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Chairman: Mr. FAHMY (Egypt) (Vice-Chairman)

CONTENTS

- General debate on all disarmament items
- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 TO 69 AND 151 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. COVARRUBIAS (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): First, I congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your election. Your ability and acknowledged experience are undoubtedly a guarantee that our work will be successful.

My country, which cherishes peace and the rule of law and believes in fulfilling international undertakings and obligations, has adhered to the principles in the United Nations Charter since it was formulated. We are therefore convinced that compliance with the Charter is a categorical imperative of international coexistence. We support the strengthening of all legal norms that contribute to peace and the solution of disputes by peaceful and mandatory means, as well as the enhancement of the authority of the United Nations and its Secretary-General. The Organization must play an increasingly active role in the field of disarmament and international peace and security.

The atmosphere in which we are beginning our work this year is different from that during previous sessions; there is no doubt that it is less tense. The world is gradually moving towards ever higher standards of freedom, particularly in Eastern Europe. The excesses of extreme devotion to ideologies are being left behind. The language is more reasonable and moderate, and, as a result, dialogue and understanding are becoming easier and consensus more feasible.

Thus, such long-standing conflicts as that in Afghanistan are moving towards a solution. The cease-fire between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq is a good beginning to the re-establishment of peace and security in the region. The Namibian independence process and the progress towards a possible solution in Cambodia, are moves on complex international issues that offer clear hopes of peace.

(Mr. Covarrubias, Chile)

The United Nations has recently been able to show the international community positive achievements that have made a real contribution to progress towards the peace for which we all long. However, we must realize that, unfortunately, a great deal still remains to be done, for wars and violence persist in many parts of the world, threatening world stability and peace.

Now, in the field of arms limitation and disarmament there are some areas in which important steps have been taken. However, there are others in which there is marked stagnation. One positive development has been the destruction and withdrawal of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles agreed between the United States and the Soviet Union. But regrettably some countries still insist on continuing to develop such weapons.

The bilateral negotiations between the two major military Powers on a 50 per cent reduction in their offensive strategic weapons are a good beginning and should continue uninterruptedly until the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons has been achieved.

The Government of Chile urges all countries that produce, stockpile, acquire or transfer chemical weapons to reach prompt agreement on a comprehensive ban on the development of such weapons and, of course, on their use, in order to achieve their total destruction on the basis of effective and comprehensive verification. We know that work on a draft convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons is difficult, but it is not impossible, and it will have to be given the greatest possible priority if we wish to reach a definitive solution and achieve the comprehensive prohibition of such weapons.

We also wish to express our concern over the threat to international peace and security represented by the illegal use of chemical weapons. Their eradication should be a priority for the over 20 countries that possess such weapons. We therefore attach great importance to the declaration of the Paris Conference on

(Mr. Covarrubias, Chile)

the prohibition of chemical weapons, held this year, and we urge adherence to it. Australia's convening of the Conference recently held at Canberra with the participation of the chemical industry of many countries was also of great value to this cause.

In this connection we note with interest what has taken place between the two major military alliances, for we regard it as a clear indication that agreements can be reached on balancing and then reducing the level of forces, both in terms of troop strength and in terms of nuclear and conventional weapons, with a view to reducing their offensive capabilities and increasing mutual trust. It is also interesting to note that the parallel talks being held among participating countries in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) on the drafting of a new set of confidence- and security-building measures have resulted in important proposals to make those measures more universal in scope, thereby strengthening the Stockholm document.

The increasing consolidation taking place with regard to an increase of confidence and security the world over will make it possible for agreement to be reached at Vienna on reductions in conventional weapons, and we also hope for encouraging signs that, in due time, a total suspension of nuclear testing will be agreed on, expanding the scope of the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water. Lastly, we hope for a realistic, step-by-step approach to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which pose such a great danger to world peace and security.

With regard to the question of arms transfers, it would be interesting and advisable to devise a system that could allow for greater global transparency. We therefore support the request made to the Secretary-General to carry out, with the assistance of governmental experts, a study on effective ways and means of promoting

(Mr. Covarrubias, Chile)

transparency on a global and non-discriminatory basis, taking into account the view of Member States.

The growing illegal traffic in weapons, with its unquestionably close links to international terrorism, subversion, crime and drug-trafficking, threatens both the internal security of States and regional security. We must therefore encourage progress in studies on the question so that all countries may join in adopting effective measures to eradicate, at the earliest possible moment, the extremely negative and illicit international trade in weapons. We completely understand the complexity and sensitivity of the question, particularly in terms of establishing effective international control and finding a definitive solution. However, we believe that, given the necessary political will, effective and solid agreements will be reached at the bilateral and regional levels by the countries most affected by that scourge.

We share the view expressed by some delegations that have spoken of the advisability of pragmatism and of rationalizing the work of the First Committee to reduce the number of draft resolutions and to focus our efforts on a smaller number of items. In that connection all delegations share the responsibility for the Committee's being more effective in its work. We should like to associate ourselves with and support the very positive statements that have been made in the Committee, for we believe that, after so many years of stagnation in the disarmament field, we are now on the threshold of a new era characterized by greater hope that progress can be made towards fruitful and constructive dialogue. We must not let that opportunity slip by.

This year the meetings of the First Committee have begun in a favourable climate for international relations. We therefore hope that we will be able to make substantive progress here on the issues and questions before us. The Committee can rely upon my delegation's contribution, however modest.

Mr. BATSANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Our delegation spoke in the Committee barely four days ago. However, there have been many interesting developments on the international scene since then, though their number might be less than the number of draft resolutions that will be tabled in the Committee today before the deadline.

With regard to current events I have in mind, first, President Gorbachev's visit to Finland and the meeting in Warsaw of the Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Treaty countries. I should particularly like to underscore the momentous document of a new type signed during the visit of Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev to Finland - the Soviet-Finnish Declaration - which encompasses political, economic, ecological and humanitarian spheres of co-operation. Co-operation in the political field calls for the following.

First, there must be active participation in building a world free from violence and intimidation, inequality and oppression, discrimination and interference in the internal affairs of others. All disputes, including regional conflicts, must be settled solely by peaceful political means. No country may enhance its security at the expense of others. No use of force can be justified, neither by one politico-military alliance against another, nor within the alliances, nor against neutral countries by anybody. Joint security requires that military confrontation be abolished.

Second, there must exist unconditional respect for the principle of free socio-political choice, the de-ideologization and humanization of inter-State relations, the subordination of foreign policy to international law and the supremacy of universal human interests and values.

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

Third, we must ensure international security through stage-by-stage nuclear disarmament, accompanied by reliable political and legal guarantees and strict regard for the interests of all States. These efforts should include the quantification without delay of a minimal nuclear deterrent, including tactical nuclear weapons, as an interim phase leading towards this goal.

Fourth, we need early finalization of agreements on a 50 per cent reduction of Soviet and United States strategic offensive armaments, the complete and universal prohibition of chemical weapons and the cessation of nuclear testing.

Fifth, there must be a global policy of openness covering the skies, the ground, the seas and oceans and outer space, contributing to the enhancement of comprehensive international security.

Sixth, we should develop a ramified system for reliable verification of disarmament processes.

Seventh, members of the military alliances should reduce their conventional forces in Europe, thus effectively eliminating their capability for a surprise attack or large-scale offensive operations, and bringing them down to a level of reasonable sufficiency for defence. Full support should be given to the conclusion, as early as 1990, of major agreements that could be formalized at a summit.

Eighth, we should develop as soon as possible a generation of qualitatively new confidence- and security-building measures in Europe, with extended scope.

Naturally, special attention was paid at the Soviet-Finnish summit to European problems.

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

Recent months have shown that developments in Europe are steadily progressing. Some cases in point are the first part of the Paris human rights conference, the London Information Forum and the Sofia environmental conference. There is now ground to believe that agreements on the reduction of forces and armaments as well as on confidence-building measures in Europe are attainable as early as next year. This would be such a momentous event that the document should be signed by the Heads of State of all the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) countries.

Public opinion seems quite logically to be wondering whether the time has not come for the present generation of European, United States and Canadian leaders to discuss again the state of European affairs and to hold a preview of what Europe will be beyond this century. It would be a good idea to hold the CSCE meeting scheduled for 1992 at the level of Heads of State of all the 35 participating countries.

But the greater the progress along this road, the more urgent the need to tackle questions concerning naval forces, including confidence-building measures and adequate controls. The destabilizing role of such forces will grow as other types of armaments are reduced. This does not apply only to Europe.

The Soviet Union highly appreciates Finland's initiative, supported by other countries, for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the north of Europe. Speaking in Helsinki, President Gorbachev declared that today there are no Soviet intermediate- and shorter-range missiles on combat duty in areas adjacent to the north of Europe. Our tactical nuclear weapons are now stationed in such a way that they would not reach the Nordic countries from any place in the Soviet Union. During the visit a new decision by the Soviet Union about its nuclear weapons in the Baltic Sea was also announced. We are beginning to eliminate unilaterally some types of these sea-based weapons.

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

The Soviet Union has taken two submarines out of commission as a first step, and it will eliminate the remaining four submarines, known in the West as "Gulf", by the end of 1990. We shall also destroy the ammunition for nuclear missiles for those submarines, and we shall not replace them. We are ready to agree with all the nuclear Powers and the Baltic States on efficient guarantees for a nuclear-free status for the Baltic.

I should also like to recall that our proposals - among them those launched in Murmansk - to limit and reduce military activities in the northern region, including naval and air activities, remain fully valid.

Generally speaking, in the European context, we have been suggesting that naval disarmament be discussed in the Vienna negotiations, and we are not going back on that. However, an initial agreement could cover appropriate measures applicable to the seas around northern Europe.

I have already mentioned the Warsaw Treaty Foreign Ministers' meeting held on 26 and 27 October. In accordance with established practice, representatives at this session of the General Assembly will naturally be briefed on the results of that meeting.

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

I should like, now, to draw attention to one paragraph of the communiqué that was issued following that meeting:

"The Ministers advocated the speedy conclusion of an international convention on a complete ban on, and elimination of, chemical weapons, and urged the participants in the Geneva negotiations to resolve the outstanding questions in 1990. They stressed the importance of making the work of the Conference on Disarmament as a whole more effective."

Indeed, the negotiations on the banning of chemical weapons are now going through their most important phase, as, in our view, is borne out by the discussion in the First Committee. The past year has witnessed quite a few important developments in the area of the prohibition of chemical weapons. The overall political impetus and practical consequences of these developments could accelerate the conclusion of the long-awaited convention.

At the Paris Conference in January this year practically all States assumed, at a high level, moral and political responsibility for the early conclusion of the convention, thus sending a powerful positive signal to those taking part in the Geneva negotiations. We fully agree with the Belgrade forum of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in its appeal that advantage be taken of this impetus.

In this connection we cannot but welcome the relevant aspects of the concept of comprehensive arms control and disarmament that was approved by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Council at its summit session in Brussels - in particular, the statement by the NATO leaders of their intention to see that a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable treaty banning the development, production, stockpiling and transfer of all chemical weapons is concluded as soon as possible. Documents published recently by NATO indicate that that organization does not view chemical weapons as an indispensable element of deterrence. Taking

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

into account the overall NATO approach to arms limitation, this gives one hope that all NATO countries will, in effect, totally renounce this monstrous means of annihilation.

At the Canberra Conference the political consensus in favour of the achievement, at the earliest possible date, of agreement on a total ban on chemical weapons was complemented by an important new element. I refer to the fact that the representatives of the chemical industry strongly supported this goal. The importance of this factor can hardly be overestimated, for the future convention must provide for effective control of the production of chemicals, and co-operation from chemical companies and enterprises is absolutely necessary.

The meeting, in Wyoming on 22 and 23 September, between the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, and the Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. James Baker, resulted in an important special agreement - the memorandum of understanding regarding a bilateral-verification experiment and data exchange. The steps agreed upon under the memorandum - an exchange of data in a number of stages; visits to facilities for the production and storage of chemical weapons, as well as chemical plants; and inspections - are designed to facilitate the process of negotiating, signing and ratifying the convention. In arriving at that agreement the Soviet Union and the United States proceeded from the belief that greater openness could contribute to an improvement in the prospects for the early conclusion of an agreement that would constitute an effective ban on chemical weapons.

In Wyoming the Soviet Union and the United States adopted the first-ever special joint Soviet-American statement on chemical weapons, thus reaffirming the commitment of the two countries to pursue actively the prohibition of chemical weapons and the destruction of all stockpiles of such weapons on the basis of a comprehensive, effectively verifiable and complete global ban. In that statement

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

both sides reaffirmed the possibility that the remaining issues could be resolved, and the convention concluded, at an early date. The Soviet Union firmly intends to adopt such an approach in its political efforts and in its negotiating practice.

Speaking at the current session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Shevardnadze, stated that the Soviet Union is ready, without waiting for the conclusion of the multilateral convention, to assume, together with the United States, the following obligations: to stop the production of chemical weapons, including binary weapons, as has been done already by the USSR; bilaterally to reduce stocks of chemical weapons drastically, as a step towards their complete elimination; to refrain from using chemical weapons in any circumstances; and to establish strict control over chemical-warfare agents, with a view to cessation of the production of those agents and to their elimination.

The report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly contains the updated draft convention on chemical weapons - the so-called rolling text - indicating that further progress was made in the negotiations. This progress was manifested not only in the useful reorganization of the drafting process - carried out under the leadership of Ambassador Morel of France - but also in the tackling of matters of substance, such as challenge inspections, the protection of confidential information, updating of the list of chemical agents to be covered by one or other régime of the convention, and so on. For the first time the important problem of the composition of the Executive Council was treated in a practical manner.

The participants in the negotiations now have at their disposal everything they need for early resolution of the remaining difficult questions. In

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

particular, the conditions already exist for completion, as early as November or December, in the course of the so-called interseasonal work, of the preparation of the overall scheme of verification of compliance with the convention. In this context we view as useful the initiatives of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom with regard to so-called additional verification measures - ad hoc inspections.

For its part, the Soviet Union is ready to make a constructive contribution to the final agreement with regard to the scope of agents prohibited by the convention. As is known, we have long adopted a rather reserved position with regard to the proposals of other countries for the inclusion of toxins. The Soviet Union is now prepared to withdraw its objections on this score. At the same time, we shall continue to insist on more effective verification under the biological weapons convention, which, as representatives know, covers all toxins.

A positive aspect of the current stage in the efforts to achieve the prohibition of chemical weapons is the fact that those efforts have been expanded to a considerable extent. This includes geographical scope.

There has been a substantial increase this year in the number of States that, although not members of the Conference on Disarmament, are taking part in the negotiations on the convention. We see this as a practical reflection of the results of the Paris Conference. Every State wishing to make a contribution to the negotiations should be able to do so. This is the only way of making it possible to lay all the necessary groundwork for the early entry into force of the convention and of ensuring that it is universal in nature.

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

The drafting of the convention goes beyond the framework of mere deliberations. That is confirmed by national experiments on verification of compliance by industry with a future convention, carried out by many States, including the Soviet Union. Even with the variety of all the various experiments, these experiments have manifested the feasibility of such verification procedures as worked out in the negotiations. The Soviet Union is ready to conduct international experimental inspections in the chemical industry as soon as their procedures have been agreed on and as soon as an agreement has been reached to proceed with such inspections in other countries.

To this end we have designated a chemical plant in the city of Dzerzhinsk. We are also carrying out a national experiment on inspections by challenge and in the framework of that experiment a verification visit has been made to an artillery munition depot.

Moreover, the competent authorities in the Soviet Union are now preparing their proposals on the modalities, dates and location sites for the construction of facilities for the destruction of chemical weapons. The total capacity of these facilities will enable the Soviet Union to eliminate all its stockpiles within the time-period stipulated in the draft convention. In this context I should like to emphasize that we are guided by an old negotiated and agreed provision on the need for the mandatory complete elimination of all chemical weapons between the second and the tenth years after the entry into force of the convention.

At the same time we see that the task of working out the programmes for the destruction of chemical weapons is not a simple one. It will be necessary to resolve a whole range of issues of munitions transportation, dismantling and destruction. Priority attention has to be paid here to environmental considerations. Failure to take into account matters of public relations has cost us dearly at the initial stages of the construction of the chemical weapons

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

destruction facility near the city of Chapayevsk. Heeding the demands of the local community the Government of the Soviet Union was pressed to take a decision to convert the facility into a chemical-weapons destruction training centre which would use only imitation chemical agents rather than the actual combat agents.

We believe that international co-operation in the field of the destruction of chemical weapons could also be particularly helpful.

In general we believe that the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons should be concluded within the next year or two, and we hope that the General Assembly at this session will call for the early conclusion of that convention.

In a few days the First Committee will proceed to another important stage of its work, namely, the consideration of draft resolutions and action on them. I should like to express the hope that this year we will be able to reach a high level of common understanding and through it proceed to an expanded range of practical steps. The Soviet delegation will contribute to this end in every way it can.

Mr. AMAR (Morocco) (interpretation from French): Permit me first to convey to Mr. Taylhardat of Venezuela the heartfelt congratulations of my delegation on his election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. We are convinced that under the leadership of Mr. Taylhardat the First Committee will conclude its work with efficiency and success. The delegation of Morocco would like to assure him that he can rely on its support and co-operation in the accomplishment of his tasks.

The year 1989 has been a year of great hopes for the international community, a year that has been marked by sustained dialogue and effective détente between the two great Powers and their allies. After concluding the Treaty on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles - the INF Treaty - in

(Mr. Amar, Morocco)

December 1987, the two great Powers have continued their dialogue, including talks on arms control. The Americans and the Soviets alike have reaffirmed their commitment to cut by half their strategic nuclear arsenals. The delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco welcomes and wishes to encourage the intensification of negotiations under way between the United States and the Soviet Union on a reduction of strategic nuclear weapons and on a nuclear-test ban. The end goal is general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Whenever there is progress in weapons technology, new insecurity ensues and a new impetus is given to the arms sector. This clearly shows that it is not possible to guarantee security through over-arming. It is necessary, therefore, not only to adopt disarmament measures but also to realize general and complete disarmament. The INF Treaty signed in 1987 between Moscow and Washington clearly shows that it is possible to overcome many technical difficulties. The Moroccan delegation welcomes the initiatives which have been taken in the last four years with regard to the START negotiations and underground nuclear tests. These efforts, as well as those taking place in the field of conventional disarmament, are positive starting-points leading to a new momentum and a new dynamic which one can already feel in international relations.

There is no need to emphasize the many links between the two key problems of today, disarmament and development. It is indeed undeniable that progress towards general and complete disarmament would open up new prospects for more rapid socio-economic development.

There is no need to repeat that 50 million to 100 million people throughout the world are engaged, in one way or another, in military activities, nor must we forget that the military industry on a yearly basis produces approximately \$150 billion worth of equipment intended for war. It is therefore time for the

(Mr. Amar, Morocco)

international community to recognize the need to place disarmament at the service of development. Morocco in this connection welcomes the initiative taken by the Secretary-General to convene a conference next year to study the problem of armaments conversion and its consequences.

The resources devoted to armaments are essential to ensure the development and preservation of the environment. Security is not only military in nature, it must be considered as a whole including its political, economic and social components, and the aspect of conservation of the environment. Security must not be the prerogative of the most powerful but should rather be a guarantee to all peoples so that they may live in peace and security.

(Mr. Amar, Morocco)

The declaration of the two super-Powers on 21 November 1985 that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" indicates that the two major Powers are concerned and that they are interested in assuming their responsibility in preventing a nuclear war. Given the progress made in the last four years in bilateral negotiations, we regret the lack of progress in multilateral negotiations evident from the report of the Conference on Disarmament, which was introduced by Ambassador Benhima of Morocco.

In this connection, Morocco continues to be convinced of the vital importance of the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum in the United Nations. It continues to be a key forum in the field of disarmament. Disarmament initiatives in the nuclear field cannot be the exclusive preserve of only two States. The participation of the entire international community is imperative.

Firmly supporting as it does the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, Morocco wishes to express its regret over the absence of significant progress in the implementation of measures contained in its Programme of Action.

Despite many appeals by the General Assembly concerning the need to conclude treaties on the cessation of nuclear tests, no real progress has been made in that field other than the resumption of negotiations between the two super-Powers. Concluding a nuclear-test-ban treaty would be a major contribution to stopping the arms race and preventing nuclear proliferation.

The progress made recently at the Wyoming meeting in regard to protocols on verification will no doubt facilitate ratification of the 1974 Treaty on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests and of the 1976 Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes.

(Mr. Amar, Morocco)

The Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the non-proliferation Treaty will provide an opportunity for strengthening the non-proliferation régime. Nevertheless, international co-operation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must be strengthened so that developing countries may have access to the technologies that are needed for promoting and developing nuclear energy with a view to economic and social development.

Morocco remains convinced of the need to conclude international arrangements guaranteeing the security of non-nuclear States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Such arrangements would strengthen the current system of nuclear non-proliferation.

The creation of denuclearized zones is another factor that would reinforce the system. In this connection, Israel, whose nuclear capability need no longer be proven, continues to refuse to submit its nuclear installations to the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, thus compromising efforts aimed at establishing a denuclearized zone in the Middle East and increasing the risks of nuclear proliferation in a very active region.

A similar situation persists in Africa, where the nuclear capability of South Africa very seriously threatens the peace and security of the continent. The General Assembly has already adopted a resolution with regard to making the African continent a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The international community should co-operate with African States to avert the South African nuclear threat and to make Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The risk of extending the arms race to outer space is another source of concern to the international community. Morocco attaches the greatest importance to the work of the Conference on Disarmament in that field and supports broader international co-operation in that area. The existing restrictions of the

(Mr. Amar, Morocco)

international legal system are not sufficient and do not apply to all types of weapons systems.

Conventional disarmament is also a matter of concern. Morocco has periodically stressed the fact that conventional disarmament is essential and should be pursued with urgency as part and parcel of the overall process of disarmament in which all States should participate actively.

Morocco welcomes the fact that the Disarmament Commission is making a thorough study of problems relating to conventional disarmament and regrets that it was not in a position to reach agreement on that issue at the 1989 session.

Morocco continues to promote the conclusion of a comprehensive, universal and verifiable convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. In this connection, it welcomes the results of the Conference on the prohibition of these weapons held in Paris in January 1989. The Final Declaration adopted by consensus by the 149 States participating in the Conference shows the firm commitment of almost all of the international community to the early elimination of chemical weapons.

Morocco welcomes the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons held in Canberra in September 1989 and, in particular, supports the Declaration adopted by industry at the Conference.

The role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament is a matter of the utmost importance. Morocco is convinced that, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, the United Nations should continue to play a central role in the field of disarmament. The General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies must continue to play their role as forums for deliberation. The First Committee, in particular, should continue to play its role as the Main Committee responsible for questions of disarmament and related international security issues.

(Mr. Amar, Morocco)

As in the past, the delegation of Morocco pledges its full support to the Committee in the conduct of its work for international peace, security and co-operation.

Mrs. SAWADOGO (Burkina Faso) (interpretation from French): With the massive accumulation of the most powerful weapons ever produced owing to the nuclear arms race, mankind is at present facing an unprecedented threat of destruction. It is now widely acknowledged that disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, should be seen as a matter of top priority and of vital importance for mankind. Disarmament is the responsibility of all States. It is the nuclear-weapon States that are chiefly responsible for guaranteeing nuclear disarmament and, together with the other militarily significant States, for halting and reversing the arms race.

The complete destruction and prohibition of nuclear weapons is the key to full security. The declaration of the two major Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought enjoys broad support.

All States must co-operate in order to adopt concrete and appropriate measures in order to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war and to prevent the use of nuclear weapons.

The new dynamism of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, in particular the signing and entry into force of the Treaty on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty, is a promising sign. That agreement and the thaw in the relations between the two super-Powers has generated a mood of co-operation and détente and has helped resolve several regional and local conflicts.

(Mrs. Sawadogo, Burkina Faso)

The agreement is evidence of the political will of those two countries to curb the danger to mankind posed by the arms race. We must none the less note that the danger persists because the means of waging a necessarily fatal war are increasingly abundant and sophisticated. The arms race, particularly in the nuclear sphere, runs counter to the efforts made to achieve a further relaxation of international tensions and establish international relations based on peaceful coexistence and trust between all States and to enhance co-operation and international détente. The success of disarmament negotiations is of crucial interest to all the peoples of the world. That is why it is the duty of all States to contribute to disarmament efforts.

Nuclear disarmament began with the INF Treaty. The ongoing efforts to reduce by 50 per cent the offensive strategic arms of the Soviet Union and the United States, the quest for a solution to the problem of nuclear testing, the preparation of a convention on chemical weapons, and the positive attitude of the participants in the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe and on confidence-building measures are all new, positive realities.

However, it must be said that the present negotiations on disarmament do not provide for the complete elimination and destruction of the weapons concerned. In most of the bilateral negotiations between the super-Powers the proposals are limited to reductions in the vast arsenals that have accumulated. While the agreement on intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles is to be welcomed as the beginning of a process leading to general and complete disarmament, it must be admitted that such missiles account for only 4 per cent of the world's total nuclear stockpiles.

Burkina Faso associates itself with all disarmament initiatives, and welcomes the progress made in disarmament negotiations that led to the entry into force of

(Mrs. Sawadogo, Burkina Faso)

the INF Treaty and to an agreement in principle on a 50 per cent reduction of the strategic nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union. In the interest of the international community, it is necessary that all States co-operate in efforts to achieve the goal of nuclear non-proliferation, by preventing the emergence of new nuclear-weapon States and gradually reducing and eventually totally eliminating nuclear weapons.

The Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) offers an opportunity for strengthening the non-proliferation régime and opening up the prospect of universal adherence. We encourage all States that have not yet done so to adhere to the NPT. Burkina Faso also associates itself with the initiative concerning amendment of the 1964 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water. We support the convening of a conference to amend the Treaty so as to transform it into a treaty banning all nuclear-weapon tests.

While nuclear disarmament is essential, it is also necessary to make substantial cuts in conventional armaments. In this connection, those countries with the largest military arsenals and the members of the two principal military alliances - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty Organization - must strive to reduce conventional armaments and press ahead with negotiations on these weapons. We welcome the commencement of negotiations on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe and the continuance of confidence- and security-building measures in Europe. The Vienna talks on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe are continuing in a positive vein and we look forward to the early conclusion of an agreement on conventional forces on those forces.

The arms race in space poses a great threat to all mankind and helps to exacerbate the existing insecurity. Burkina Faso supports the idea of closer

(Mrs. Sawadogo, Burkina Faso)

international co-operation in this field. It is essential to call for the cessation of the arms race in space, which must be used strictly for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all mankind. The space Powers should negotiate an international agreement prohibiting space weapons.

At the Paris Conference on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, in January 1989, the participants unanimously called for the conclusion without delay of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition and transfer of chemical weapons, and on their destruction. There is an international consensus in support of the complete and final elimination of chemical weapons. The Paris Conference on chemical weapons gave a strong political impetus to the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, particularly through the solemn reaffirmation of the validity of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which prohibits the use in war of asphyxiating gases and bacteriological methods of warfare. We pay a tribute to the two super-Powers for their determination to work together towards the rapid completion of a universal, effectively verifiable convention.

My country supports all initiatives designed to lead to general and complete disarmament and contribute to the development of all States. Africa is faced today with a particularly serious problem - the dumping of nuclear and industrial wastes in Africa. This is a mortal threat to the African continent, which already suffers severely from drought, desertification and other disasters. At the Basel Conference, Africa placed on record its concerns and expressed reservations with regard to the increasing transboundary movements of toxic wastes. We believe that frank co-operation between all States would make it possible to find appropriate solutions for the treatment, transfer, and destruction of such wastes, and we look forward to the adoption by consensus of a decision to that end.

(Mrs. Sawadogo, Burkina Faso)

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world is an important disarmament measure which helps to strengthen world stability and security. In this context, no nuclear weapon must ever be deployed in nuclear-weapon-free territories. The nuclear-weapon States should guarantee that non-nuclear-weapon States will never be threatened or attacked with nuclear weapons. The General Assembly has adopted a resolution aimed at making the African continent a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Burkina Faso associates itself with the appeal to all States by representatives of African countries who have spoken earlier to combine their efforts to prevent South Africa from developing nuclear-weapon capability and to ensure that Africa becomes a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The international community must intensify its efforts to bring about the limitation, reduction and elimination of armaments, so that it can use all its economic strength and technical expertise to contribute to the development of Member States and to international co-operation. Rapid progress in both disarmament and development are essential to genuine, lasting peace and security in an interdependent world. Disarmament and development are two of the most pressing challenges facing the world today. World military expenditure can have irreparable consequences for mankind in view of the gravity of the present world economic situation. World military spending is in striking contrast to economic and social underdevelopment and the wretchedness and poverty of more than two thirds of mankind.

(Mrs. Sawadogo, Burkina Faso)

It is therefore essential that the international community link disarmament and development. It is widely acknowledged today that over-armament and underdevelopment are both threats to international peace and security. Burkina Faso wishes to reiterate here its full support for the programme of action adopted by the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which provides for the establishment of institutional and financial machinery for the transfer of resources saved as a result of disarmament measures towards economic and social development activities.

It is now time to establish a new order based on strict respect for the principles of the Charter, that is, peaceful coexistence, the non-use of force, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, general and complete disarmament and the complete and general elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. As we read in the Secretary-General's report, "Progress towards arms limitation and disarmament demands persistence and considerable hard work". (A/44/1, p. 13)

The role of the United Nations in the disarmament field is an important one. We are convinced that, in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter, the United Nations must play a central role in the disarmament field. In order to create conditions conducive to the success of the disarmament process, all States must comply strictly with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. They must refrain from any act detrimental to the success of disarmament efforts and they must show a constructive attitude to negotiations and the political will needed for agreement to be reached. International peace and security, if they are to be lasting, cannot be founded on an accumulation of armaments by military alliances, and it cannot be maintained by the precarious policy of deterrence embodied in the various military doctrines. It is only through the effective application of the system of security provided for in the Charter and by rapidly and substantially

(Mrs. Sawadogo, Burkina Faso)

reducing armaments and armed forces through international agreements and by mutual example that true and lasting international peace can be achieved. This in turn would lead to general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

International developments have shown that the concept of security and the ideas underlying it must be re-examined. Security encompasses not only military and political elements, but also economic and social elements. Underdevelopment and the worsening prospects for development, bad management and the squandering of resources are also detrimental to security. We are pleased that the détente in the relations between the great Powers, the significant ebbing of the cold war, the progress made in the disarmament negotiations and the negotiated settlement of regional conflicts are all harbingers, as it were, of a new philosophy of relations between States, one promoting better understanding and confidence and also a more promising future for the whole of mankind.

Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic): Problems of conventional disarmament rightly occupy a central position on the disarmament agenda. Commitment to peace makes it imperative also to reduce those arsenals down to a level where ultimately the threat of war would be banished. Regional negotiations serve that goal, and the United Nations must contribute its share.

Last year, the General Assembly adopted four resolutions on quite different aspects of conventional disarmament in order to generate momentum. Many an effort has been undertaken in the Disarmament Commission to make full use of the existing potential for agreement and gradually to reduce prevailing differences. We believe that the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the Secretary-General's study on conventional disarmament contained in document A/39/348 provide, by and large, a solid framework for progress in discussing these issues further.

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

As to the work of the Disarmament Commission, there is a common awareness - which we share - of the difficulty involved in establishing agreed and generally valid principles for global conventional disarmament. A first step in this direction would, in my country's view, be the identification of those elements to which all sides could subscribe; those elements would then serve as a basis for a structured and substantive discussion. We feel that a meaningful discussion could be held on the following topics: the correlation between nuclear and conventional disarmament; the connection between the strengthening of international security and conventional disarmament; the connection between the socio-economic development of States and conventional disarmament; the consequences of new technological developments for the arms race in the conventional field and for conventional disarmament; the connection between transparency, openness, confidence-building and conventional disarmament; and international arms transfers and conventional disarmament.

Conventional force reductions are particularly urgent in Europe, the continent with the highest weapon density in the world. Jointly with the other Warsaw Pact States, the German Democratic Republic has added its contribution for the Vienna negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe, which started in March this year, and it has submitted quite a few proposals so that these negotiations are conducted in a substantive, concrete and speedy fashion. We are doing this to strengthen stability and security in Europe through the establishment of a balance of conventional forces at ever lower levels; to create more security and predictability with cut-backs in armed forces and conventional armaments; to gradually reduce disparities and asymmetries in the military field in Europe; and to reduce and ultimately remove capabilities for surprise attack and large-scale offensive operations.

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

This is also the underlying motive of the comprehensive and far-reaching proposals advanced by the Warsaw Pact on reductions in five weapons categories and in the numerical strength of armed forces.

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

No doubt those are ambitious goals - the more so since the cuts would affect some 2 million troops, tens of thousands of tanks, armoured troop carriers and artillery systems and thousands of combat aircraft and combat helicopters of the two military alliances in Europe. I must mention here that just recently the German Democratic Republic, on behalf of the Warsaw Treaty States, has submitted a compromise proposal aimed at bringing the positions on tactical or frontal aviation and combat helicopters closer together.

Generally speaking, at Vienna the two sides have in recent weeks narrowed their differences in the negotiations. Detailed proposals by both sides are on the table. Yet we cannot fail to note that positions on quite a few major issues are still wide apart. I am thinking of, first, the inclusion of all armed forces in manpower ceilings, as well as separate ceilings for all forces stationed on the territory of other countries; secondly, I have in mind the counting rules for, and precise definition of, weapons systems, including those stored in depots; thirdly, I am referring to the subdivision of the area of application into regions and, lastly, verification issues and stabilizing measures, as well as data and information exchanges.

With regard to manpower ceilings, we would hold that those ought to include all armed forces in Europe and that separate ceilings should be set for all troops stationed outside national borders so as to cover not just Soviet and United States troops. In our view the counting rules for weapons systems should be laid down in such a way that all weapons systems, inclusive of equipment in storage, are accounted for, in the context of both overall ceilings and regional sublimits.

The Warsaw Treaty States have submitted two concrete proposals on the regional subdivision of the area of application. Towards the end of the third round of negotiations at Vienna our side advanced detailed ideas on data exchange, on

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

verification régimes and on what are known as additional stabilizing measures. All those moves go to show that the Warsaw Treaty approach is truly a flexible one.

Still, much remains to be done to give substance to what the leaders of either alliance have staked out as a goal, namely, reaching an initial agreement by the end of 1990. Therefore, we fully support the idea of accelerating the pace of negotiations through political impetus, which could be derived, for example, from a meeting at the foreign-minister level in the spring of next year.

As is widely known, the disbanding of six tank regiments of the German Democratic Republic's national armed forces has recently been completed. My country has thus put into practice a substantial part of the unilateral disarmament moves it decided to take last January. In addition, the Wilhelm Pieck fighter wing of my country's army was decommissioned at Drewitz Air Base on 25 October. That is a practical demonstration of our professed commitment to peace and disarmament. At the same time it is a manifestation of our seriousness in seeking to make reasonable sufficiency, exclusively oriented on defensive lines, the basis of security concepts and policies as well as of military potentials.

In that context we appreciate that at the negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures in Europe agreement was reached on holding a seminar on military doctrines in January 1990. The seminar could help promote the ongoing negotiation on conventional armed forces and usher in a process of designing new defensive-security concepts.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic would wish to see the General Assembly at this session take decisions that would serve to make headway in conventional disarmament and conduce to maintaining momentum at the Vienna negotiations.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): In our statement today we would like to elaborate on chemical as well as bacteriological (biological) weapons.

Let me start by evaluating in brief the events of this year in the field of chemical weapons. As a first major event, in January 1989 the Paris Conference clearly stated the political will of the international community to advance most urgently with the conclusion of a chemical-weapons ban. At the same time recognition was made of the fact that a number of political, as well as technical, questions remain to be solved along the way.

Within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, following a disappointing year of negotiations and lack of concrete results in 1988 a new impetus was given the talks in 1989. A reason for that was the better organization of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, on the one hand, and, on the other, the political readiness of a number of States to achieve substantial results.

Basic steps forward could be taken on issues such as the protocol on confidentiality, the protocol on inspections and the reorganization of the various lists of chemical substances subject to the draft convention. Preliminary and highly interesting discussions took place on the questions of challenge inspection and the future international control organization.

Considerable new momentum was then gained in September by the convening of the Canberra Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons. That exercise provided the necessary means for ensuring that the chemical industry was on board, as well as giving industry representatives world wide the firm feeling that their concerns and propositions were duly taken into account.

The continuous bilateral process between the two super-Powers in this area led first to understandings and then to a formally endorsed agreement at the meeting at Jackson Hole. Issues at stake were the order of destruction of existing stocks,

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

inspection procedures and early exchange of data. Some preliminary discussions have also taken place on the destruction of chemical-weapons production facilities.

All those events in 1989 in the field of chemical weapons finally generated an atmosphere of expectation with regard to the early conclusion of a global chemical-weapons convention, an expectation that was shared both by the public at large and by political leaders. The logical question then seems to be: Where do we stand now? .

It seems to us that two steps have to be taken in the near future. The first would be to agree on the incorporation of the bilateral security concerns of the two super-Powers into the multilateral framework. That would give a further impetus to the multilateral talks as well as help to avoid a dissolution of the achieved global consensus. The second step would then be to advance with work on the draft convention as quickly as possible. By that we mean solving the outstanding issues as rapidly and as thoroughly as possible and leaving the "fine tuning" to either a conference of States or a special session of the General Assembly to be convened once work on the text of the draft convention has been concluded.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Let us be quite candid about what we see emerging if those two steps are not taken in due time. Instead of an effective and universal solution to the question of chemical weapons, there will be alternative systems which do not make the maximum contribution to international peace and security and to confidence-building.

Wishing to contribute to the early conclusion of a chemical-weapons convention, my country took an initiative at the forty-third session of the General Assembly aimed at the exchange of relevant information and data as well as the making of declarations on whether or not States possess chemical weapons. Formulations to those ends were included in resolution 43/74 C. Both before then and since a number of States have put forward such information and made such declarations, and it seems of great importance that all States join in these efforts.

This year again my delegation has the honour to submit the draft resolution on biological weapons. The work is well under way, and I want to express my sincere thanks to the Australian and Netherlands delegations for their support.

Although we have not yet touched upon the question of non-proliferation, I must state clearly that we are concerned about the possibility of the world-wide spread of chemical as well as biological weapons. Our basic concern is that any further spread of those weapons might create a psychological environment that would favour their acquisition out of fear that the other side might have them.

Regarding biological weapons, we saw great merit in the endeavour of the international community to conclude a biological weapons convention back in 1972 in order to state a clear commitment. Likewise, we welcomed the follow-up work conducted in 1987, as a concrete outcome of the Second Review Conference, in 1986, by a group of scientific experts of States parties to the Convention to elaborate effective confidence-building measures.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

The recommendations on information and data exchange, which were later repeatedly endorsed by General Assembly resolutions, seem to us to be a step in the right direction. Moreover, they seem of particular importance, as the Convention itself does not provide for any verification measures.

In this regard, the Secretary-General is requested to prepare a report on the implementation of confidence-building measures and to circulate it to States parties to the Convention prior to the convening of the third review conference. In our opinion, the report should be circulated before the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. In this context, my country is preparing an updated version of the information provided to the Secretary-General in 1987.

It seems to us that, since the question of verification is gaining considerable momentum throughout all disarmament efforts world wide, especially in the context of intermediate-range nuclear forces, it is the right moment to consider the possibilities for adequate verification provisions in the biological warfare context. The basic groundwork was laid by the group of experts convened in 1987, but much more work lies ahead of us when considering feasible and reliable verification procedures, even on a preliminary basis.

Let me be quite clear in this regard: we are not expressing any mistrust of the Convention's régime or the activities set so far by the international community. However, it seems to be the right moment to consider the principal problem posed.

The draft resolution this year expresses the need for further consideration of the work started at the Second Review Conference and referred to in article XII of its Final Declaration. We think that the international community is thus able to show its support for and readiness to consider, in the light of experience gained, the possibilities of strengthening the biological weapons Convention.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Likewise, note is taken of the decision taken by the international community in the Final Declaration of the Second Review Conference, in 1987, at the request of a majority of States, to convene a third review conference not later than 1991. Concrete preparatory work is to be carried out in the course of next year and will be reflected in next year's General Assembly resolution.

In conclusion, I must say that we see any use of biological weapons as a threat to international peace and security, and this, in our judgement, also applies to any use of chemical weapons.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I remind members of the Committee once again that, in accordance with the Committee's decisions, the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under the disarmament agenda items - items 49 to 69 and 151 - will expire today at 6 p.m. I reiterate that it is my intention to adhere to that deadline.

I also wish to inform members that the following delegations are on the list of speakers for this afternoon's meeting: Thailand, Brunei Darussalam, Algeria, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Bulgaria and Sri Lanka.

The meeting rose at 12 noon