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New York

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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 TO 69 AND 151 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I call on the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Yasushi Akashi.

Mr. AKASHI (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): I very much appreciate the opportunity of addressing the First Committee in its consideration of the disarmament items on its agenda.

The Committee has before it a number of reports submitted by the Secretary-General in implementation of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at previous sessions. Without attempting to deal with every one of them, I hope I may be permitted to draw the attention of representatives to some of these reports, especially those which directly impinge on the responsibilities of the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

As representatives are well aware, the Department is responsible for a wide range of activities. The provision of substantive services to the First Committee and other bodies established by the General Assembly, and to the Conference on Disarmament and its subsidiary bodies, continues to be a main responsibility of the Department. Especially in the case of the Conference on Disarmament, this has meant an extremely heavy task for the Department, primarily because of the accelerating pace of negotiations on the draft convention on chemical weapons. Furthermore, my Department serviced the Third Review Conference on the sea-bed Treaty and will provide the necessary assistance and services for the Fourth Review Conference of the non-proliferation Treaty, to be held next year.

Another important function of the Department has been the gathering, presentation and publication of information about United Nations activities in the field of disarmament. Representatives will observe that continuing efforts are

(Mr. Akashi)

being made to improve our publications, including the Disarmament Yearbook, the periodical, Disarmament, fact sheets and newsletters so as to make them as informative and readable as possible. We are also looking for effective new audio-visual and educational programmes in disarmament in co-operation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs and some outside organizations.

The recommendation of the Group of 18 and the request by the General Assembly for five expert studies to be carried out by the Secretary-General have made it necessary for the Department to strengthen its monitoring, analysis and studies function. In this connection, I am happy to inform members that two groups of governmental experts, one on nuclear weapons and the other on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification, have been working hard and are expected to complete their work in time for submissions by the Secretary-General at the forty-fifth session, next year.

In addition, two studies are being carried out by the Secretary-General with the assistance of a small number of consultants in the areas of (a) science and technology and their implications for international security and (b) the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It is hoped that the respective reports based on these exercises will also become available before summer next year.

In compliance with resolution 43/75 I, another group of governmental experts is being established on transparency of information on conventional arms transfers. The group is expected to hold its first meeting in January next year. The report of the group will be submitted to the General Assembly in 1991.

Another group of experts has recently completed its consideration of the role of the Secretary-General in the investigation of the alleged use of chemical weapons and has developed further guidelines and procedures to uphold the authority

(Mr. Akashi)

of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. The report (A/44/561) constitutes a serious attempt to synthesize different ideas on strengthening the role of the Secretary-General in this vital domain, where easier access to relevant technology has made it a subject of growing concern.

(spoke in French)

In his annual report on the work of the Organization the Secretary-General has noted that

"in areas where confrontation has been the norm for so many years, major changes in attitudes and perceptions are taking place and long-standing differences are being reconciled." (A/44/1, p. 13)

He has also pointed out the

"stresses and strains that exist in so many parts of the world." (ibid.)

It is against this backdrop and in the context of the mandates given by the General Assembly that the three regional centres for peace and disarmament, in Africa, Latin America and Asia, have been utilized to the extent that their resources permit. Intensive dialogues are being organized at these centres. I participated personally in the meetings held in Lomé, Togo, in Lima, Peru, and in Kathmandu, Nepal, all of which served to clarify the priority areas of work to be assigned to the centres. The potential contribution the centres can make towards the relaxation of tension, confidence-building and disarmament is now widely recognized. However, if they are to realize their potential to the full they need adequate resources, both human and financial, particularly for the effective and efficient organization and expansion of regional and subregional dialogues.

In the year 1989 the Department for Disarmament Affairs has been active in prompting discussions, sometimes at expert level, sometimes at the level of non-governmental organizations. At times we have sought to bridge these two levels

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in order to demonstrate the complexities of ongoing negotiations and provide opportunities for interchange between negotiators, representatives of the military, researchers and members of non-governmental organizations. On other occasions we have organized meetings specifically designed to provide training to young diplomats and reach out to mass media leaders.

(Mr. Akashi)

Ad hoc conferences have been held in Kyoto, Japan; in Dagomys, USSR; in Kiev, Ukrainian SSR; in Cairo, Egypt; and in Lagos, Nigeria. In all cases, we received unstinted co-operation and support from the host Governments concerned, and I wish to record my sincere gratitude to them.

It is heartening that a number of Governments have indicated their interest in hosting further meetings. Next year, for example, a meeting on arms transfers will be held with the co-operation of the Government of Italy. On naval issues, two seminars are planned, with the support of the Nordic Governments and the Government of Bulgaria, respectively. It is also planned to have an international meeting of scientists to discuss the challenge of scientific and technological developments in relation to international peace and security.

I cannot fail to mention in this connection a conference on conversion of military to civilian industries to be held in Moscow next June, with the co-operation of the Government of the Soviet Union. Efforts towards converting military industries to civilian production are actually taking place in some countries, sometimes as a manifestation of government policy, and sometimes as an outcome of economic requirements felt by private industry. The destruction of existing arms and the conversion of military industries to civilian purposes are extremely complex operations. It seems to be most appropriate for the United Nations to lend its hand in this process by mobilizing academic and other expertise available in the world in order to facilitate consideration of this complex issue as a contribution to making conversion a durable wide-spread process.

(spoke in English)

While the prospects for major progress in disarmament are encouraging, particularly in Europe where the largest concentration of armed forces is located, it certainly does not permit complacency in many other regions of the world. In these areas, the process of positive dialogue and agreements has to be nurtured so

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that difficulties of a political and technical nature can be overcome to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. In this process, informed public opinion has a major part to play. Therefore, the objectives of the World Disarmament Campaign, launched in 1982 at the time of the second special session devoted to disarmament, continue to be of great relevance. It is with that in mind that the Secretariat will continue to seek new ways to widen the distribution of its publications and promote discussions among non-governmental organizations and between non-governmental organizations, experts and academics. In the interest of wider public information, the Department, using its extrabudgetary resources, has made small amounts of subsidies available to a number of United Nations information centres in order to aid them in organizing specific disarmament information activity. It also intends to organize ad hoc briefings for members of the mass media to keep them informed of important ongoing negotiations, particularly at the Conference on Disarmament.

Many members of the First Committee will be aware of the shift of emphasis in the work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies, which the Secretary-General renamed the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters with effect from 1 January 1989. The mandate given to the Board by the General Assembly remains unchanged, but the Secretary-General has sought to provide a better opportunity once a year for the Board to have a frank and in-depth discussion of disarmament issues. The new format was applied successfully to the session of the Board in July this year, following which the Chairman's report was received by the Secretary-General. The objectives of these changes were to permit the Secretary-General to draw on the accumulated experience and wisdom of the Board for advice on matters within the area of disarmament and arms limitation.

I recall with immense gratitude the decision of the First Committee last year which was embodied in the letter of the Chairman of the First Committee addressed

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to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee. Similar concerns regarding the resources available to the Department to service adequately the Conference on Disarmament were conveyed to the Secretary-General in a letter dated 17 April 1989 from the President of the Conference on Disarmament. Despite the outstanding quality and exemplary dedication of its staff, of which I am very proud, the Department has, in my view, already reached the point at which the numerous mandates given to it cannot be satisfactorily carried out with the limited resources at its disposal. I would be less than candid if I did not express my concern about the Department's future capacity to fulfil its manifold responsibilities on the basis of the highest professional standards which Member States have received in the past and have every right to expect in the future. I hope that in deciding on any new tasks which the Committee may wish to assign to the Department, including the three regional centres, members will fully take into account their implications for our scarce resources.

Having said that, I wish to emphasize that the Department for Disarmament Affairs feels privileged to participate in the evolving positive process towards a global and co-operative approach to questions of peace and security, a pragmatic trend in deliberations and the willingness to adopt innovative measures by consensus. As the Secretary-General said in his annual report this year:

"... the number of resolutions and a reiteration of old positions does not meet the demands of new circumstances". (A/44/1, p. 15)

Furthermore:

"The magnitude and complexity of the issues involved in the multilateral disarmament process demand that we explore all avenues to strengthen the role of the United Nations in this field and make more effective use of its deliberative machinery." (supra)

Giant steps towards these objectives seem to be within our reach for the first



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time in many decades. The Secretariat will always be at the disposal of the Governments of Member States with a view to assisting them in the attainment of the lofty objectives of arms limitation and disarmament.

Mrs. URIBE de LOZANO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like first to express our gratitude and admiration to Ambassador Douglas Roche of Canada for the admirable work accomplished with understanding and incomparable skill. He presided over one of the most fruitful sessions of the First Committee last year. Mr. Chairman, we wish you similar success in your work.

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano,  
Colombia)

For Colombians who only a few years ago suffered the rigours of nature so harshly, the disaster which occurred yesterday in San Francisco is deeply felt. We therefore wish to convey to the United States Mission our sentiments of solidarity.

Mr. Chairman, as we begin our work in the First Committee - over which you have so rightly been selected to preside - it is impossible for us not to mention the name and the philosophy of that great Venezuelan, Bolivar, who inspired and promoted the aspirations that unite our peoples. Through his struggle, Bolivar sought not only the political independence of peoples but also their freedom. When he uttered that word "freedom", it was to give it a universal significance going far beyond its usual meaning for mankind. Freedom, yes; but freedom to break away from the shackles of the oppressed, to improve the lot of millions of human beings who are subjected to a life of deprivation, humiliation and disappointment: in sum, freedom to enhance the dignity of man.

His concept of freedom embraces both the personal condition of every citizen and the supreme benefits of equality whereby human beings are judged not by accidents of fate, such as race or colour, but by the exercise of virtue founded on common morality.

From his calls to action and messages, from his letters and decrees, one can clearly see Bolivar's concern over the fate of the individual. He seeks the weakest to extol their virtues; he bows in respect for the rights of those who are subject to the hateful yoke of slavery in all its manifestations. Thus Bolivar opposes the great dictators of all times, those who would impose their will on peoples, those who have always wielded the iron grip of tyranny to suppress rights, to enslave mankind and to establish a policy of total mastery over the minds of men.

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Colombia)

The Liberator wished the best possible future for his Americas, the highest measure of happiness, social security and political stability. The society Bolivar foresaw was one in which every person would be guided by concepts of strict morality, respect for the rights of others and complete coexistence that should form the bases of any republic.

When Bolivar spoke, it was to address directly the great community of men and women who lived in the lands he freed. His thinking lives in our democratic institutions and in the most treasured principles of the United Nations as well. We are thus committed to Bolivar's struggle to achieve the great future he wished for our Americas and for which all peoples struggle today.

The decade that is fast coming to an end will leave our region a poor legacy in the social and economic fields. Individual and collective efforts at development have been thwarted and the result has been more poverty, more backwardness and less well-being for many thousands of people in Latin America and the Caribbean whose security is thus threatened. The root of our problems is therefore not one of a military nature, nor will solutions be achieved through weapons.

Latin America has had a deeply rooted tradition to co-operate in the maintenance of peace, and this has been amply demonstrated with regard to the Central American conflict. If in the case of Colombia we have been forced to resort to arms, it has been solely to defend our constitutional order against the powerful weapons which drug traffickers, terrorists, mercenaries and others of that ilk acquire in the gruesome arms fair of those who would make this lucrative trade legitimate.

For many years the world has been living in a climate of confrontation; no nation has been spared and no person has been free from the anxiety of the threat

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Colombia)

posed by nuclear weapons. The new relationship that is developing between the United States and the Soviet Union has promoted initial disarmament agreements and a turn towards mutual trust. We hope that this relationship will be further strengthened along lines that can lead also to a new climate of international trust, free from the spectre of nuclear weapons.

While the world has been able to survive in spite of the presence of nuclear weapons at a given moment in its history, we need only consider the possibility of continuing to do so in an uncertain future to understand that the nuclear era is like an endless minefield in which the proliferation of nuclear weapons will offset the ability of the deterrence system to maintain its precarious stability.

It seems that the nuclear Powers are assuming that doing away with the policy of deterrence can be postponed for a few more years; but the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons that is part and parcel of that policy, in addition to horizontal proliferation, has given the deterrence system an evermore dangerous dimension - and this must be corrected without delay.

Events of recent years do not lead one to hope for the reversal of the trend towards nuclear-weapons proliferation. So far none of the States that remain outside the non-proliferation régime and carry out nuclear activities has guaranteed to the international community that its nuclear programmes are strictly for peaceful purposes. Furthermore, the States that have so far not adhered to non-proliferation Treaties seem to believe that the continued production of nuclear weapons by a few States and the qualitative development and the retention and deployment of considerable stockpiles of such weapons means that those weapons can be considered as politically useful. Similarly, many States parties to these Treaties have made known their impatience over the fact that their renouncing the nuclear option has not yet contributed to the adoption of more effective nuclear

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disarmament measures, as envisaged in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, whose Fourth Review Conference will once again have to address these issues.

On the other hand, continued nuclear tests - subject to a partial ban excluding underground nuclear tests - has allowed for the qualitative development of those weapons and their proliferation, in spite of the consensus in the world community that a comprehensive nuclear-test ban would be the most effective way to put an end to the nuclear-arms race. The world would gain little if the talks between the major Powers, instead of leading to agreement on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban which would entail amending the 1963 Moscow Treaty, were to revive the Treaty on the limitation of underground nuclear tests, which was concluded bilaterally in 1974. Let us not fool ourselves: that Treaty would permit underground explosions of up to 150 kilotons - the equivalent to 150,000 tons of TNT - a force 10 times greater than that of the bomb that razed Hiroshima and greater than almost any test undertaken by the United States and the Soviet Union.

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Nor would it benefit the world if at the same time as the negotiators of the major Powers met to agree on a 50-per-cent reduction in their strategic weapons those producing them were to continue to develop increasingly sophisticated weaponry. At a stage in history when there seems to be movement towards détente and co-operation, what purpose could be served by the continued development of weapons for use in what the experts call limited nuclear war or, for example, by maintaining 9 megaton nuclear warheads - the so-called B-53s - which are many times more lethal than the Hiroshima bomb? These are questions of grave concern, and the international community is entitled to adequate answers.

The inability to resolve these basic problems has set back all attempts to counteract progress in the nuclear field. The international community will have to address them with greater resolve, each State shouldering its responsibilities, if we are to free mankind from the horrible prospect of a nuclear holocaust.

We have followed with great interest news about the deliberations between the Warsaw Treaty countries and the countries members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on the reduction of nuclear and conventional weapons in Europe. We hope that, within the new dynamics of these events, initiatives to achieve a stable balance of conventional forces at lower levels in the region will bring about a climate conducive to the elimination, once and for all, of the threat that has for many years existed as an argument to justify the maintenance of nuclear weapons and the nuclear-deterrent system. We have no doubt that this is the intention of European countries, and it is the hope of countries which, like Colombia, feel bound up with the fate of that continent.

My country has repeatedly stated the need to start procedures that will lead to conventional disarmament in all regions. Thus, we have always sponsored or supported draft resolutions adopted on this item. Resolution 43/75 I, entitled

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano, Colombia)

"International arms transfers", which was sponsored by 20 countries and was adopted by the General Assembly last year, calls on Member States to adopt all necessary measures to control the procurement of weapons that exceed the legitimate needs of national defence. The Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization, says:

"one of the essential requirements is that means be found to regulate the transfers of arms. The need for action both within and outside this Organization towards this end becomes ever more pressing. Many developing countries are draining their economies to purchase highly sophisticated weapons. On their side, arms-producing countries are vigorously pursuing weapon sales and transfers to bolster their trade balances. Efforts at the United Nations, with the help of governmental experts, to introduce greater transparency into arms transfers would be a necessary first step in arresting this alarming trend." (A/44/1, p. 14-15)

The Secretary-General refers also to the growing technical complexity of new weapons and to their proliferation, which compound existing difficulties even if they contribute to the spreading of technical know-how. Many Governments have expressed similar concerns. In their responses to the Secretary-General, as well as in their statements at plenary meetings of the General Assembly, they have expressed their firm belief that there is an immediate need to restrict international arms transfers and to subject them to reliable political control. Furthermore, the Heads of State or Government of non-aligned States recognize the negative implications for international peace of the supply of weapons to areas of tension. This is especially true of the illegal traffic in weapons - a phenomenon that compounds tensions, undermines the internal security of some States, as well as regional security, and strengthens those forces that oppose the disarmament process.

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The matter of international arms transfers should be addressed, together with the easing of international tensions, the strengthening of confidence-building measures, reaffirmation of the need to settle disputes by peaceful means, control of the arms race, and the achievement of disarmament under effective international supervision. Colombia, for its part, will spare no effort to ensure follow-up to resolution 43/75 I and achievement as soon as possible of the agreements necessary to achieve the purposes of that resolution. We shall continue to press our views, as embodied in document A/44/444, convinced, as we are, of the crucial role that the United Nations can play in identifying measures to control and reduce international arms transfers and to eliminate illicit transfers of arms.

For Colombia this is a time of anguish. The winds of terror shake the foundations of our cities, but the spirit of Colombians cannot be broken. Our suffering brings out our best qualities and virtues, enabling us to face difficulties with determination and resolve, despite the fact that we have been the victims of a serious state of social disintegration instigated outside our borders and therefore beyond our control.

Mr. Virgilio Barco, President of Colombia, in his address to the General Assembly, issued an urgent invitation to share the risks of the world's war against drug trafficking. With vehemence, he urged eradication of the madness of the arms trade, pointing out that many of the sophisticated arms with which criminals are intimidating, wounding and murdering Colombian people are obtained freely and irresponsibly from arms-trading nations. President Barco said:

"Let us make no mistake about this: those who sell arms to narco-terrorists are even more guilty than the addicts whose demand for drugs fuels violence."

(A/44/PV.13, p. 16)



(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano, Colombia)

The proliferation of weapons is the proliferation of suffering. We are convinced that weapon transfers are an invitation to the option of war and conspire against the process of disarmament and the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

Transfers of chemical weapons are also inherently aberrant. We wish, before this Assembly, to denounce and condemn not only those who use these weapons but also those who provide the raw materials and the technology for their manufacture. Colombia has referred to the urgent need for States that have the capacity to develop, manufacture and use chemical weapons to start sharing responsibility, to assume jointly the obligation, for the total prohibition of these abhorrent weapons. We have also maintained that under the new international convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, procurement, transfer and use of chemical weapons and their destruction the United Nations should be given broad latitude for verifying commitments and for applying sanctions for violations.

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano,  
Colombia)

Therefore, the States which have committed themselves to this responsibility will determine whether or not we reach the threshold of the twenty-first century with these vestiges of barbarism.

Undoubtedly all societies involved in a high degree of military effort are using up resources which could be used to attain productive social goals. The waste of the world's resources and the diversion of human skill and effort that result from the inability of nations to live in harmony is simply monstrous. Estimates of the total number of persons directly or indirectly involved in military activities range from 50 to 100 million divided among armed services, production of military equipment, ministries of defence and military research institutions. World industry at present devotes approximately \$150 billion to military production. Clearly, this immense effort to ensure the destruction of potential enemies contributes very little to the world economy, well being or security. However, it is an integral and permanent part of the economic structure.

The need for plans to convert military industries to civilian purposes was considered in its international aspects by the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts that prepared the report on The Relationship between Disarmament and Development. The report contains proposals for and an examination of concrete disarmament measures and the resources that would be freed by a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, the general prohibition of the possession and production of chemical weapons, demilitarization of the sea-bed and its surrounding areas, the elimination of all foreign bases and withdrawal of all foreign troops.

In the hope of disarmament lies the possibility, if we adopt a coherent approach to the world of the future, of a gradual conversion of our economy from the arms race to a stable and sustainable world order. A prerequisite for this is

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Colombia)

universal acceptance of the need to equate disarmament with development, not only in the third world but in the world as a whole.

We welcome and support the valuable initiative of the Secretary-General in convenng next year a conference to address the question of conversion and its impact on the arms race.

We are living, as though condemned to do so, on a razor's edge, on the edge that both separates and unites the universal culture that is emerging and specific cultures that we are seeking to perpetuate. There is, therefore, a vacuum in our political order. Through the armaments culture man has become "a wolf to man" and the life of man "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short", to use the sad words of Hobbes.

We believe that the Costa Rican initiative on education for disarmament could fill this vacuum. It is certainly our inescapable historical duty to devote our best efforts to bringing about a universal awareness that development through peace and disarmament is essential today if man is to realize his human potential.

We therefore need "a new life order" that will offer disarmament in place of the colossal disaster that threatens, and development, beginning with the idea that to develop is to be more, to create more and to share more. We need an educational undertaking that will educate for creative and productive work, educate for coexistence and peace among all men, teach the ascendancy of fundamental scientific concepts and modern technical instruments, and teach respect and love for others, not just for one's own. Thus we need a new ethic which not only advocates community morality but also the impersonal morality that establishes and regulates the rights and duties of States and nations among themselves, the rights and duties of communities with regard to the State and of the latter with regard to the former, and the rights and duties of all with regard to nature.

Mr. TURBANSKI (Poland): I wish to begin by joining other delegations in expressing sincere condolences to the United States delegation on the tragic human losses and suffering caused by last night's earthquake in California.

Mr. Chairman, I also take this opportunity to congratulate you, on behalf of the Polish delegation, and on my own behalf, on your election to preside over the work of our Committee. Your well-known diplomatic skills and experience augur well for the successful fulfilment of the tasks entrusted to you.

My congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee. At the same time, I extend my best wishes to the Under-Secretaries-General, Mr. Yasushi Akashi and Mr. Vasiliy Safronchuk, as well as to Mr. Miljan Komantina, the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament.

The First Committee begins its disarmament debate in an auspicious political climate. During the last few years the international situation has been changing gradually for the better. The world has entered a new phase marked by the growing East-West dialogue and a decisive turnabout in Soviet-American relations. The conclusion of the Washington Treaty on the elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles has become a milestone in the history of arms control and disarmament. It has not only initiated the elimination of an advanced operational nuclear-weapon system but also emphatically proved the feasibility of disarmament efforts. The successful experience in the implementation of the Treaty has raised high hopes of a positive outcome to the crucial talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear and space arms. Their commencement has created expectations of yet another turning-point in nuclear disarmament leading to 50 per cent reductions in the strategic offensive arsenals of the two great Powers.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

We are confident that the spirit of accommodation demonstrated at the meeting of Secretary of State James Baker and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, as well as the constructive responses to each other's concerns, indicated in the joint statement of 23 September, augur well for further progress in this field.

Gradually but steadily the new political thinking has become deeply rooted in international relations. There is common recognition of the total nonsense of nuclear war. We are also witnesses to the growing recognition of the primacy of international law in relations between States. Efforts are being made to provide for the evolution of military doctrines towards assurance of their strictly defensive character.

Substantive positive changes have taken place in many regional conflicts which for a long time have been a source of tension and mistrust. The successful involvement of the United Nations in resolving these conflicts has strengthened the role of the Organization and increased confidence in it.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

The favourable trends in the international climate have significantly expanded the possibility for progress in all fields of disarmament. In fact, that view was distinctly confirmed during the Assembly's general debate. What is more important, a number of Member States reiterated in this connection a growing need for the intensification of multilateral disarmament efforts and their willingness to take full advantage of existing opportunities in this regard. Such efforts should not lag behind the bilateral negotiations. They should - and could - more fully and more effectively supplement and complement bilateral negotiations leading to the much desired strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

Speaking on the first day of the general debate in the General Assembly, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Skubiszewski, addressing the subject of disarmament, stated:

"In our view, the top priorities are limitation of armaments, progressive elimination of nuclear weapons, and elaboration of an effective system of supervision. The world needs new and far-reaching disarmament agreements in which all States would have their fair share. Such agreements should concern all types of armaments in all areas of the world." (A/44/PV.4, page 71)

The single most urgent task, and at the same time the one closest to successful finalization, seems to be that of concluding work on a convention on the complete elimination of chemical weapons. This year the Conference on Disarmament started its work on this question with a fresh political impetus coming from the Paris Conference of the States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and other interested States. Undoubtedly, significant progress has been achieved in Geneva, yet the outcome of this year's negotiations has fallen short of the international community's expectations, as articulated in the universal appeal from Paris for a

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

convention on chemical weapons. It is our duty to identify and carefully consider the main causes of this situation and subsequently to elaborate appropriate recommendations aimed at further stimulation of the work of the Conference. In my considered view, such recommendations should include, among others, unequivocal provisions for the expansion of the mandate of the ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, with a view to the final drafting of the convention.

Poland welcomes with satisfaction the joint United States-Soviet statement of 23 September 1989, on chemical weapons and the further far-reaching proposals concerning chemical weapons put forward by President George Bush and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze during the Assembly's general debate. We regard those proposals as a distinct confirmation of the commitment of both Powers to the cause of eliminating chemical weapons and as an important contribution to multilateral negotiations on the subject taking place in Geneva, which will provide for their acceleration and, it is to be hoped, for the early elaboration of the convention.

At the same time, I should like to express Poland's high appreciation to the Government of Australia for the initiative of convening in Canberra the Government - Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons. In our view, the Canberra Conference constitutes an important step in preparing the ground for the implementation of a future convention and securing the commitment of the world chemical industry to its aims and provisions. The achievements of that Conference and its follow-up will facilitate the work on the convention since in many areas they can serve as a practically oriented and industry-related feed-back to the political process of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

The conclusion of the convention would contribute significantly to increasing the feasibility of multilateral efforts and enhance substantially the credibility of the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of global scope.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

In our opinion, the first priority in the field of nuclear disarmament should be given to halting the quantitative and qualitative development of nuclear weapons. Since nuclear explosions are the only way of testing the performance of new nuclear charges, a comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon tests would be the most effective way of putting an end to their development.

According to the informed opinion of military experts, both from the West and from the East, the combat capability of existing nuclear warheads can be successfully tested by means of computer simulation. Thus, a nuclear-weapon-test ban would in no way adversely affect either the security of the nuclear-weapon States concerned or the credibility of their nuclear arsenals in the interim period before the achievement of our ultimate goal, a world without any nuclear weapons at all.

While recognizing the importance of bilateral negotiations on a nuclear-test ban and welcoming the progress achieved in the Soviet-American talks on this subject, we are convinced that every State has both the right and the obligation to contribute to nuclear disarmament efforts. Poland shares the overwhelming view that it is necessary to initiate without further delay multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

In this context, we also noted with interest the proposal put forward by a group of non-aligned States concerning amendment of the 1963 partial test ban treaty, to have it cover underground tests as well. This original approach, aimed at reaching the ultimate goal - a comprehensive nuclear-test ban - deserves careful consideration.

Nineteen years of operation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have distinctly demonstrated its effectiveness and resiliency as a major international instrument for limiting and reducing the nuclear threat.



(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

The Treaty has its critics. No one can however deny its role in halting horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Since its conclusion, no new nuclear-weapon State has emerged among the parties to the Treaty. The Treaty has contributed to making the world a safer place. In all those years, it has also played an important role, in establishing a basis for international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Poland is vitally interested in maintaining the effectiveness and viability of the Treaty. Universal accession to it would serve this purpose. Thus, the First Committee should renew its appeal to all States that have not yet acceded to the Treaty to do so without further delay.

The forthcoming Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is to be the last one before the time comes to determine the future of the Treaty. For this reason, it is of paramount importance that the Conference be very well prepared so that it may be able to reaffirm the role of the Treaty as the basic element of an effective international non-proliferation régime and confirm the strict compliance of all parties, both non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon States, with the provisions of the Treaty. We note with great satisfaction the substantial results achieved so far by the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference. Poland believes, however, that the First Committee should seek to stimulate further the preparatory process and to create a favourable political background for a non-confrontational course and the successful outcome of the Review Conference.

Poland attaches considerable importance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This year in the Conference on Disarmament, we noted increased activity in this regard. Consideration of the item took place in an atmosphere that was distinctly better than ever before. In spite of that, however, no

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substantial results were achieved in the work of the Conference on this subject. We are seriously concerned over the steadily widening gap between the rapid development of space technology and the possibility of its military applications, on the one hand, and the slow pace of multilateral negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space on the other.

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It is our conviction that the Conference on Disarmament is well qualified to prepare new legal instruments relating to disarmament, including this particular field. Since the Conference has for some time encountered serious difficulties in reaching new agreements in this field, we have come to the conclusion that it is imperative for it to break the vicious circle and make an attempt to register some tangible progress in that area.

In that connection the Polish delegation has submitted to the Conference on Disarmament, for its further consideration, a set of confidence- and security-building measures in this regard. They are aimed at strengthening the existing international legal régime applicable to outer space, as well as at increasing transparency in outer space activities, particularly those having a military or military-related character. The measures seek to provide some political guidance which, if followed, would prompt further co-operation in and facilitate consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are greatly encouraged by the first reactions to that proposal and express our readiness for further co-operation in this field with all interested delegations.

For years Europe has been an area of grave tensions resulting from the direct contact of the two politico-military alliances. Today the situation has changed. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe has initiated a process of developing new forms of coexistence to ensure a greater degree of stability and security for all States on the continent at lesser cost. It has also created conditions for the development of the process of overcoming divisions established during the cold-war period.

We believe that peaceful stability in Europe can be established at a considerably lower level, that of defence sufficiency. Measures that would lead in this direction include the elimination of existing asymmetries and disproportions

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between North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Warsaw Pact military forces, as well as a considerable reduction in their respective military potential rendering them unequivocally defensive in nature. In addition, we are of the view that an increased predictability and enhanced openness in military activities, as well as greater restraint in conducting such activities, should also be conducive to the achievement of that goal.

The Vienna negotiations pursued by the Group of 23 and the Group of 35 are of a unique character since they represent, as a combined and interrelated system, a genuinely new element in the international disarmament process. From the very beginning we have striven to make a constructive contribution to them and to sustain their momentum. Our priority has been given to the elaboration, in the first place, of specific measures that could reduce the risk of a surprise attack. We believe that progress in negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe can generate conditions conducive to the disarmament process in other areas, especially that of tactical nuclear weapons. In our view these highly destabilizing weapons should become the subject of separate disarmament negotiations as soon as possible.

The negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe, pursued in parallel with negotiations on a new set of confidence- and security-building measures, open up new possibilities to achieve a radical and durable breakthrough in the military situation in Europe. Poland's contribution to those negotiations is a concept of decreasing armaments and increasing confidence in Central Europe, known as the Jaruzelski plan. We have noted with great satisfaction that its ideas have found ample reflection in the common platform of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty and that they have also met with considerable interest among our Western

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partners. We hope that the ideas contained in the plan will be given careful consideration during the negotiations in Vienna and that they will be duly reflected in future agreements.

The present changes in the political situation in Europe make it possible for us to reconsider the premises of our national security. Consequently, Poland has decided unilaterally to reduce its armed forces and to cut military expenditures. Those reductions are accompanied by the reorganization of our armed forces in line with the modification by the Warsaw Treaty of its defensive doctrine.

I should like to stress that Poland, being one of the proponents of the principle of defensive sufficiency, is prepared to reduce, together with its partners at the negotiating table, its military potential to such a level. There is no single type of weapon that we would not be willing to make the subject of negotiations or of mutually agreed reductions. We are also fully prepared to include our armed forces in the first phase of reductions which may be provided for in an agreement that will eventually be worked out in the course of the Vienna negotiations.

The positive changes in the world are gaining unprecedented momentum. We trust that they will be reflected also in the work of our Committee. In the next few weeks the First Committee will make strenuous efforts to give new impetus to the process of disarmament. We sincerely hope that this year the Committee will be able to elaborate even more consensus recommendations on all key issues on our agenda.

For its part the Polish delegation is ready to play an active role in the proceedings of the Committee and offers its full co-operation to you, Mr. Chairman, and to all delegations.

Mr. de AZAMBUJA (Brazil): My congratulations go to you, Mr. Chairman, and to other members of the bureau on your election. We have been friends for many

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years. It gives me great pleasure to see you in that seat and to know that we are in good hands.

May I also join other speakers in conveying our solidarity to the United States delegation on account of the Californian earthquake. We hope that the reconstruction will soon be under way, and that much will be learned from this disaster.

It has become commonplace to say that we are living in a unique moment in the history of international relations. Dialogue is progressively replacing confrontation. The United Nations has again been given a strengthened role in promoting peace. Military spending seems to be on the verge of gradually decreasing. As happens with all commonplaces, these assumptions have a certain amount of truth and some half-truths in them. The other side of the coin is that aspects, which remain mainly unaccounted for in the tide of optimism, are now pervading the media, obviously public opinion at large, academic circles and even the most pragmatic and, by professional bias, sceptical human beings - diplomats and the military. These facts do not entirely change the veracity of the assumptions that currently make headlines and editorial pages, but they taint them with shades of doubt and apprehension.

In the area of primary concern of this Committee - disarmament questions - the new atmosphere in international relations and specifically that between the two super-Powers has already produced a significant achievement, the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty. There are also promising signs both in relation to the START negotiations and to the chemical weapons convention being negotiated in Geneva, not to mention the Vienna negotiations on conventional disarmament in Europe. Nevertheless, some observations on the neglected aspects I mentioned before impose themselves when reviewing these developments.

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My first remark relates to the pace of progress in disarmament negotiations. I do not think anybody can recommend to negotiators that they be frantic or reckless; but the international community, being in a way hostage to the success of its endeavours, has the right to ask for resolve and expeditiousness. The North often asks the South to alter in the short term cultural, social or economic realities that took centuries to crystallize - most of the time with the active participation of those same developed countries, then colonial Powers - and that are embedded in deeply rooted local circumstances. This is the case in the human-rights and ecological fields. On its part, the North reacts negatively to any intimation that change could be faster in disarmament negotiations, an area where decision-making is centralized and where, consequently, the role of Government is undisputed. Excessive caution in matters in which solutions are at hand can be taken for procrastination. This impression of a certain unwillingness to renounce the advantages of material power tends to nudge the rest of the world towards a more cynical attitude, one less conducive to self-restraint.

My second observation is that, while disarming in a slow and step-by-step fashion, the militarily significant States urge other States to keep away from the same categories of armaments they deem essential for their self-defence. The notion of a world where some will keep for an indefinite time most of their overwhelming military power is obviously abhorrent and morally unacceptable to the international community as a whole. The repeated attempts to resort to concepts of non-proliferation of some technologies while reserving for a few their peaceful and military uses weaken the credibility of régimes based on those assumptions and show them to be largely oligopolistic practices that can give full satisfaction only to their creators and promoters.

A third observation relates to the scope of disarmament negotiations; it applies both to those already successful and those now under way. Few of them, and

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certainly not those related to the central problem of our time, nuclear weapons, aim at a complete ban and total destruction of the weapons involved. In most of the super-Powers' bilateral negotiations, the task is limited to making cuts, albeit relevant and extensive, in the formidable nuclear arsenals accumulated by them. The same assessment applies to the negotiations on conventional weapons recently begun in Vienna. Only the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on a chemical-weapons ban conform to the ideal model of a truly multilateral process, with potentially universal participation, aiming at a comprehensive prohibition not only of the use, but also of the development, production and stockpiling of a whole class of weapons

My fourth observation, closely related to the preceding one, refers to the format of the current disarmament negotiations outside the Conference on Disarmament, limited most of the time to two, three or at the most some three dozen participants. This mere fact detracts from their representativity. Some would hold that after being the main actors in the arms race, it is only natural that the two super-Powers be the protagonists in the disarmament process, which is in a way the reverse of the other, or its replay backwards, a type of reverse engineering. To some extent this is true. Nevertheless the international community has an inherent right to participate in something that is essential to survival, the failure of which could endanger us all. Another argument implying that only those that have the weapons being negotiated have the right and the necessary know-how to participate has the perverse consequence of stimulating States that could do so to pursue the acquisition of these arms themselves so that they also can have a say in such crucial decisions. As with any discriminatory political logic, the net result of a selective prohibition is to make the object of the prohibition more enviable and desirable.



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My fifth remark on the shortcomings of current efforts in the field of disarmament is that we have yet to see how even the somewhat moderate cuts in military spending will ultimately translate into more resources for development for the South. A massive transfer of resources for development, including resources liberated through disarmament measures, is one major way to prevent the ominous spectre of a third world bogged down in internal strife and widespread poverty, leading to massive exodus with the resulting immigration and refugee problems. The thaw in East-West relations has also cooled down what specialists somewhat cynically call low intensity conflicts, and even halted some. The resources thus saved, plus the savings coming from the neo-détente process in disarmament should help those nations that still struggle to overcome hunger and misery.

A sixth remark has to do with the crucial implications of armaments, especially nuclear armaments, vis-à-vis the protection and preservation of the world environment. The contemporary arms race has led to an unprecedented development of weapons of mass destruction capable not only of eliminating all life on our planet several times over, but also of making large areas of our planet uninhabitable or sterile for years or decades to come.

As we know, the United Nations has produced a good many studies on the matter, such as the one called "Study on the climatic and other global effects of nuclear war", whose conclusions fully corroborate overall concerns about the use of nuclear weapons and its consequences for the world environment. In essence, those conclusions demonstrate in an eloquent way how fallacious and unacceptable are the reiterated allegations that the fundamental question of disarmament should be exclusively dealt with by the so-called parties directly concerned.

Moreover, the close interrelationship between disarmament, development and the preservation of the world environment is undeniable. In a world of limited resources in which the basic human needs of mankind are ever growing, there are not

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too many alternatives for the maximization of those resources. The resources allocated for armaments are those that are essential for development and for environmental protection.

I have mentioned the studies already made by the United Nations on the question of disarmament and environment. I believe that thought should be given to a new and updated comprehensive study on the matter which could be made on the basis of existing studies and should reflect world concerns on the different aspects of the question, taking into account a number of scenarios. I hope that at this session we could begin to explore this line and that the United Nations Disarmament Commission might be given a role to play in further exploring this preliminary suggestion.

In short, the new atmosphere in international relations is most welcome and encouraging, but it has yet to develop all its promises in the field of disarmament, not to mention in the economic and social fields, on which I will not dwell for they do not pertain to the central agenda of this Committee.

Before coming to an assessment of the 1989 session of the Conference on Disarmament, a word - and a word only, even if the subject would require lengthy consideration - on the United Nations Disarmament Commission. All the hurdles now faced by the Conference on Disarmament - a multilateral negotiating body in an era of triumphant bilateralism - are multiplied in the case of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Its deliberative character should not be detracting in itself, but it came to be so. As a factory of ideas and a forum for discussion, the Disarmament Commission has already made some worthy contributions. The impulse has somewhat worn out. We need to use the present session of the First Committee to discuss among ourselves ways and means of giving new life to that relevant and representative body of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

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The assertion that the auspicious winds blowing through the international atmosphere take too long a time to translate into the disarmament arena is given proof in the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral negotiating forum devoted to disarmament negotiations. Progress in the first three items on its agenda, those relating to the most crucial aspect of disarmament, the nuclear one, continues to be prevented because the corresponding subsidiary bodies have not been established. Some nuclear-weapons Powers insist not only on their exclusive right to have nuclear weapons, even threatening to use them in their defence policy, but also to continue to test and modernize them. A negotiating mandate has yet to be found acceptable to a group of States, as if the Conference on Disarmament were an academic body or a non-governmental organization with a mandate to study disarmament issues but not to commit Governments in negotiations or final decisions on those issues.

(Mr. de Azambuja, Brazil)

Outer-space matters present a situation not far removed from the one I have described. Here the Conference on Disarmament has been able once again to establish a subsidiary body - you, Sir, have been very active in its efforts - only to see it stalemated by the confrontation over positions of principle. One group of countries seems reluctant to move forward in the search for new measures to prevent the arms race in outer space. Here again we are confronted with the argument that only those with the competence to make the weapons are competent to negotiate their future. This line of argument evades the evidence that outer-space issues, like nuclear matters, concern the whole planet and all mankind, without any exceptions.

My Government is deeply disappointed with the present state of affairs. Here I would recall the address of President José Sarney at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the principle he then enunciated that

"the non-militarization of outer space constitutes an essential pre-condition for the adoption of significant measures for regional disarmament".

(A/S-15/PV.10, p. 14-15)

Some seemed not to grasp fully the linkage between the two questions. It is evident to us that military activities or control over outer space above a particular region deeply and fundamentally affect what happens below and unfavourably influence regional processes of disarmament.

Consideration of other items in the Conference on Disarmament agenda - radiological weapons and negative security assurances - continues to be hampered by divergent views. Even if successful, the measures resulting from those discussions would in any event address only secondary or limited aspects of disarmament. The item on the comprehensive programme of disarmament, the discussion of which is so ably chaired by Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, to whom I extend best wishes

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for a speedy and complete recovery, could obviously not be more successful than the rest, the sheer comprehensiveness of its concept being just the opposite of the piecemeal and step-by-step approach in vogue in the centres of power.

I come now to the one and only item on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament that shows movement and inspires hope: a complete ban on chemical weapons.

The year 1989 has been marked by, at least, three very important developments towards the prohibition of chemical weapons. First, in January the Paris Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and other Interested States reaffirmed the validity of that Protocol, called for the early conclusion of the convention being negotiated in Geneva and recognized, in the fourth paragraph of its Final Declaration, that a complete ban would be the answer to the dangers involved in vertical and horizontal proliferation.

Secondly, this year's session of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference on Disarmament, under the dynamic and able guidance of Ambassador Pierre Morel of France, produced and enlarged a new version of the so-called rolling text of the convention, with significant improvements on previous texts and new material, albeit perhaps falling short of the very high expectations aroused by the overwhelming support registered in Paris for "the redoubling of efforts" at the Conference on Disarmament. Redoubled the efforts undoubtedly were, but not their tangible results - at least, not to the same extent.

Thirdly, the Canberra international Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, recently concluded, was another step in the direction of a comprehensive, universal and non-discriminatory convention on the total prohibition of chemical weapons, confirming beyond doubt that ideas implying a selective and exclusionary régime are completely out of the picture. Let us hope that, after so many relevant developments in 1989, 1990 will be the year of the conclusion of the

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convention on chemical weapons, banning, at last, those abhorrent weapons from the face of the Earth. We see no reason why that should not be feasible in this time-frame.

Coming from a country that never had or intended to have chemical weapons and from a region where, fortunately, the chemical-warfare threat has never been a fact of life, I can state that my Government is ready to join a chemical-weapons convention that prohibits the use, development, production and stockpiling of those terrible weapons, provided that it does not unduly hamper our civilian chemical industry and that no discriminatory provision is included in its text. I know for sure that the great majority of the developing countries, whether or not participants in the negotiations in Geneva, share this view.

The conclusion, signature and entry into force of the chemical-weapons convention will be a significant step forward in the direction of disarmament. One of the most terrible and more easily available weapons of mass destruction will be eradicated and ruled out as a means of warfare. Nevertheless, even taking into account the elimination of intermediate nuclear forces in Europe and, it is to be hoped, possible major cuts in the strategic nuclear weapons of the two super-Powers, we shall still be living in a world excessively loaded with arms and under the lingering threat of nuclear annihilation.

The rationale for that accumulation of means of destruction is the so-called theory of deterrence, which purports to legitimate, with complicated "pseudological" arguments, the immorality of the principles on which it is grounded: the permanent threat of destroying the adversary and, probably, with it the entire planet. The same perverted logic, based on retaliation, is sometimes transplanted by its supporters to other fields, the chemical for instance.

Let us only reflect for a moment on what it means to champion a kind of general theory of deterrence. If country A considers it can deter country B only

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with in-kind retaliation - that is, nuclear with nuclear, chemical with chemical - two corollaries follow logically: first, that country B will also try to deter country A with the same amount, possibly plus an extra bit that will persuade country A not to try anything, and so on, each partner engaging in a specular and never-ending arms race; secondly, that if country C is trying to deter country D, it will be tempted to follow the "successful" examples of countries A and B, and D will accordingly react to C, and the rest follows. In brief, deterrence is either good for all or for none.

This brings us to a leitmotif of recent initiatives emanating from the super-Powers in the field of disarmament, the notion that before they initiate disarmament in such and such an area it is necessary to prevent the spread or proliferation of the weapons in question. This kind of reasoning is doubly wrong, in our view. First, it frequently mistakes military technologies for science and technology as such; thus, in aiming at the prevention of the spread of deadly technologies, it ends up by preventing the dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge per se, which is a source of life and development for countries striving to overcome poverty, hunger and backwardness. Secondly, based as it is on an inherently unequal philosophy, this sort of old thinking fails to gather support and to be convincing.

The only logic that can aspire to universal acceptance is that based on universalism, which would apply to international relations the Kantian ethics expressed in the phrase:

"Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become universal law".

This ethical principle could undoubtedly be applied to the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace. Here we have an idea which States

(Mr. de Asambuja, Brazil)

from certain specific regions have seen fit to bring to life, as a means of preserving their immediate environment from being threatened by the presence of nuclear weapons or by conflicts that are alien to them. But this regional approach could also be the embryo of a progressive denuclearization and decreasing of tensions throughout the world.

Brazil has played an active role both in the conception of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and in the Declaration of the South Atlantic as a Zone of Peace and Co-operation. These two initiatives place my country and other neighbouring States in the privileged position of enjoying a unique peaceful geopolitical situation.

Coming from the same South American region, Sir, you will share my feelings of pride and privilege at living in the region with the lowest rates of military expenditure and one with a solid tradition of peaceful relations and very good neighbourliness. Brazil, for one, has not participated in an international conflict for the last 120 years, except for its answer to the call to combat the dangerous threat of nazi-fascism. We still look with concern towards other regions of the world where huge arsenals have accumulated. We are relieved by the signs that a new era is beginning, one of dialogue, transparency, détente and demobilization of military might. Let us hope that this trend proves to be deep-rooted and permanent, contradicting our somewhat ingrained pessimism, natural after repeated frustrations. Let us also hope that this new peaceful era of convergence between the foes of yesterday will not be built at the expense of those of us in the developing world, and that the new order will not forget its responsibilities towards those that lived through the cold-war years as close spectators or minor actors, or as its victims.



(Mr. de Azambuja, Brazil)

I began my statement by referring to commonplaces. Another idea is at risk of becoming one: the misconception that history has come to an end. The central argument here is that with the end of the cold war there is no adversary left to a certain conception of the world, and that following Hegel's premises, if there is no dialectic there is no movement and hence no history. Obviously, the adherents of this new fad acknowledge that, as they say - to quote some of them - "The world remains mired in history, and will be a terrain of conflict for many years to come".

(Mr. de Asambuja, Brazil)

What I fear is that this revival of the Hegelian idea of an "end of history" does not bring with itself other Hegelian assumptions, mainly what the German philosopher said in his Philosophy of Right, that:

"The Nation to which is ascribed a moment of the Idea in the form of a natural principle is entrusted with giving complete effect to it in the advance of the self-developing self-consciousness of the world-mind. This nation is dominant in world history during this one epoch, and it is only once that it can make its hour strike. In contrast with this its absolute right of being the vehicle of this present state in the world-mind's development, the minds of the other nations are without rights and they, along with those whose hour has struck already, count no longer in world history."

For someone who comes from the developing world, the idea that movement would stop, that history would be only a tedious repetition of the same, is equal to saying that the South has no rights. Change is the answer to the problems faced by developing nations. If confrontation is fading away between East and West, dialogue has not even really begun between North and South. This new dialectics can be the motor for a new era of human history. In our specific area, disarmament, this will happen if and when we all sit at the same table, those that possess weapons of mass destruction and we that do not, to negotiate a world order based on peaceful relations, mutual confidence and the rule of law.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.