

UNITED NATIONS  
**General Assembly**  
FORTY-FOURTH SESSION  
*Official Records*

FIRST COMMITTEE  
19th meeting  
held on  
Friday, 27 October 1989  
at 3 p.m.  
New York

---

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela)

CONTENTS

- General debate on all disarmament items (continued)

---

This record is subject to correction.  
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned  
*within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC 2/50,  
2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.  
89-63111 4284V (E)

Distr. GENERAL  
A/C.1/44/PV.19  
3 November 1989  
ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 TO 69 AND 151 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. TAEB (Afghanistan): Mr. Chairman, I wish to extend to you the warm congratulations of the Afghan delegation on your unanimous and well-deserved election to guide the work of this important body. Your rich experience and high qualifications in disarmament and security issues give the best assurance of the success of the First Committee's work during the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. We also congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election to serve the Committee under your guidance.

There is a universal conclusion that the international climate has improved. The business-like relations between the Soviet Union and the United States and new thinking on the approach to and solution of international problems through dialogue and by peaceful means have made a significant contribution to this end. We welcome any further desire and determination on the part of the great Powers to seek ways to settle burning issues pertaining to the very survival of the community of nations. We welcome the progress in the Soviet-American negotiations at the recent Wyoming ministerial meeting.

The ninth Summit Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Belgrade, declared that: "Tension is no longer at breaking-point, but neither is peace stable". While noting the general positive tendency in world affairs we cannot but express our disappointment with regard to the regional problems that continue to remain tense and that could at any time poison the favourable international atmosphere. The failure of some nations to respect international law and to implement their specific obligations as signatories of international agreements is a matter of great concern.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

The signing of the Geneva Agreements under the auspices of the United Nations on 14 April 1988 has been welcomed by the international community. Everyone hoped that the foreign intervention and interference in the internal affairs of my country, which go back to the early 1970s, would cease in favour of peace and stability in that region of the world. Unfortunately, however, since that time the war has been intensified, with new dimensions aimed at achieving a military victory over the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, and events since 15 February have proved those perceptions to be wrong. It is very important to mention that the Soviet Union and the United States became guarantors of the Geneva Agreements relating to Afghanistan, which is a promising start for the solving of similar regional conflicts in various parts of the world. The Geneva Agreements laid the ground for demonstrating the positive contribution of the great Powers to the solution of regional conflicts through peaceful means in conformity with the United Nations Charter.

The Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have faithfully implemented their obligations and continue to abide by the provisions of the Agreements.

The fact is that interference and intervention in the internal affairs of my country continue, in contradiction with the Geneva Agreements. The assertions of those who are involved that such is not the case are absurd. We have a saying: "The sun cannot be hidden by two fingers."

The initiatives of the Republic of Afghanistan for a comprehensive political settlement of the problem in and around the country were outlined by my Foreign Minister on 28 September in his statement to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

Turning to the items for consideration in the First Committee, the Republic of Afghanistan, as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, supports every effort in the field of disarmament in all its aspects and strongly believes in the concept of strengthening international security through disarmament.

We attach great importance to the question of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war. The conclusion at the highest level by the two main nuclear Powers that there is no winner in a nuclear war must produce new approaches to the elimination of that destructive and powerful class of weapons. The concept of nuclear deterrence should be replaced by the goal of the total eradication of nuclear weapons from the globe. At the present time concrete measures must be adopted to stop the world from falling into the abyss, which could happen not only through evil intent but through a mere technical error. In that regard the proposal of the Soviet Union on measures to reduce the risk of nuclear war put forward last week should be given serious consideration as the basis for discussions in an international forum.

The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - has given an impetus to discussions for further disarmament measures. It is our hope that the signing of an umbrella agreement on verification and stability at the Wyoming ministerial meeting would expedite the negotiations on strategic arms reduction. The international community is expecting the early conclusion of a treaty on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive weapons between the Soviet Union and the United States as a significant step towards the total elimination of nuclear arsenals.

In that context we would like to stress the strict observance of previous treaties, particularly the anti-ballistic-missile Treaty and the Treaty on the prevention of the spread of the nuclear-arms race into qualitatively new spheres, including outer space.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

The delegation of Afghanistan fully supports the idea of transforming the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. We support the convening of an amendment conference to convert the Treaty into a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty in 1990, as called for by the Summit Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement. We are of the opinion that the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty would widen the opportunity for the determination of the international community to get rid of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

The close link between a comprehensive test-ban treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is inevitable. Therefore the prohibition of nuclear tests would prevent the non-nuclear-weapon States from developing nuclear weapons and would contribute greatly to strengthening the NPT régime. The Fourth Review Conference of the parties to the NPT is scheduled to be held next year. The Republic of Afghanistan, as a party to the NPT, calls on those States that have not yet adhered to the Treaty to do so and to observe strictly the provisions of the NPT régime.

My Government consistently supports the principle of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in different parts of the world: in southern Asia, the Middle East, Africa, the South Pacific and elsewhere.

We note with satisfaction the progress made by the Conference on Disarmament with regard to chemical weapons. Early this year, the parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, by adopting the Final Declaration in Paris, voiced unanimously their determination to achieve the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons, and their destruction. My delegation believes that the Final Declaration will contribute to the multilateral efforts in the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a comprehensive and global convention on chemical weapons in the near future. We welcome the statements of the Soviet Union and the United States in which they declared their readiness to destroy their chemical weapons before the conclusion of a convention. Consequently, an urgent ban on the production of all types of chemical weapons is required.

Peace and stability in Europe have a great influence on world affairs. The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles provided the foundation for further positive changes in East-West relations. The beginning of the Vienna negotiations on conventional forces in Europe in March 1989 must

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

remove mistrust for the future talks. A constructive approach and realism in tackling this complicated issue could produce fruitful results. European countries should redouble their efforts to turn Europe into a model of peace and stability.

My delegation expresses its appreciation for the conclusion of the Vienna follow-up meeting to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and commends the continuation of negotiations towards an agreement on confidence- and security-building measures as an important component of peace and stability in Europe.

The problem of international arms transfers and of illegal trafficking in them has negative implications for international peace, particularly in areas of tension. This issue, which covers a great variety of transactions, in many cases presents serious problems for national security, internal stability and socio-economic development in developing countries, threatening the security of regions and the world as a whole. We encourage restraint in the sphere of international arms transfers in favour of promoting peace, but there is a clear distinction in this context between State-to-State relations on the basis of international contracts and arms supply to irresponsible groups that have no legality whatsoever, with a view to destabilizing a Member State or the entire region.

Our region's experience undoubtedly shows that illegal trafficking in different types of weapons, including more sophisticated and destructive ones, in contravention of international law and behaviour has turned the neighbouring country into a weapons black market and has posed a dangerous situation for all the countries of the region, not only at the present time, but also in the future.

The human and material losses for the Afghan people as a result of arms supplies that are delivered and distributed on foreign soil to anti-government extremist groups are great. These weapons are used for terrorist acts - to kill

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

civilians, women, expectant mothers and children, to destroy economic infrastructure, schools, kindergartens and residential quarters. These are unfortunate facts that occur almost every day in my country and they are no secret to anyone.

No one with any human feeling can portray such activities as a struggle for faith, freedom or democracy. It is terrorism in the full meaning of the term. Therefore, the international community, within the framework of this august body, must take urgent measures to prevent the continuation and repetition of such a tragedy resulting from illegal trafficking in arms.

Mr. BAYART (Mongolia) (interpretation from French): I have already had the opportunity to offer you my delegation's congratulations on the occasion of your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am happy to renew those congratulations today, since your Government has just entrusted you with an important and responsible position as Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The delegation of the People's Republic of Mongolia is happy that, since the forty-third session of the General Assembly, there have been positive new developments in the field of disarmament, demilitarization of international relations, and political thought. The world is nearing a new period in which there will be fewer weapons and more security for all, a period in which trust and co-operation will prevail.

The negotiation process encompasses conventional armed forces and weapons of mass destruction. We see the appearance of real prospects for a breakthrough towards a substantial reduction of the arsenals of offensive strategic weapons of the Soviet Union and the United States and the prohibition of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

Inter-State relations are being characterized more and more by increased mutual understanding, which in many fields is translated into concerted action towards strengthening stability and developing the process of disarmament. On this level, we must stress the importance of the recent meeting between the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Shevardnadze, and the Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Baker, in Wyoming. Through their negotiations they reached important agreements which give new impetus to the Soviet-United States dialogue. Mongolia, like all other countries, hopes that the next Soviet-United States meetings will contribute to an effective and lasting solution of the problems of our day, above all, the problems of disarmament.

Speaking of positive changes in international relations, we would like to stress also how important the normalization of relations between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China is for the establishment of new and realistic approaches with a view to increasing confidence, security and co-operation in Asia and in the world as a whole.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

We cannot but welcome the fact that these two great countries neighbouring Mongolia have agreed to open talks in the near future with a view to putting an end to their military confrontation. For its part, Mongolia is making genuine efforts on the practical level to make its contribution, however modest, to strengthening and implementing the new trends. At the beginning of this year, my Government decided to reduce our country's armed forces during 1989 and 1990 by 13,000 and to transfer 1,000 lorries and 90 tracked and armoured vehicles to the economic sector. Furthermore, under the terms of the agreement concluded between the Government of Mongolia and the Government of the Soviet Union, most - 75 per cent - of the Soviet military contingent temporarily stationed in our country will be withdrawn during 1989-1990, and the first stage in the planned withdrawal has already been carried out.

The policy of reasonable sufficiency for defence is being implemented through the reduction of the armed forces of the socialist countries and the process of switching production away from military purposes. Unilateral measures of this kind make it much easier to maintain the balance of forces at a lower level, increase confidence and develop the disarmament process.

The Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization of September this year, emphasized that

"No complacency is reflected in noting the credit side of the balance."

(A/44/1, p.13)

Mongolia shares this opinion. In its view, we cannot yet guarantee that the disarmament process is irreversible. In this field too there remain, to quote the President of France, Mr. Mitterrand, in this bicentenary year, many Bastilles to be taken. For this reason, the First Committee must undertake concrete and specific

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

tasks: achieving the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions on disarmament issues; setting new tasks and objectives; and providing a powerful impetus to the bilateral and multilateral negotiations taking place on arms limitation and disarmament.

Prohibiting chemical weapons remains one of the most urgent and important tasks in the field of disarmament. The pressing need for their prohibition is recognized by all. We are encouraged by the statements made by President Bush of the United States and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze of the Soviet Union to the General Assembly concerning the destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles and their complete prohibition.

The Canberra Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons was a successful contribution to multilateral efforts with a view to banning this type of weapon. We wish to express our gratitude to the Government of Australia for holding the Conference and for the excellent organization of it.

The Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which was held in January this year, gave the necessary political and moral impetus to the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament with a view to the preparation of a convention prohibiting chemical weapons. We wish to thank the Government of France also for this initiative and for its hospitality.

In speaking of these negotiations, however, we have not fully succeeded since then in redoubling our efforts, as the Paris Conference requested, with a view to solving the remaining problems without delay, although some progress has been made in respect of many political and technical issues. We pay a tribute to the unflagging and energetic efforts and the talent of the French Ambassador, Pierre Morel, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Mongolia considers that the time has come to agree to alter the present terms of reference of that

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

subsidiary body so that it can set out very clearly the aim of drafting the convention in final form in the near future. The Mongolian delegation concurs with those who consider that any partial solution to this problem is unacceptable and that a total ban on chemical weapons is a matter of extreme urgency.

In order for the convention to be concluded at an early date and implemented, the non-proliferation and the non-use of chemical weapons are very important. To this end, Mongolia proposes that the General Assembly should invite all States which have not yet done so to accede to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 so that in 1990, the 65th anniversary of its signing, it may become an even more universal and effective instrument.

We also propose that States with a chemical capability should take the necessary steps for the physical protection of the chemicals from terrorist acts and other possible types of attack.

The efforts of multilateral diplomacy are at present concentrated on elaborating a convention prohibiting chemical weapons. This is indeed a task of the utmost importance, but it should none the less not cause us to ignore the urgency with which priority issues should be solved.

A total ban on nuclear testing is still an essential task, inasmuch as it is the determining factor in halting the nuclear arms race, in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and in nuclear disarmament. For this reason, we think that it is indispensable that the General Assembly should take a resolute stand for opening multilateral negotiations on this problem within the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

A large number of constructive proposals for establishing a subsidiary body to deal seriously with nuclear-test-ban issues, particularly the monitoring problem, have been made in this Conference Room. We consider that implementing the proposal by six countries - Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia and Venezuela - to convene a conference of States parties to the 1963 Moscow Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water with a view to discussing ways to convert the Treaty into a global ban on nuclear tests is one of the ways that could lead to a complete cessation of nuclear tests. Mongolia, together with over 40 States, has come out in favour of convening a conference of this kind, and believes that it should take place as soon as possible.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

The utilization of various means to achieve the objective of a halt to nuclear-weapon tests is all the more important in view of the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is to take place next year. My country, like many others, welcomes the increase in the number of States parties to the Treaty and hopes that between now and 1990 - that is, by the date of the convening of the Fourth Review Conference - the Treaty will be even more universal.

It seems to us today that all States are agreed in considering that the further proliferation of nuclear weapons will make it even more difficult to reach the objectives of nuclear disarmament. Changing political realities and the process of demilitarization and democratization in international relations must foster and incite the nuclear-weapon States to adopt a new approach towards ceasing the arms race and towards nuclear disarmament, so as to respect the goals and objectives of the Treaty to consolidate international peace and security. Thus, the proposals of the Soviet Union aimed at opening discussion on matters relative to nuclear weapons and measures to reduce the risks of launching a nuclear war, with the participation of all nuclear Powers, deserve full support and must be studied carefully by all parties concerned.

It must be said that the ninth Belgrade Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held at Belgrade stressed that nuclear war threatens the very right to life and that all nations were henceforth equally concerned in preventing it.

In recent years, the study in various multilateral bodies of the problem of preventing an arms race in outer space, together with bilateral Soviet-American negotiations on the question of nuclear and space weapons, and the accumulation of a large number of concrete proposals made by many countries in that area, are

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

eloquent testimony to the need to take additional measures to strengthen the existing legal régime applicable to space. Mongolia supports a global treatment of that matter through appropriate multilateral negotiations, in conformity with the appeal made many times by the General Assembly.

Not all States, however, are ready to enter into such negotiations. Thus, it seems useful and timely to us that there be step-by-step negotiations and the adoption of partial measures leading to the ultimate objective of keeping space free of arms. In the view of my delegation, the prohibition of anti-satellite weapons, the protection and immunity of satellites, and the taking of measures to build trust concerning the activities of States in outer space, are the most appropriate and urgent measures. The need to lay down international legal norms governing various aspects of space activities is the direct consequence of the development of those technologies. That is why the elaboration of those norms should not lag too far behind technical progress.

Twenty years ago, citizens of the Earth laid on the surface of the moon a plaque inscribed with the following words:

(spoke in English)

"Here men from the planet Earth first set foot on the Moon,

July 1969 A.D. We came in peace for all mankind."

(continued in French)

Those prophetic words must not remain a mere wish. We must see to it that all States make every effort so that space, a common heritage of all mankind which today has become an integral part of the limited resources of our planet, be used exclusively for peaceful and creative ends in the interests of the progress and prosperity of all countries and all peoples.

I have briefly touched upon some of the questions relating to disarmament that we consider to be the most important and the most urgent. If my delegation has not

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

touched upon other problems, that in no way signifies that we are less interested in solving them. For example, matters such as the relationship between disarmament and development, the conversion of military production, and others claim our full attention.

The statement of the ninth summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries stressed quite justly that the worsening of development problems, especially in developing countries, could imperil the positive results achieved in international relations and represents a great potential threat to world stability.

My country continues to attach great importance to the mobilization of world public opinion in favour of disarmament and to a better co-ordination of United Nations efforts and the potential of national and international non-governmental organizations in the struggle for peace, security and disarmament. We should continue as much as possible to pay heed to traditional manifestations such as the World Disarmament Campaign and Disarmament Week, which have contributed greatly to the awakening and mobilization of world public opinion in favour of disarmament. We applaud the statements made by the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the First Committee on the occasion of Disarmament Week. Those statements enriched the arsenal of important documents in the field of disarmament.

Mr. NANDOE (Suriname): Speaking for the first time in the Committee, I should like to extend my felicitations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this important Committee and on your appointment as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, with which country we maintain excellent and most cordial relations. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau, and my delegation assures them of its co-operation in the discharge of their responsibilities.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

Previous speakers have already highlighted the successes achieved on the international scene in the field of disarmament and international security. It is indeed encouraging that there has been a noticeably increased sense of realism in the deliberations on the achievement of practical measures in the field of disarmament. It is my delegation's sincere hope that the constructive climate now prevailing will enable the parties concerned to make full use of this momentum so that new and important agreements can be reached.

These agreements are very much needed since it is well known that the present stores of armaments are far greater than are required to meet the real threats to security. In one sense, the growing expenditure on armaments has brought less security than was available earlier because the additional arms could destroy the world several times over.

In another sense, also, security has proved elusive, as is shown by the number of conflicts in today's world. In this respect my delegation would like to express its appreciation of the various initiatives that have resulted in successful regional arrangements to reduce tensions and promote peace, and in particular its appreciation of the role of the United Nations.

The role of the Organization, in the field of disarmament also, cannot be over-emphasized. The lack of concrete results in the field of disarmament at the multilateral level is due, not to the ineffectiveness of the multilateral mechanisms, but rather to political reasons. We deplore the fact that for the sixth consecutive year, the Conference on Disarmament was not able to agree on important questions such as the complete cessation of nuclear tests.

We believe that every effort should be made to mobilize support for strengthening the role of the United Nations in bringing about and maintaining a

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

comprehensive system of global security. We agree with the view expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union in the Committee that the United Nations should be the driving force behind the disarmament process.

After the cruel experience of the First World War, the use of chemical weapons was outlawed internationally under the Geneva Protocol of 1925. A number of events paved the way for the convening of a conference on chemical weapons. At the Conference, held in January 1989, 149 States, including my own, unanimously called for early agreement on a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, transfer and use of chemical weapons and on their production.

There is no doubt that the Paris Conference brought into the limelight the danger of the spread of chemical weapons, which has greatly increased in recent years without much notice being taken of the fact. The Paris Conference did not produce satisfactory results as regards non-proliferation. The achievement of a convention on chemical weapons, which has also been stressed by other representatives, should be our main objective. We are strongly in favour of completely eliminating chemical weapons through a comprehensive convention banning these weapons and, therefore, we welcome, as a first step, international measures reducing existing stockpiles.

In this context, the international community should indeed welcome the statements made by President Bush and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, during the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly, concerning the reduction of their chemical-weapon-stockpiles.

As the Secretary-General said in his report, the present opportunity to agree on a complete ban on chemical weapons must be seized, and since that is in the interest of every State, no one should be excluded from participation in the Conference on Disarmament negotiations on an international ban on chemical weapons.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

The efforts made to restrain the chemical-weapon danger should not obscure the need to press forward with continued efforts with regard to nuclear proliferation. It is clear that nuclear proliferation poses a threat to human existence far greater than that posed by the spread of chemical weapons. One has only to compare the immediate effects on global strategy of the use of nuclear weapons by any State, anywhere, with those that ensued from the use of chemical weapons by one particular State.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) provides the general legal framework in the field of disarmament. Although some important States have not adhered to the Treaty, the threat to the international community today would have been much greater if the Treaty had not been concluded and if there were not more than 130 adherents to it. That non-proliferation Treaty should be considered as the framework of the nuclear non-proliferation régime and the basis on which all arms-control and disarmament progress should rest.

The Fourth Review Conference is due to open in Geneva next year. My delegation is pleased to note that progress has been made in the preparation of the Review Conference, and hopes that a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty can be negotiated. That treaty is absolutely essential for the preservation of the non-proliferation régime embodied in the NPT. Such a treaty was welcomed by the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade last month.

There have been several agreements to control the spread and development of nuclear weapons. It has been recognized that the ratification and implementation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Soviet Union on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, as well as the observation and interpretation procedures are the beginning of a process for

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

reducing nuclear armaments. It can be said that there are clear indications of a growing will in the relations between East and West to achieve a fair reconciliation of interests and reduce further the sources of conflict. My delegation whole-heartedly welcomes this trend in the new international political climate.

As a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, my delegation underlines the objectives of peace and co-operation established in the declaration of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic. We therefore urge all States to refrain from any action that is inconsistent with the objectives of the said declaration, in particular actions that could aggravate, or might create, situations of tension and potential conflicts in our region.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to reiterate what the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries stressed during their summit meeting in Belgrade, namely that the prospects for disarmament need to be widened in scope and to provide for all the States Members of the United Nations to participate in and accelerate the process initiated.

Once again we stress that it is time for the arms race to be replaced by competition in furthering common objectives which carry the promise of a safer future for all.

Mr. SAVUA (Fiji): Please accept my delegation's congratulations on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of this Committee. Your experience at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and here in the First Committee gives us confidence that our work will be concluded in a most expeditious manner. We also extend our congratulations to the members of your Bureau.

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

The prevailing climate of optimism surrounding the whole area of disarmament gives us hope that quantum shifts will take place towards agreements which have long eluded the international community. It is very encouraging and is a definite and clear step towards attaining true stability in our one world. Small nations like mine may not always directly involve themselves in the discussions and negotiations of disarmament meetings and conferences. This is not because of lack of interest on our part but because of the high cost of sending delegations to these and other important meetings. We just do not have the resources to cover everything. Nevertheless, disarmament and all it entails affects all our lives, and we will voice our concerns when the opportunity occurs.

This responsibility was aptly put by the Permanent Representative of Denmark in his statement to this Committee yesterday, when he said:

"Disarmament, however, is not the prerogative of the super-Powers or of the European countries. Disarmament and the building of greater confidence and security are needed in all parts of the world and all Member States bear a responsibility." (A/C.1/44/PV.16, p. 46)

Security is multi-faceted. To achieve total security would mean addressing all the facets and finding lasting solutions to all of them simultaneously. Defence tends to find a place high on the list and often receives priority financial allocation at the expense of the social and economic sectors. The rationale for such high priority is the existence of external threats. Statistics show that in 1984 developed countries devoted an average of 5.6 per cent of their countries' gross national products to defence expenditure, or an equivalent of some \$600 billion. The special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and development held last year highlighted the linkage between the reduction of expenditure on arms, on the one hand, and social and economic development, on the other. Increasingly, the morality of such disparity is unsupportable. My

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

delegation welcomes the co-operation between the super-Powers, which is flowing over into every area formerly marked by tension and suspicion. While we have yet to see tangible evidence of the diverting of saved arms expenditures and their being channelled to developing countries, we are hopeful that this is only a matter of time.

Having said this, we must also acknowledge the need of States to acquire arms and establish armies for self-defence. It is little consolation to those States to be told to rewrite budget priorities by others cocooned in the relative safety of calmer regions or for the significant military States to be told to avoid purchasing the categories of armament they themselves deem essential to their own defence. The fact of the matter is that each State determines for itself the level of defence spending suitable to its own needs. Ironically, the advice they get from outside is to buy in bulk the best on the market and acquire replacements in line with the latest in technology. What is required is a high-level meeting to implement conventional disarmament and draw up guidelines on how this should be effected instead of listening every year to a repetition of the same rhetoric. We hope that the Disarmament Commission will be able to reach agreement on a substantial report on this issue at its session next year.

We respect global and regional alliances and understand their presence in the South Pacific. However, when these alliances have come only to heighten tension and suffering in our region, then we must protest most emphatically. Our region has been a victim, and our people casualties, of the spill-over of international conflicts. The remnants of this spill-over continue to plague us today. On top of the list is the continued testing of nuclear weapons. Despite the repeated assurances we have received, our concerns cannot rest. These concerns can only be dispelled by the co-operation of the testing parties in providing comprehensive,

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

internationally substantiated reports to be followed by a realistic agenda for the total cessation of these tests.

Our consistent concerns over nuclear-testing led our leaders to declare a South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone as embodied in the Treaty of Rarotonga. The Treaty came into force in 1986; its protocols are yet to be ratified by all the major nuclear-weapon States. Fiji supports the move to take this issue one step further by bringing a draft resolution to this Committee for consideration. In this connection, we commend and strongly support the initiative taken by 39 parties of the partial test-ban Treaty in April this year to constitute the one-third majority necessary to convene a conference to convert the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Like previous speakers, my delegation believes that the initiative should receive the support of us all.

My delegation applauds the continued dialogue between the two super-Powers to reduce their nuclear arsenals and to cut back the size of their conventional forces, and their pursuit of a chemical weapons convention. The reduction in the number of nuclear weapons will not completely remove the threat of nuclear war, for there will remain enough weapons to destroy us several times over. Together with this reduction, there will no doubt be the requirement to maintain weapons which are more efficient, of greater destructive power and more difficult to detect than existing ones. This new breed will continuously need upgrading, and our region stands to bear some of the brunt of the ongoing need to develop these sophisticated weapons. In spite of this, my delegation acknowledges the positive manner in which the talks have gone towards reducing tensions world-wide.

Chemical weapons are truly inhuman and non-discriminatory. Reports received from where these weapons have been used only add to our sense of horror and revulsion. We believe that it is incumbent upon us all to seek their eradication in all forms. My delegation hopes that our region can be spared from being used

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

for the storage or destruction of chemical weapons. Fiji would like at this juncture to thank the Government of Australia for convening in August this year a Chemical Weapons Regional Seminar. From our point of view, the seminar served as a means for the dissemination and exchange of information among those of us who may not have a similar opportunity in an international forum. The 21 countries which participated were unanimous in their condemnation of chemical weapons and their support for the early conclusion of a convention for their elimination.

There are no nuclear Powers in the South Pacific and no one intends to purchase or to employ chemical weapons. However, the casualties of war in our region have been felled, and continue to be felled, by conventional armaments. One of the facts that disturbs us is the ease with which these weapons can be obtained on the open market or the black market. The arms bazaar is one of the most lucrative of markets, and the merchants are unscrupulous. The value of these transfers of arms is considerable, and according to some sources is at least \$30 billion annually.

We are perturbed by the increasing destabilizing effect of arms transfers in our region. Recent events and discoveries have shown that our once tranquil region is as vulnerable to the forces of the shadowy purveyors of arms as are other regions. For this reason, Fiji believes, like the many who have spoken before us, that suppliers and recipients of arms should ensure that transfers are legitimately and responsibly carried out and that each State should, as a matter of urgency, develop transparent and effective systems to control arms supply and demand.

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

Security cannot be assured by defence cuts and associated defence reduction alone. The easing of international, regional and bilateral tensions, the political willingness of countries to heed the yearnings of their populations for peace and the determination of States to live with one another are all important. The international political climate is now moving towards the realization of this goal, and it is incumbent on all States to seize the opportunity.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.