspection, under the guidance of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, in which we have discerned signs of a greater convergence of views. The subject remains an area of central concern on which much of our effort should continue to be concentrated. We in the United Kingdom believe that a useful basis for developing the design of a challenge inspection system is hands-on experience. As we have described to the Conference on Disarmament, we have started a series of trial challenge inspections to test the proposed procedures, which have included inspections of sensitive installations such as military ammunition storage depots. We are continuing the series of trials and will report further to the Conference on Disarmament. Useful pointers and lessons have already emerged. We would encourage other States to carry out similar trials.

A chemical-weapons convention that is soundly constructed and that gives confidence to its parties is bound to have an impact on the operations of the chemical industry. The Canberra Conference provided an important opportunity for Governments and senior chemical-industry representatives to assess the situation in the negotiations. The joint declaration at Canberra by the world's chemical industry brought a new impetus to the dialogue between Government and industry that is so essential to achieving a convention.

We cannot allow any slackening in the pressure on the negotiations in Geneva. Every year that we delay in the completion of the chemical-weapons convention increases the risk of the proliferation of those terrible weapons.

What of the rest of the arms-control agenda? We are at present in the midst of a period when some of our attention is being turned to checking the health of past achievements, the Conventions already in force. We have just completed the Third Review Conference of the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed, a review that showed that that useful Treaty is in good health. We were pleased by the declaration of the parties that none of us is emplacing nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed, even outside the Treaty's zone of application. And some useful provision has been made for future exchanges of technical information.

In the view of my Government, the most important of the existing arms-control treaties, and incontestably the one with the widest adherence, is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Here, we are in the midst of the process of preparation for the Fourth Review Conference, due to be convened in the middle of August next year. That review has a particular importance as it is the last before the parties meet in 1995 to decide on the extension of the Treaty. We have been heartened by some recent developments in relation to the Treaty, including the welcome accession a year ago of Saudi Arabia and, more recently, Bahrain and Qatar. The positive and constructive nature of the first two Preparatory Committee meetings indicated that the prospects for the Fourth Review Conference are good. But there is no room for complacency. The possibility of a nuclear-arms race developing in one of the so-called sensitive regions continues to be a threat to the non-proliferation régime. I can assure the Committee that my Government will not rest in its efforts to strengthen and reinforce the régime and to work for an outcome to the Fourth Review Conference that will help to further the goals of the Treaty.

The other existing instrument to which attention has been turned is the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water - the partial test-ban Treaty - of 1963. My Government, as a depositary, is actively preparing for the convening of the conference requested by some of the

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

parties. However, in this case what is proposed is not the review of the operation of a useful arms-control measure but a misguided attempt to force into being a measure that has proved unattainable, at present, through the normal and accepted means of multilateral negotiation. That attempt cannot succeed, but if we are not careful we risk real damage to the vehicle the promoters have chosen. The partial test-ban Treaty has brought us to the position where, for years now, all nuclear explosions, whether by parties or non-parties, have been underground. The Treaty has, of course, had important environmental benefits, but it is also an arms-control measure, placing significant constraints on weapons-testing. Underground nuclear-weapons tests were further constrained by the 1974 threshold test-ban Treaty, and we look forward to the early conclusion of the bilateral negotiations on the verification protocol, which will enable the ratification of that Treaty, and its necessary companion, the 1976 Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes.

The agreements reached at Wyoming will, we hope, speed that process. Further steps to limit testing will then have to be considered. In that context the Conference on Disarmament is considering the matter of a mandate for establishing an ad hoc committee to discuss nuclear testing. The United Kingdom continues to support and to participate fully in the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, but an immediate move to a comprehensive test-ban would be premature and perhaps even destabilizing. For the foreseeable future the United Kingdom's security will depend on deterrence based, in part, on the possession of nuclear weapons. That will mean a continuing requirement to conduct underground nuclear tests to ensure that our nuclear weapons remain effective and up to date.

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

Since the 1950s and 1960s the comprehensive test-ban has been seen by many countries as a short cut to nuclear-arms control. But short cuts do not work. We support instead the step-by-step approach on which the super-Powers are embarked. That does work - as can be seen from the real progress that has been made over the past few years towards actually reducing the total numbers of nuclear weapons. As we all know, the 1987 Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - eliminated a whole class of theatre nuclear weapons in Europe, and in the past 10 years NATO has reduced its stockpile unilaterally by 35 per cent.

On the strategic side we all look forward to the substantial cuts that will be made by both the United States and the Soviet Union when an agreement is reached in the strategic arms limitation talks. Our view remains that the best way forward in nuclear-arms control is not through a comprehensive test-ban but through real and verifiable cuts in existing weapons. The progress of recent yearse shows that this way works.

Taken over all, 1989 has probably seen as great a movement in the direction of reductions of tension, improvements in security and the construction of viable arms-control measures as any year in recent times. We must maintain - nay, increase - the momentum in 1990.

Mr. REESE (Australia): The Australian delegation would like to add its expression of condolences to the United States delegation for the losses and suffering caused by the earthquake yesterday in California.

The theoretical physicist Professor Stephen Hawking begins his now-famous book, A Brief History of Time, with the following anecdote about a well-known scientist. The scientist was giving a public lecture on astronomy and described how the Earth orbits round the Sun and how the Sun, in turn, orbits round the centre of our galaxy. At the end of the lecture an old lady at the back of the

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

room got up and said, "What you have told us is rubbish. The world is really a flat plate, supported on the back of a giant turtle." The scientist gave a superior smile before replying: "Indeed. And what is the turtle standing on?" "You're very clever, young man, very clever," she retorted, "but it's turtles all the way down."

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

Speakers before me have already commended the movement we have seen in recent times away from what I might call the "flat-earth" confrontational approach to international relations that we have experienced up until now. We have seen a shift away from a divisive and unworkable world. We have seen in a remarkable way a freeing-up in East-West tensions, characterized in particular by increased and productive dialogue on a wide range of issues between East and West, by greater super-Power co-operation and by profound changes in the political climate of Eastern Europe.

On the arms-limitation and disarmament front we have witnessed the conclusion of the historic Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty, the remarkable progress in the talks at Vienna on conventional forces in Europe and substantial shifts in the negotiating positions in the strategic arms reduction talks, which will expedite those very important negotiations.

Nor are those developments limited to East-West concerns. Improvements in East-West relations have had their accompaniment in the achievement of, or movement towards, peace in a number of regional conflicts. The recent summit meeting of members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held at Belgrade clearly spelled out the desire of all members of the Movement to enhance global co-operation in the search for peace and security.

But we have a long way to go. It is clear that the "flat-earth" mentality of those who favour confrontation and resist the common search for peaceful solutions to mankind's problems still has its adherents. Clearly, one area in which greater effort is needed is our area, the area of multilateral disarmament and arms-limitation negotiations. Our negotiations appear to be stuck, with few exceptions, in the time-warp of the cold war, although in some situations North-South differences seem greater than those of East-West.

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

Most - but not all - of the recent progress achieved has been in bilateral negotiations or between alliances, as in the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe. There is an evident need for a greater effort to engage constructively in multilateral processes. In nuclear areas it is evident that the question of nuclear weapons is so germane to the future of us all that the issues cannot be left to the nuclear-weapon States alone. This and other questions can be resolved effectively only through multilateral agreement on, for example, nuclear non-proliferation, ballistic missiles, chemical weapons, and conventional weapons and arms transfers. Similarly, other threats to security need the involvement of the international community. I refer to problems pertaining to drug-trafficking, to environmental issues and to third-world debt, to name but a few.

It concerns my Government that in too many multilateral forums States continue to indulge in political point scoring and continue to adhere to positions that do not contribute to solutions. I acknowledge that there continue to be many problems that do not lend themselves to easy or ready solutions. It would be naive to pretend that a simple change of attitude will solve all things.

But it is clear that in international disarmament forums we continue to beat the air too often. The current state of the Disarmament Commission is an unfortunate example. That body is not serving the purpose for which it was established, and it was for that reason that Australia called for change in its statement to the Commission in May.

In the Conference on Disarmament, similarly, there are areas in which we are not producing results. One ray of light this year was the decision to set aside for the time being our attempts to develop a comprehensive programme of disarmament, which clearly had become bogged down.

We need to treat all of those issues more rigorously. The lack of progress on a comprehensive test-ban treaty continues to disappoint us. Indeed, as the

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Evans, pointed out in a statement to the Conference on Disarmament on 13 June this year, the proposal for a partial test-ban Treaty amendment conference was an indictment of the inertia of the Conference on Disarmament on the issue of the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Australia will, however, be supportive of the proposed amendment conference, in line with our ongoing commitment to work towards the abolition of nuclear weapons.

I will come to the subject of chemicals weapons shortly, but in this context I should like to say that if we are to achieve a chemical-weapons convention we must show more flexibility and imagination in our approach to the negotiating process. We must not be tied down by our unsatisfactory negotiating schedule, which was settled on for reasons that have nothing to do with the expeditious negotiation of a chemical-weapons convention.

In the area of multilateral disarmament, Australia has a number of priorities. The nuclear non-proliferation Treaty is the single most important arms-limitation agreement. None of us doubts that the world would have been a far more dangerous place if that Treaty had not been concluded and had not received the wide number of adherents that it has today. The Treaty is coming up for review in 1990 and for decision as to how it is to be extended in 1995. How we handle the multilateral disarmament questions in this period will play an important role in confirming the continuing validity of the Treaty.

Australia continues to believe that a comprehensive test-ban treaty is an urgent priority for the international community. We wish to see such a treaty negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament and firmly believe that a committee should be established for that purpose at the outset of the 1990 session. New Zealand and Australia, along with a number of other countries, will again sponsor a draft resolution to that effect at this session of the General Assembly. Last

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

year's resolution 43/64 was adopted by the highest vote ever recorded for any test-ban resolution, evidence that the international community is almost unanimous in its desire to see a test-ban in place.

The need to prevent an arms race in outer space is of increasing importance as we expand our knowledge of the technological applications that are feasible in that domain. Since 1967 mankind has recognized the need for international co-operation in outer space and the need for any outer-space activities to be carried out in the interests of maintaining international peace and security. In Australia's view the emplacement of weapons in outer space or their use from Earth against objects in outer space should be prohibited. The Conference on Disarmament should continue to pursue the negotiation of multilateral measures to prevent the arms race in outer space.

As views of the global situation change and as conflicts are resolved it is inevitable that States should begin to question more seriously the value of maintaining high levels of military expenditure. Sovereign States of course have the right to maintain their military expenditure at levels they see as commensurate with their self-defence needs. But it is becoming apparent that such spending is in the long term detrimental to the over-all infrastructure and social and economic interests of the population.

Crippling debts and large deficits, in developed and developing countries alike, increasingly call into question the levels of expenditure on weapons and armed forces. Conventional wars since the Second World War, and the bolstering of those wars through arms sales or military aid, have resulted in tragic loss of life and, equally, have been to the detriment of economic development in the developing world.

The transfer and development of arms should therefore both be subject to the scrutiny of the world. Australia supports the establishment of an international

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

United Nations register of arms transfers. The United Nations study soon to begin will provide invaluable insights into those complex and vexing issues. Australia will be a participant in that study.

As the Minister for Disarmament of New Zealand, Ms. Fran Wilde, has already announced, South Pacific countries Members of the United Nations have decided at this session of the General Assembly to ask for endorsement of the regional treaty that has been negotiated among them but that no less enhances security on a global basis. I refer, of course, to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty or Treaty of Rarotonga, the name by which it is commonly known. The support of the States of the United Nations for the aspirations of the peoples of the South Pacific encapsulated in that Treaty will play an important role in assisting us in our quest for unqualified adherence by relevant States.

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

The achievement of a chemical weapons convention is one of the Australian Government's principal disarmament objectives. I have already spoken of the need to look anew at the negotiating schedule. Today, rather than go over all of the issues relating to the convention, I propose to focus on developments in which Australia has been particularly involved.

What Australia seeks is a convention that is comprehensive in scope, effectively verifiable, non-discriminatory in impact and one that attracts universal support. But we also recognize the need for a convention that is workable. If we aim for provisions that are too prescriptive and rigid, the convention simply will not work and the international chemical industry simply will not co-operate in its implementation.

A particular challenge therefore is to see that a correct balance is struck between security benefits and commercial realities. Put another way, the convention must marry the strategic perspectives of Governments to the more practical and immediate concerns of industry. To help create the conditions for such a marriage, the Australian Government convened in Canberra, from 18 to 22 September this year, the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons involving representatives of nearly 70 Governments and the world's chemical industry.

I am pleased to report that the Conference achieved its objectives and gave new momentum to a dialogue that is fundamental to the successful conclusion of the convention. On the more specific outcomes of the Conference, I would draw the attention of delegates to two particular documents that emerged from Canberra, and which Australia has asked the Secretary-General to circulate as documents under item 62: the statement issued by industry representatives at the Conference, and the Chairman's closing statement.

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

The statement by the representatives of the chemical industry is significant in that, for the first time, the world's chemical industry has recorded its unequivocal abhorrence of chemical warfare and has expressed its willingness to work actively with Governments to achieve a global ban on chemical weapons. In declaring its support for efforts to conclude and implement a chemical weapons convention at the earliest date, the chemical industry has stated its willingness to continue dialogue with, and to participate in the necessary national measures with, Governments to prepare for the effective entry into force of the convention.

The closing statement of Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade is no less an encouraging indicator for the coming year. The Canberra Conference was unique because it brought together for the first time on this scale Government representatives and those representatives of the chemical industry whose involvement will be so vital to the proper design and implementation of a chemical weapons convention. The meeting was not side-tracked by divisive point-scoring or politicization. It conveyed an overwhelming sense of commitment to conclude and implement a convention, as well as the political and practical will to work through and resolve the remaining outstanding issues in the negotiations in the coming year.

Accordingly, 1990 was seen to be a critical year for the chemical weapons negotiations, and that is one of the most important messages from the Canberra Conference. We must not allow the momentum generated for the earliest conclusion of a convention to falter, and we must now, all of us, commit the necessary political and practical will to seeing the conclusion of a convention in 1990.

Even as the focus now returns to Geneva, Australia believes that Governments can and should take further measures to support the Geneva negotiations. In August this year, for example, Australia convened a regional seminar in Canberra to discuss with our neighbours the security problem that chemical weapons pose to our

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

region. We considered how best that ought to be avoided and in that context how to pre are for the chemical weapons convention.

We see the seminar as a first step in ensuring that the countries of our region not directly involved in the Geneva negotiations can develop a common understanding of the implications of a chemical weapons convention. We have also asked the Secretary-General to disribute a selection of the seminar documentation, because we think that other non-members of the Conference on Disarmament in particular should find it of value. Complete sets of the Conference documentation are available at the Australian Mission for those who would like a more complete account of the proceedings. We would encourage other members of the Conference on Disarmament similarly to consider ways in which countries of their regions might be drawn into the Geneva process.

There are, of course, other ways to assist the negotiations and to ensure that when the Convention is ready for signature, countries are ready to sign it. For its part, Australia has set up a National Chemical Weapons Convention Secretariat to be responsible for preparing the way for Australia's implementation of the chemical weapons convention. The Secretariat will co-ordinate consultations between federal Government departments and between Government and industry; review existing laws and regulations covering the activities of the chemical industry; and look at ways of introducing and adapting the prospective requirement of the chemical weapons convention to our current regulatory matrix, with a view to harmonizing industries' obligations.

Our overall objective is to ensure that the appropriate structure is at hand to enable us to implemnt the convention once we have signed and ratified it. We would commend that approach to others. Clearly, if we are to achieve at the earliest date a chemical weapons convention, we cannot just wait for the Geneva

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

process to run its course before we consider what must be done to bring the convention into force. We must now take whatever measures are necessary and practical to ensure that signature and ratification can also be effected at the earliest date.

In my opening remarks, I drew attention to the need for perceptions to keep pace with developing realities, just as in our field - the field of disarmament and arms control - negotiations must keep pace with technological advances. In particular, I stressed the need for disarmament negotiations, a linchpin of international peace and security, to become an acknowledged part of our global co-operation and to be treated accordingly.

We need to see our way to eradicating the flat-earth mentality, to accepting the universality of our many plights upon the planet and to working together to eliminate them. Perhaps we can turn for inspiration some quarter of a century back down the track to the words of President John F. Kennedy of the United States, when he addressed the General Assembly on the same question of a changing of perceptions. He said:

> "Never before has man had such capacity to control his own environment: to end thirst and hunger; to conquer poverty and disease; to banish illiteracy and massive human misery. We have the power to make this the best generation of mankind in the history of the world - or to make it the last". (A/PV.1209, p. 6, para. 58)

The 1990s should provide an opprortunity for us to discover that best generation.

Mr. ENGO (Cameroon): Permit us to commence by expressing our strong sense of shock at the tragic earthquake in California last night. In expressing our sincere condolences to the United States delegation, we respectfully ask them

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

to convey to the Government and people of this great nation, with which Cameroon shares the warmest of friendly relations, the sense of solidarity that our delegation, our Government and our people share with the bereaved in California at this time.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

The delegation of the Republic of Cameroon extends to you, Sir, the warm congratulations of our Government and people, who share many common concerns with you. Paramount among these is the predicament of the noble ideals, purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, which provide the only frontier for the successful management of peace and development everywhere. Your colleague, the Permanent Representative of Venezuela, Ambassador Andres Aguilar, and I shared the privilege of responsibility in the monumental endeavours that culminated in the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea at Montego Bay. At the commemorative twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, we were fortunate enough to preside over the First and Sixth Committees, respectively. On these two occasions, we came to recognize the profoundness of the interest links that Venezuela and Cameroon had as so-called third world nations and as witnesses to the imperatives of the multilateral process in a technological age.

In the contemporary world, the dividing line between war and peace is so thin that both phenomena have lost their traditional definitions. It has become more obvious than ever before that the impulse for peace, security and development knows no borders: rich or poor, powerful or weak, all share a stake in it. Your presence in the Chair underlines another truth, Mr. Chairman: that the quality of experience which your background and knowledge bring to the leadership of this Committee does not confine its influence to geography. What is relevant is the magnetism of the multilateral process, which increasingly attracts universal participation in discourse on global issues. We pledge to you the fullest co-operation of the Cameroonian delegation.

Ambassador Douglas Roche of Canada made a tremendous contribution to our work. We have come to take his dedication for granted, and we are gratified that he lived up to that reputation.

(Mr. Enqo, Cameroon)

The First Committee of the General Assembly meets once aqain, seeminqly responding to an annual ritual. This institution was created for a purpose that has been the victim of threats and violations. In the final analysis, it will always remain mainly what we, the human element, make of it. Our attitudes and responses to the preoccupations or concerns of others continue to dictate the nature of our concourse here, as well as the role we ascribe, consciously or unconsciously, to it.

The international public entertained hopes in our endeavours, but was tormented, teased and incensed by what some journalists and sections of the media had overplayed, and sometimes rearranqed, concerninq our pronouncements here. Indeed, symphonies of discord have been extracted from our unendinq rendition of repetitive political lyrics at the General Assembly.

We approach the year 2000 better informed about both the horrors of warfare and the benefits of the alternatives. Perhaps what we should be addressinq at this time is not so much where the United Nations has failed or succeeded, but what chanqe should be introduced into our attitudes towards it. The miraqe of a tide in the affairs of this generation has not produced a flood that leads to fortune: the fortune of rejection of armed conflict and belliqerency, of constructinq the sustaininq rudiments of peace, of consolidatinq international strenqth to maintain qlobal peace and security.

What the world needs today are the fruits of such chanqe in attitudes; chanqe also in the will to pursue our universal visions of the future, a future that will increasinqly mock all tendencies towards both individual isolationism and sectionalism qeared to defyinq the collective will of the peoples of these United Nations. We need to demonstrate our commitment to the United Nations Charter, makinq productive use of the periodic meetinqs of the General Assembly and the

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

Organization's other forums, ensuring that we are seen to be more than a mere debating society.

Multilateralism has procured for mankind perhaps the only realistic vehicle to international understanding, an understanding that enhances confidence-building measures and paves the way to concord devoid of mistrust, an understanding that permits of knowledge of the nature of our common exposure to dangers, of natural forces, of our own forces, and of the scope of our interdependence. The multilateral process provides opportunities to hear and to be heard on the definitions of national policies, the concerns, aspirations and expectations of peoples everywhere, opportunities also for an exchange of views on the human condition - all these with a view to harmonizing the actions of States.

Most problems in contemporary life derive from cracks and breakdowns in the international system. Each nation was to be tuned to respond effectively to the uncertainties and transformations of the international scheme. It would be amiss to administer local medicine to a malaise needing global solutions.

We attach great importance to this phenomenon, because it translates the reality of life in a technological age. Frustrations with the consequences of adopting old attitudes in order to resist new realities may well be at the foundation of inter-State wars, of the war that modern man seems to be waging against himself, of a crisis in both conscience and perception.

At the commemorative fortieth anniversary of this Organization, we undertook some critical stock-taking of the tedious march from the San Francisco of the 1940s to the New York of the 1980s. The dialogue gave the impression that the United Nations was on trial. Criticisms were made about its value and place in modern international relations. There were indictments of its credibility and worth. The decision was reached to set up a group of high-level intergovernmental experts to

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

review the efficiency of the administrative and financial functions of the United Nations. It was as if the Organization was separate from ourselves, the Member States that constitute it. The juridical personality presented a convenient scapegoat for our misgivings.

Yet from the barrage of sentiments came some ideas upon which the fruits of today were nourished. It soon became crystal clear that States, no matter how rich or powerful, could no longer shield themselves with the outdated panoply of excuses as to why the Organization had been largely sidelined or even ignored in serious issues of international dimensions.

Serious disarmament efforts had been considered a matter within the privileged domain of the strong. The Organization was too cumbersome and too plagued with reactionaries for the sort of in-depth discussions on complex technical issues that disarmament negotiations entailed. Others had chosen resignation to the fact that there was no political will for disarmament on the part of the major military powers.

We approach the beginning of the last decade of this century with reformed attitudes in Washington, Moscow and other major capitals of military strength. It is reassuring that the disarmament issue has left the exclusive universe of discourse for experts. Politicians and the civil decision-making machinery of States have now sought and obtained the necessary knowledge. They have begun to join with the populace to recognize that a real stake in peace and security anywhere is the well-being of the individual, the family, the nucleus of society everywhere. The nuclear threat does not discriminate: it concerns mankind as a whole. This in itself demonstrates the need for involvement in disarmament efforts by all sectors of the international community that desire such involvement.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

These things are important for two practical reasons. First, the new attitudes in Washington and Moscow may be taken - hopefully - as part of the realization that primary responsibility for action in the field of disarmament, constitutionally as well as de facto, rests with these nuclear-weapon Powers. Secondly, the new-found friendly relations among them have encouraged the rest of the world to entertain a sense of revived hope in greater endeavours towards better standards of life for all.

Last January the French capital was host to a renewed international effort to curb and finally to eliminate chemical weapons. Even so-called third world nations, which often look on this category of weapons as the poor man's nuclear force, responded favourably to President Mitterand's echo of the universal call made at the General Assembly. The enthusiasm of the disarmament world was later to freeze somewhat as the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva strolled its rocky path, completely out of tune with the spirit of Paris.

President Bush and President Gorbachev were too inspired to permit the demise of a lofty ideal. The unilateral decisions to destroy existing weapons cannot but help build confidence among those States that feared a power and defense vacuum in the call for a mere ban on proliferation. It can only be hoped that the trend will visit the non-proliferation Treaty as well as the elaboration and implementation of other accords geared at ridding the world of military and non-military instruments of destruction and war.

Our preparations for a new world order of peace, security and development in the year 2000 must now address the procedures and machinery for implementing the aspirations of a generation recently graduated from illusions of the role of power and of the mirage of benefits deriving from conquest, conflict and conflagration in international relations.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

A happy consensus seems to have emerged after all concerning the ever-present potential of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and security. There was universal applause for the deserved award of the Nobel peace prize to the Secretary-General and to the United Nations peace-keeping forces. It was as if we all jointly smiled at the realization that the Organization was ours, that we were proud of our baby.

In order to avoid a relapse into the confusion and misgivings of the past, it would appear imperative that we strengthen the Organization and its capacity to play the roles prescribed by the Charter. This is more urgent now than ever before. The 1980s have begun to witness a remarkable change in the brute use of force involved in regional conflicts. The Secretary-General has demonstrated what a man of vision and dedication can do. Cessation of open warfare may be expected to extend to areas beyond Namibia: Central Africa, Asia and other regions of the globe may follow.

Peace-making must be followed by peace-keeping. Peace-keeping can assume a permanent form only if it is accompanied by settled measures of confidence-building among parties, to replace the elements of discord. Verification is a subject to which the Cameroonian delegation and Government attach equal importance because of the strength and reassurance it provides to parties as part of confidence-building.

Five years ago the Cameroonian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. William Eteki Mboumoua, addressing the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly on behalf of our nation, proposed a review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. We were encouraged by subsequent discussions and decisions on the subject to present to the Disarmament Commission a formal document outlining our views on the subject. Our primary concern continues to be the efficiency of the institutions set up by this generation for the constructive maintenance of international peace, as designed by the universal political edifice

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

that we all choose to call the United Nations Charter. We cannot be above owning that the contradictions of contemporary international society exist in spite of the Charter, not because of its prescriptions. States do not seem to echo in their policies the determination of the peoples of the United Nations represented in San Francisco to establish productive conditions of peace, to practise tolerance and to promote such harmonious progress universally as would make conflict both repugnant and undesirable.

Faced with disputes or even suspicions about the motivations of others, nations resorted to war and belligerency instead of seeking understanding or recourse to peaceful settlement. The first half of the twentieth century saw a graduation from Europe's Middle Ages in which States were created by force of arms. Technology had changed the scene, and the ambitions of individual tyrants had to be met with the collective force of new groupings across the globe. The frustrations of the vile quest for military victory and foreign occupation persisted well beyond the immediate ravages of war. The cancer of conflict was to find its way into long-term economic and social consequences. The lesson began to dawn on those who revelled in the illusions of power, and restructuring responded very quickly to rethinking on the blessings rather than the curse of it.

We can only hope that recent events justify our impression that the changing times do, in fact, herald a revival of faith in the universal conscience that established the great visions of the United Nations Charter. If this is so, it would be dangerous and premature to presume that the human instincts for conflict and war have been eliminated from international relations. The pressures that provoked change descend from deteriorating economic and social advancement, the cause of which may be traced to mismanagement and wrong priorities set. History has shown that once the pressures and other nightmares of conflict recede into what is seen as irrelevant memory, man takes on vagrancy, lured by illusions and

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

It is our view, during the happy moments of revival, that sustainable institutions must be set up and strengthened to ensure that the individual is always preoccupied with forms, procedures and other activities which actively promote the nature of better alternatives to conflict - the alternatives of co-operation, of understanding through dialogue, of the inevitability of joint actions. The United Nations can hardly be seen not to be a precedent because it has no precedent: it indeed creates one.

We live in dangerous times and need to recognize that fact. It would appear to this delegation that history is once again presenting our generation with the facet of a détente which may be said to exist among some of the military powers and among the economic giants of the age.

(Mr. Enqo, Cameroon)

If anything is becominq clear, it would appear to be the diverqency of views on the scope and beneficiaries of the proclaimed détente. It is not even clear whether the predicament of others was particularly relevant as the two super-Powers undertook a critical rapprochement in the process of easinq tensions between them. The rest of the world took hope and may have presumed too much about its effect on international relations elsewhere. The world no lonqer operates merely on the wishes, interests and dictates of the major Powers alone. Yet, we must understand that their predicament colours the pliqht of others: they share economic crises and the epidemic spreads; yet, they make peace amonq themselves and this does not necessarily qive comfort and relief to others. The blame is too often placed entirely where it does not belonq: there is a tendency to iqnore the ever-present truths of the human condition. There are permanent interests which each State seems to seek in security, peace and development.

What is heartenino is that in time of adversity, man seeks his kind for survival. That quest qave birth to this Orqanization. At least for the time beino, we have with us a renewal of faith in the United Nations. We must strenqthen this Orqanization in order to consolidate recognition of it as the only true, universal centre for the harmonization of the actions of States.

Most critical, perhaps, at this period in time is the role it must play in the delicate areas of disarmament, of peace-makino and of peace-keepinq. The cessation of open-armed conflict does not always come with assurances of a sustainable peace. Peace-keepinq is probably the most urqent amonq the important responsibilities of this Orqanization. It is upon the Secretary-General and the efficiency of the institutional structures that parties to conflicts, as well as the international public, place their hopes for the maintenance of peace and security.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

In a fast-moving world, the Secretary-General's responsibility is both complex and heavy. The holder of the office cannot afford to operate on an ad hoc basis, permitting crisis situations to drag dangerously on because of indolence or bureaucratic idiosyncracies. He is called upon to maintain a tremendous reservoir of knowledge of the nature of each case and to respond with dispatch as well as expertise regarding any issues arising from the special dictates of the Security Council and the General Assembly in relation to the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security.

Considering the multifaceted nature of his overall duties and the need to enhance the effectiveness of his exercise of his prerogatives, it is the opinion of this delegation that the hand of the Secretary-General should be strengthened. The tremendous bureaucracy over which he presides must be so structured as to reinforce his capacity to respond efficiently in the performance of the delicate functions demanded of him.

We are inclined to conclude, in the light of ever-increasing events relating to regional and other conflicts, that the time has come to review the role of the various organs and institutions which deal with international peace and security. That review must lay prominent emphasis on the efficiency of the system, especially the effectiveness of co-ordination and the elimination of duplication of effort. The Secretary-General must be seen to be the master of crisis management, not a technocratic pater familias preoccupied with co-ordinating a large, diverse bureacracy of equals, each laying claim to unsettled jurisdictions.

The process of evaluation for the Secretary-General, especially when he has to consult Member States on delicate political decisions, must be streamlined. His professional and technical support must come to him with reasoned alternatives, not conclusions and recommendations from diverse sources. Following consultations with

(Mr. Enqo, Cameroon)

many deleqations and experts, we have come to the conclusion that a step should be taken, similar to the decision of the General Assembly to establish a principal co-ordinator for international economic development, a hiqh-level official at the level of Director-General. The formal proposal by Cameroon's Minister of External Relations, Dr. Jacques-Roqer Booh-Booh, at the 11th plenary meetinq of the General Assembly on 28 September 1989, was inspired by that conclusion. He too endeavoured to reflect our Government's concern for, and commitment to, such reforms in the United Nations system as truly make for efficiency both of cost and of actions.

In order to address the full implications of this proposal, we would respectfully request that the Secretary of the Committee or the Secretariat of the United Nations should provide a purely technical analysis of the distribution of labour amonq the various orqans, services and other institutions dealinq with all aspects and activities of international peace and security within the system. I would stress that we are requestinq a purely technical analysis.

In closinq, we cannot help but draw attention to the stronq case for peace that has been made by the fadinq twentieth century, the end of an eventful millennium postulatinq a cataloque of the evident consequences of human conduct in conflict amonq States, in conflict both with nature and the environment. The conflict, any conflict, is destructive. War is definitely not an instrument of well-beinq, either to the victor or to the vanquished. Peace, to be attained, must be fouqht for resolutely aqainst conditions of war and belliqerency. Once obtained, peace must be orqanized. It can only be maintained by conscious and concrete construction, not only of the rudiments that inhibit war and conflict but also by the entrenchment of procedures and mechanisms which lend efficiency to its overall manaqement.

(Mr. Engo, Cameroon)

We sincerely hope that the sentiments which we express today will further enhance the recommendations for rational change made by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I am certain that the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs has taken note of the request by Ambassador Engo, and that he will be contacting him about the request in due course

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.