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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MASHHADI (Islamic Republic of Iran)
(Vice-Chairman)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Mashhadi (Islamic Republic of Iran),
Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 to 69 and 151 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. AL MOSAWI (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset to express to Mr. Taylhardat our warmest congratulations on his unanimous election as Chairman of this exceptionally important Committee. I am confident that with his wisdom he will guide our deliberations in a constructive way. In keeping with the friendly relations between Iraq and Venezuela, I wish to affirm my delegation's willingness to co-operate with him with a view to achieving the positive results we all desire, results that will promote the climate of international détente and strengthen the hopes of humanity for a world in which peace and justice would prevail, and in which arms of all kinds would be eliminated.

In the course of this century mankind has witnessed horrors of war that have surpassed anything we had known from our history books, so much so that the desire for security is one of the most ardent desires of our contemporary world.

(Mr. Al Mosawi, Iraq)

It is regrettable that the arms race has taken place and is taking place under the pretext of concern for security. This situation has reached such a point that nuclear arsenals are now capable of annihilating life on Earth many times over. This has thrown light on the futility of nuclear superiority: it can only lead to diminished security for all.

During the past two decades there have been positive developments at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, for example, the disarmament negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union, the Vienna negotiations on the reduction of conventional weapons in Europe, and the ongoing negotiations in Geneva on a convention banning chemical weapons. Iraq welcomes such initiatives. However, their outcome does not measure up to the hopes placed in them, nor can those conclusions hide the fact that the quantitative and qualitative arms race still exceeds by far the efforts aimed at curbing it. To cite an example, the bilateral agreements between the Soviet Union and the United States of America on the elimination of their medium-range and shorter-range missiles and the START negotiations on the reduction of strategic arms stockpiles have not stopped the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons; those agreements did not ban the development of new systems of such weapons, to say nothing of the fact that the first agreement covers only 4 per cent of the world's nuclear stockpiles, while the second agreement, if implemented, will only cover 40 per cent of existing nuclear stockpiles.

Such facts raise questions about the rest of the stockpiles of the five nuclear-weapon States, in addition to the stockpiles of those States that have not yet formally joined the nuclear club. Is it indeed possible to ward off the danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war while those gigantic arsenals of nuclear weapons continue to exist and to be further developed and refined?

(Mr. Al Mosawi, Iraq)

The nuclear-weapon States bear the primary responsibility in regard to disarmament. This does not mean however that they should negotiate between themselves on nuclear disarmament, in isolation from the international community. Inasmuch as the question touches on the vital interests of all peoples of the world, bilateral and multilateral efforts should be complementary and mutually supportive.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, plays a major role in negotiations concerning multilateral disarmament agreements. We place great hopes in that Conference, hence our participation as an Observer in its work this year. On the other hand, we are concerned over the sterility that has characterized its work throughout the past decade. Certain nuclear Powers bear the major responsibility for that sterility. They are opposed to providing its committees concerned with nuclear weapons with an appropriate mandate for continuing their work. This contravenes the commitments of those States, as contained in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament adopted in 1978. It also contravenes the will of the international community.

International life has acquired a degree of interdependence which makes it necessary for all States to participate in managing the common interests of humanity. It is indisputable that it is the legitimate right of all members of the international community to take part in making decisions that affect the management of those common interests. Accordingly, we believe that there is an urgent need at the present time for the Conference on Disarmament to expand its membership to include States that wish to join it. In particular, the rules of procedure of the Conference do not allow observers to participate as full members in the work of the Conference.

(Mr. Al Mosawi, Iraq)

Together with all other peace-loving peoples, Iraq seeks to eliminate all kinds of weapons from our planet, in accordance with the priorities laid down in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament held in 1978, which declared that the highest priority should be accorded to effective measures aimed at nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war.

If the peoples of the world are concerned at the nuclear threat resulting from the growth of the nuclear arsenals of the major Powers, the Arab nation to which my country belongs has an additional reason for anxiety, namely the possession of nuclear weapons by Israel, and no one can be unaware of that country's aggressive and expansionist designs. This poses a grave threat to national Arab security, to the safety of the States of the region, and to the system of nuclear non-proliferation there. The aggressive Israeli régime continues to use its military capability to perpetrate acts of aggression against the Arab nation and continues to occupy its territory. It did not hesitate to commit a direct act of aggression against my country in 1981, to destroy the Iraqi nuclear reactor which is devoted to peaceful purposes and which is under the safeguards régime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The latest in its practices is its testing of a medium-range missile, which fell near the coast of a sister Arab country.

(Mr. Al Mosawi, Iraq)

It is regrettable that there are effective international circles that are in collusion with this racist régime and with its counterpart, the racist South African régime, in developing their nuclear military capabilities.

Within the framework of its quest for general and complete disarmament Iraq has supported the idea of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in accordance with the principle of the accession of all States of the region, including Israel, to the non-proliferation Treaty and the subjecting of the nuclear installations of the States of the region to the IAEA safeguards, coupled with the establishment of an effective international safeguards régime.

The strength and credibility of any treaty are measured by the success in applying its principles. Moreover, the harm resulting from the impeding or the mis-application of an international treaty will of necessity have negative implications for other international treaties, whether those already in force or those that are the subject of negotiations.

It behoves us now, on the eve of the Fourth Review Conference on the non-proliferation Treaty, to remind the nuclear-weapon States of their commitments under that Treaty. Among these I would mention the early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban as part and parcel of an effective disarmament process aimed at the reduction of nuclear weapons as the first priority, and ultimately at their total elimination.

Iraq was actually one of the States that called for a conference of the States parties to the partial nuclear-test-ban Treaty with a view to converting that Treaty into a universal, comprehensive and verifiable test-ban treaty. We will continue our efforts to achieve that goal as soon as possible. Like most States, Iraq believes that the main objective of disarmament measures is the consolidation of peace and security. Increasing the momentum of the course of disarmament requires parity, mutual respect and renunciation of the use of force and of the

(Mr. Al Mosawi, Iraq)

policies of hegemony. By the same token it requires also the elimination of the sources of economic and social concern in our international community which means the elimination of the glaring discrepancies in the distribution of wealth.

The persistence of international economic crises, the continued conduct of international economic relations on an inequitable and unjust basis, the persistence of crises of foreign indebtedness and the lack of growth in the economies of developing countries in a manner commensurate with the progress achieved in the developed countries, together with technological restrictions, are factors that constitute serious obstacles to security in its broad sense. Hence, unless there is a change in the general political climate, unless a higher level of confidence and co-operation is achieved, unless problems arising from the economic and social discrimination are resolved, and the relations between South and North have changed, and the rights of individuals and nations to a decent level of living are secured; unless all that is accomplished, the international community will not achieve genuine and general disarmament.

Outer space is the common heritage of humanity and of future generations. If the arms race continues to be extended into outer space, the consequences will indeed be grave. The risks involved will be difficult to avoid. Those imminent dangers should therefore be averted through multilateral negotiations with a view to reaching an agreement on the prevention of the extension of the arms race, in all its aspects, into outer space.

In conclusion, I feel duty-bound to reaffirm that the United Nations has a fundamental role to play and a main responsibility to discharge in the field of disarmament. Consequently it must contribute more effectively in that respect. It must encourage and promote disarmament measures and establish a suitable mechanism for linking them together, in accordance with its priorities. For the United

(Mr. Al Mosawi, Iraq)

Nations to play such a role, all the Member States should recognize its role and its responsibility in the achievement of this lofty goal, taking into account the fact that there is no time to waste.

Miss RAZAFITRIMO (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): In spite of the appeal, made under article 110 of the rules of procedure, may I take this opportunity to express to Mr. Taylhardat, on behalf of the Malagasy delegation, our most sincere congratulations on his election as Chairman of the First Committee. We also extend our congratulations to the other officers of the Committee.

Given the importance accorded in the media to recent developments in trends that had prevailed in international political relations, and from what we have heard from many speakers about positive developments in international relations, we might be tempted to believe that the world was moving towards lasting improvement. Certain events seem to support that assertion, contradicting certain beliefs about the world order that some of us have held since the Second World War; relations between the two super-Powers are improving; and there is growing détente between the two military-political blocs.

As far as the resumption of dialogue on arms control is concerned, in addition to the prospects in the multilateral field there has been considerable progress in the negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America. A certain number of agreements were reached at the Wyoming talks between the United States Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Minister, among which I might mention the agreement on prior notification of strategic exercises, which would increase the use of nuclear-risk-reduction centres and also complement the 1988 agreement on prior notification of the launching of strategic ballistic missiles and the 1989 agreement on the prevention of dangerous military activities; the planned visit by a group of Soviet experts to research and experimentation centres associated with the American plan for the strategic defence initiative; the general

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agreement on verification and stability proposed by the Soviet Union in response to President Bush's initiative to speed the conclusion of the strategic arms reduction talks (START), which would probably be signed by the year 1990, and an agreement on naval nuclear armaments.

(Miss Razafitrimo, Madagascar)

Moreover, the new approach in Soviet diplomacy, as described by Mr. Shevardnadze before the Supreme Soviet and in the clarifications he provided in his report of 23 October as to the future dismantling of the Warsaw Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on the basis of negotiations for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Europe by the year 2000 and the mutual withdrawal of the military bases of the two blocs in Asia, surely gives new momentum to the improvement of East-West relations, as can be seen from the statements made by a spokesman of the State Department to the effect that the Soviet Minister's statement constituted a positive evaluation of American-Soviet relations.

In this framework, the Soviet military Chief of Staff announced on 19 October that 27,400 Soviet troops had been withdrawn from Europe since the beginning of the year as part of the planned troop reduction of 50,000 by the year 1991.

As to the negotiations in the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), everyone agrees that they are promising as to the reduction of conventional weapons and conventional armed forces and that there is an agreement between the parties to create a stable balance. That new balance would be characterized by a reduction in conventional weapons and equipment and the elimination of differences that weaken stability and of the capacity to launch a surprise attack or undertake broad offensive action. These negotiations would involve land-based conventional forces and matériel within the territory of the participants, from the Atlantic to the Urals. A treaty in this respect could be concluded by next year and implemented in 1992-1993.

As for chemical weapons, following the developments that have occurred since 1938 in the field, especially the Soviet-American commitment of 23 September last on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons, following their proposals to destroy existing stockpiles and the conclusion in Wyoming of an accord on the

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exchange of data in the field of bilateral negotiations, we might expect that 1990 will be the year of the conclusion of a multilateral convention on chemical weapons, which would make up for the shortcomings of the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

The favourable impetus that this has provided would also extend to other agreements that might be developed and implemented to eliminate military and non-military factors of destruction and war, taking into account the undeniable results of bilateral consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union on multilateral negotiations.

As far as regional tensions are concerned, we can say that some inter-State armed conflicts have come to an end with the end of the Iran-Iraq war, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the prospect of a settlement of the question of Cambodia and the peace process which has begun in Namibia. But, as was stressed by our Minister of Foreign Affairs in his statement of 12 October before this session of the General Assembly:

"The list is not as complete as we might have wished; it omits at least two points. Could it be some remaining yearning for rivalry and confrontation between the great Powers that has suppressed mention of zones of peace and co-operation, including that of the Indian Ocean, and of nuclear-weapon-free zones? What role is to be assigned to the United Nations in the multilateral verification of disarmament agreements? It is good to show that we have been moving in the right direction for several years, but it would be even better to take measures to consolidate the international community's confidence in the United Nations in all spheres of international relations." (A/44/PV.30, pp. 32-33)

My delegation has listened with great attention to the speakers in the general debate. As in previous years, we are concerned about the growing risk of the proliferation of weapons, and we are aware of the vital need to put an end to that

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danger. Everyone here aspires to peace and security, which can only be found in disarmament. That is Madagascar's position, and it is why we feel that no factor should be neglected if it can contribute to disarmament.

It is a fact that, unwittingly or not, the General Assembly seems to be focusing its attention recently on certain questions to the detriment of certain others that are at least equally important and have been left pending for many years - items that are postponed from one session to another. This has increased the number of problems on which many resolutions have been adopted without effect. In making these comments we are in no way trying to blame anyone or down-play the significant events in East-West détente, which we welcome. Their impact on international relations is undeniable. In the Indian Ocean region, for example, because of this détente, any confrontation in the context of rivalry and one-upmanship between the two Powers should be obsolete.

Reasoning I would describe as a delaying tactic has been used by certain members of the Special Committee on the Indian Ocean to postpone once again the convening of the Colombo Conference in 1990, in spite of the unanimous view of the Committee on the principle of the objectives of the zone of peace, tends to spread the impression that there exists a regionalized hierarchy in questions related to disarmament.

How could the littoral and hinterland countries on their own banish from the Indian Ocean any military and naval foreign presence - a prerequisite, in our view, for meeting the objectives of the 1971 Declaration? As we see it, the Colombo Conference must take place, especially to allow for negotiated, just and equitable solutions to the questions of Mayotte, Diego Garcia and the Malagasy islands.

In the same context, the prospect of a denuclearized Africa will become even more distant if the will of Africa to establish a nuclear-free zone is impeded because South Africa continues to develop its nuclear capacity and to receive

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all the aid it needs for this purpose. Everyone is aware of the danger that its nuclear programme poses to international peace and security, in particular for African States.

The question of the establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Indian Ocean, Africa, the Middle East, southern Asia, Latin America and elsewhere - proposals for which in most cases date back more than 15 years, or even a quarter of a century as far as a nuclear-free Africa is concerned - is part of global disarmament and must not be disassociated from the process of conventional and nuclear disarmament to which by definition they would contribute, since no assurances can be given to the international community even as to nuclear programmes allegedly for peaceful purposes.

In this respect, we are pleased that one third of the required requests have now been made for the convening of an international conference to transform the 1963 partial nuclear test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. On the one hand, testing is crucial to arms development; on the other, the ban should cover all areas and all systems, including so-called peaceful explosions.

The global prohibition of nuclear testing presupposes the establishment of a system of global verification. Verification is an essential element in the establishment of confidence between the parties to a Treaty. For our part, we attach particular importance to this. We hope that the study undertaken on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification by the group of governmental experts, which will appear before next summer, will contain recommendations aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament in general and verification in particular.

There seems to be a consensus emerging to the effect that multilateralism would contribute to improving the international climate and the role and

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potential of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and security. In this respect, a commitment by all States to give new strength to the multilateral mechanism we have - the Disarmament Commission - is necessary to enable it to obtain the goals for which it was established. We do not think it is too much to ask that the Conference on Disarmament be transformed into a universal organ for negotiations on disarmament.

(Mr. Razafitrino, Madagascar)

A review of its composition has already been requested, at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Positive development of the dialogue to mobilize capacities for multilateral disarmament requires this adaptation because every State has a role to play in global security.

I cannot conclude without recalling the importance and timeliness of the Final Document of the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, in particular its programme of action.

In this respect it was striking to note in the tables presented by Professor Abdus Salam, the Nobel laureate in physics and President of the Third World Academy, at the round table of eminent personalities on the topic "Peace, development and the role of science and technology" organized on Thursday, 26 October, in the framework of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development, the high percentage allocated to defence in comparison with education and health in the gross national product of countries both developing and developed.

It is therefore clear that any progress towards general and complete disarmament would release resources for more rapid development in a difficult situation in which the only possible source of additional resources seems to be disarmament.

Therefore, above and beyond rhetoric, above and beyond debates and discussions we hope are essential, the need is being felt to reflect in deeds the unanimously affirmed desire for peace and negotiations. A first milestone in that direction is the initiative of the Secretary-General to organize in June 1990 in Moscow, in collaboration with the Soviet Government, a conference on the conversion of the military into civilian industry.

Mr. AL-ALFI (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me, on behalf of the two parts of Yemen, to express deepest condolences and sympathy to the delegation of sisterly Algeria on the earthquake that afflicted that country recently. I should also like to express our condolences and sympathy to the delegation of the United States on the earthquake that recently shook San Francisco and the surrounding region.

It is my pleasure to congratulate you, most warmly, Sir, on behalf of the two parts of Yemen, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee, which comes as a reaffirmation of your wisdom and your experience of long years in the field of disarmament. It is also a token of appreciation for your country, which plays a positive role in many causes of concern to the international community. At the same time it gives me pleasure to express our heartfelt congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. I should like to assure you, Sir, of our readiness fully to co-operate with you in order to facilitate your tasks.

The two parts of Yemen, like all who have followed the general debate on questions of disarmament in the First Committee, have drawn the same conclusions they drew from the general debate of the General Assembly: that current international relations show improvement and that constructive steps have recently been taken by the Soviet Union and the United States in the field of the limitation of the arms race and the reduction of armaments. The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - constitutes the first step on that road. The recent agreements signed by the two countries, as also the proposals made by each of them, have bolstered our hope and expectation that they will take further steps in the field of disarmament. Along with other members of the international community, we have welcomed those steps and would like to reaffirm the following.

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First, the achievements made so far in the field of nuclear disarmament cover only a fraction of the nuclear arsenals of the two countries. We believe that the reduction of those weapons should proceed at a pace at least commensurate with that of the escalation of the nuclear-arms race, which has reached a level that threatens the very survival of all mankind. Whatever the justifications may be, it is illogical to attempt to ensure international peace and security when there exist huge quantities of sophisticated nuclear weapons capable of destroying our planet and its civilization many times over.

Secondly, it is established and indisputable that disarmament is a common international responsibility and that its goal is realization of the strategy adopted by the international community: general and complete disarmament under effective international supervision. We believe that any results achieved bilaterally in the field of disarmament are but tributaries to the mainstream of our major objective and are not a substitute for it. We express our concern that the report of the Conference on Disarmament does not reflect comparable progress in the achievement of its priorities in the field of nuclear disarmament. We are entitled to wonder about the nature of the central and essential role played by the United Nations in the field of disarmament, a role mentioned by every Member of the Organization. Is it an influential, effective role? Is it merely a secondary, marginal role that is confined to expressions of welcome and hope for the achievement of progress in the field of disarmament? What is the nature of the constant talk about the Conference on Disarmament, the sole international negotiating forum for disarmament?

Thirdly, we believe that the logical sequence is for the elaboration of practical, effective agreements in the field of nuclear disarmament to start with the prohibition of all forms of nuclear tests and immediate elaboration of a

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comprehensive test-ban treaty. We can thus guarantee that no new nuclear weapons will be developed and that when we address the problem of disarmament we can deal with the existing arsenals. Proceeding from that, we support the efforts aimed at amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963 to convert it into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. It is our hope that the States parties to that Treaty will arrive at a consensus on that objective.

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

The production of nuclear weapons is of course no less important than their development or modernization. We therefore support all efforts to halt the production of nuclear weapons. We wonder how we can deal with this subject or even talk of reducing nuclear weapons while they continue to be produced at the same rate as before. How much of the stockpiles are we talking about reducing while production lines continue to run?

There is another question of the utmost importance: that of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. We cannot possibly accept any of the arguments that are intended to convince us of the need to coexist with nuclear weapons. If it is agreed that a nuclear war cannot be won and should never be fought, we would like to see this motto translated into a legally binding commitment on the part of the nuclear-weapon States. It is also of extreme importance to us that there should be a legally binding commitment to refrain from the use of those weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

Any talk of nuclear weapons naturally leads to a discussion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and especially of the fact that the States parties to that Treaty have decided to hold their Fourth Review Conference next year. That will be an important conference inasmuch as it will determine the fate and future of the Treaty. While at a certain stage the Treaty gave the assurance that there would not be a horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, it did not succeed in putting an end to the mind-boggling vertical proliferation of such weapons by nuclear-weapon States. There is another established fact that cannot be covered up any longer: namely that the two racist régimes of South Africa and Israel possess nuclear weapons. The international community must therefore shoulder its responsibilities and face up to the grave danger implied in this grave development, which threatens the Arab and African peoples in particular, and jeopardizes international peace and security. Over the past few years we have

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persistently warned against such dangers. However, those who defended Israel and South Africa continued to cast doubt on what we said. Today, we are waiting for practical steps to be taken, especially now that those same people have ascertained the validity of our statements, which were originally substantiated by the reports of the United Nations itself.

In view of the aggressive nature of those two racist régimes, and in particular of their collaboration in developing the nuclear capability, it is incumbent upon the international community to remain constantly vigilant and to take immediate steps to obtain the adherence of those two régimes to the non-proliferation Treaty and to have their nuclear installations placed under the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. Only then can we realize the will of the Arab and African peoples to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and to bring about the denuclearization of Africa. To remain silent in the face of the grave developments that may ensue from the possession by South Africa and Israel of nuclear weapons would in our opinion inevitably lead to loss of confidence in the NPT on the part of the Arab and African peoples. It could also lead to further horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, even to the point of no return.

The emphasis we place on nuclear weapons is based on the disarmament priorities unanimously agreed upon by the international community. This emphasis does not mean that we overlook the importance of dealing with the other aspects of disarmament. Yet we do not agree with the tendency to give precedence to those other aspects over the main question: namely nuclear disarmament, or the tendency to deal with those other aspects on an equal footing with nuclear disarmament. In this regard we would like to reaffirm the following positions.

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

First, we support all efforts to bring about the early conclusion of a comprehensive treaty on the prohibition of the development, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. We are gratified that that aspect of the work of the Conference on Disarmament at least was positive. The proposals for the reduction of the stockpiles of chemical weapons in the arsenals of the Soviet Union and the United States are also a source of encouragement to us. By the same token, we welcome the results arrived at by the States parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 at the beginning of the year. Yet we wonder: If all these steps and proposals reflect positive progress in this field, then who is it that is impeding the conclusion of a comprehensive treaty on the prohibition of chemical weapons?

Secondly, the debate on conventional weapons has been permeated with ambiguity and confusion. Emphasis has been placed on the use of conventional weapons but no particular mention has been made of the production of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects. There is now a widespread impression that there is no difference between the simplest and lightest weapons on the one hand and the highly sophisticated conventional and nuclear weapons on the other.

We would like to reaffirm that we, in Yemen, do not produce any weapons. The question of controlling conventional weapons is above all a matter in the hands of the super-Powers, which manufacture such weapons. It is they who can deal with this question through reducing the development and production of conventional weapons, and limiting their exports to most of the countries that have become markets for such weapons. Only in this way can the super-Powers set an example to the other States that manufacture and export light conventional weapons. Only then can we begin to deal properly with the cessation of the conventional arms race because we will then be tackling the cause of the ailment and not its symptoms.

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While discussing the arms race we should not overlook another aspect of it, the importance of which has been underlined in the debates of the Disarmament Commission: namely the naval arms race. Many small States, including the two parts of Yemen, find their security and sovereignty threatened as a result of that aspect of the arms race.

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

It is our country's destiny to be situated in a strategic location at the southern entrance to the Red Sea, to be an important part of the Indian Ocean and to have the Bab al Mandab Strait in its territorial waters. Therefore we attach special importance to the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, adopted by the General Assembly in 1971, especially since that region has witnessed a constant and dangerous escalation of foreign military presence, which, as some reports indicate, has reached the stage where nuclear weapons are being introduced into the region by some major Powers. Certain major Powers, in fact, make no secret of their plans for military intervention in the countries of that region.

The stability and security of that region are, in our belief, first and foremost, the responsibility of the States of the region. Stability and security in the region can be assured only through serious action to implement the objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, foremost among which are the cessation of the arms race between the major Powers, the elimination of military bases in the region and the ending of foreign military presence there.

For the achievement of this objective we are looking forward with keen interest to the convening in Colombo in 1990 of the Conference on the Indian Ocean, as called for by the General Assembly in the light of the consensus recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. We believe that attempts by some States not belonging to the region to recede from that resolution do not serve the security and stability of the region nor that of its peoples and countries. All the more, since the region has witnessed a number of positive elements that pave the way to the convening of the Conference. It is our hope that all permanent members of the Security Council and the maritime users of the Indian Ocean will participate in the Conference with the aim of arriving at agreements that will take

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into account the interests of all and assure the security and stability of the States and peoples of the region.

The two parts comprising Yemen are among the least developed countries. It is only natural that our suffering and the enormous difficulties facing us in our development efforts should cause our interest in disarmament efforts to be all the greater. This is compatible with our concern to maintain security and stability in our region and in the world at large. That interest is also based on our conviction that disarmament and development are closely linked. We are not alone in this belief: it is taking root in the conscience of the world. In the light of the positive development in international relations it is our hope that the recommendations adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development will be implemented and that the constructive proposals submitted to that Conference will be translated into tangible reality and the resources released through disarmament reallocated towards development efforts, particularly in the developing countries. We must all be cognizant of the fact that we are partners in this world and that international peace and security cannot be ensured while the majority of the members of the international community are faced with acute economic problems that threaten their stability and security.

All our interests and concerns are tributaries to the main stream of those of the other States of the world, or at least the majority of them. We believe that the responsibility is a common one and that we have to unite our efforts in order to arrive at appropriate solutions conducive to the achievement of our ultimate goal, namely, general and complete disarmament under effective international supervision. Without doubt, in the field of disarmament the United Nations continues to play a central role, one for which there is no substitute; bilateral efforts must be complementary to that central role. We in Yemen constantly affirm the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and in dealing with

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other urgent international questions. We can all contribute to the consolidation and promotion of that role through active and effective participation in the existing bodies responsible for disarmament questions. That contribution will be effective if we have a true political will that takes into account the interests of all and does not view the issues from a narrow, short-range standpoint, and a resolve that will allow our peoples to participate in the achievement of their hopes for disarmament through the World Disarmament Campaign.

In conclusion I would like once again to reaffirm that we stand fully ready to co-operate with the Chairman, in the discharge of his responsibility. Success in the work of this Committee is not measured by the number of resolutions it adopts, whether that number increases or decreases, but rather by the content of those resolutions. It is measured above all by our collective resolve to translate them into a tangible reality that would serve the principal purpose of our debates, that is, the achievement of real progress in all fields of disarmament.

Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The general debate is drawing to a close in the First Committee, which is entrusted with disarmament and international security items. In this connection we should like to share some of our views on the fundamental changes that appear to be occurring in the sphere of disarmament and security, as has been demonstrated also by the debate in this Committee.

We are convinced that the world is embarking on a period of far-reaching changes in political thinking. In her address made early in the Committee's deliberations, the representative of Sweden posed what we see as a very important question: "... are we ... witnessing a historic break with the past?"

(A/C.1/44/PV.4, p. 19-20)

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We are confident that this question should be answered in the affirmative. World politics are moving gradually towards a fundamentally new stage, which is determined by the transition from militarized confrontation to political dialogue, from parochial self-interest to a multilateral search for a balance of interests geared to equal security for all. We are becoming increasingly aware that we will inevitably have to restructure international relations in such a way that security would come to be based on a qualitatively new footing in keeping with the realities of today's integrated and interdependent world. The noticeably increasing role of international law underlying such a structure will mean that States will gradually abandon their policies of nuclear and overall deterrence based on military force in favour of mutual restraint based on common political and legal instruments and agreements, that is, upon legal deterrence. Collective mechanisms of international law and morality rather than weapons should be our guarantees against recklessness.

Speaking in broader terms, we are now seeing the beginnings of an entirely new order of international relations: they are becoming increasingly demilitarized and their military component is ceasing to be preponderant and dominating.

There appear to have emerged points of crystallization where real elements of fundamentally new approaches promise to multiply and grow in the future. Thus, we see an acceptance of the notion of universal human values taking precedence over other interests, as well as that of the paramountcy of world-wide institutions. The pluralism of the world of today and tomorrow is winning broad recognition as is the perception of pluralism based on the will of nations to live in peace and friendship and to promote co-operation as a source of development and mutual enrichment for systems, countries and peoples.

In the military sphere, which is anything but simple, we see signs of general agreement on such major principles as the renunciation of the pursuit of military

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superiority; the need to reduce the risk of accidental or unintentional conflict; to need to reduce and ultimately to eliminate the capacity for launching surprise attacks and initiating large-scale offensive actions; the need to ensure the mutual predictability of action; the need to maintain armed forces at the lowest levels necessary while introducing qualitative and quantitative changes in the structures of armed forces to make them exclusively defensive in nature, and so on.

Winning general acceptance of these principles is a painful process but it is a goal we must reach. At the same time, according to the law of dialectics this stage entails the need to advance towards the next stage: the transition from mutual understanding to interaction.

The principle of defensive sufficiency is, up to a point, the quintessence of changes in military strategic thinking. The new military doctrines of the socialist countries reflect their wish to abandon the principle of over-armament in favour of that of reasonable sufficiency for defence. The political and military-technological aspects of this military doctrine have been devised with one purpose in mind, namely defence, with the military dimension being subordinated to the political one. The prevention of war is the ultimate objective and core of this doctrine as well as the main function of the State and its armed forces.

The adoption of this modern military doctrine has been followed by real practical action. The USSR and its allies have begun to work in earnest on changes in the structures of their armed forces. The announced unilateral cuts in armaments and troops are being vigorously prosecuted. Plans are under way to convert a number of defence manufacturing plants to civilian production. The military budget and the output of military equipment are being reduced. Every measure that will not diminish security is being taken unilaterally. Such measures

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could have been even greater in scope in response to unilateral measures by the other side.

Obviously, the path towards the complete implementation of the principle of reasonable sufficiency for defence must be taken on a reciprocal basis. The latest political concepts of both political-military alliances appear to allow for that objective. The Brussels statement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) sets forth the objective "to enhance security and stability at the lowest possible level of armed forces". In the European Community's statement made by the representative of France in the First Committee on 16 October the Twelve

"reaffirm their belief that military forces should exist only in order to prevent war and guarantee self-defence." (A/C.1/44/PV.3, p. 41)

We have already referred to the doctrine and practical actions of the USSR and its allies. Their peace-loving orientation has recently been confirmed by the Committee of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Warsaw Treaty at a meeting which was held from 26 to 27 October 1989 in Warsaw.

In this context it appears advisable to agree on an adequate interpretation of the principle of sufficiency for defence in practical terms in an appropriate international forum. In our view, this principle could include the following aspects: structuring armed forces in a non-offensive manner; limiting their strike systems to a bare minimum; redeploying armed forces so that they can perform exclusively defensive missions; reducing the parameters of mobilization for deploying armed forces; and reducing the output of military industries.

Naturally, the practical content of the defensive-sufficiency concept when implemented unilaterally will, inevitably, be flexible and contingent on the future behaviour of the other side. It is therefore extremely important that the current Vienna negotiations on conventional armed forces and armaments in Europe establish

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a stable and secure equilibrium on the continent where both world wars began. This calls for concurrent and mutually complementary steps to reduce conventional force capabilities, make them exclusively defensive in nature and phase out tactical nuclear weapons by negotiations on these questions as proposed by the socialist countries.

Reports from Vienna are encouraging in that respect. Today we would like once again to underscore the crucial importance of both sets of negotiations under way there. To use political terms, what is being done in Vienna is something more than just the elaboration of an agreement on reductions in conventional arms and on Confidence-building measures: we are overcoming the division of Europe.

Overcoming that division, we believe, could be promoted also by political and legal action designed to promote a joint search for ways of eliminating the military confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

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For example, there is an obvious similarity between the well-known pronouncements by officials of the countries members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to the effect that none of their weapons will ever be used other than in response to an attack and statements by spokesmen of members of the Warsaw Treaty that they

"will never under any circumstances initiate military action against any State or alliance of States unless they are themselves the target of an armed attack".

The statements have obvious similarities. It would seem that a joint statement by both alliances to that effect might be advisable. Such a statement could provide further momentum for continued efforts to build confidence in Europe and enhance stability throughout the world.

The development in an appropriate forum of criteria and parameters for defensive structures of armed forces could add substantially to efforts to reach agreement on the content of the defensive-sufficiency concept. Both topics could be addressed by experts on the Military Staff Committee, as the Byelorussian SSR has repeatedly suggested. Other proposals to that effect could also be discussed. The forthcoming seminar of the 35 States participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) on the subject of military doctrines could be a useful step. It is important that progress be made on a question of global importance - that of reducing armaments - where such criteria might prove very useful.

In his address to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India outlined the overall prospects for globalizing processes that are under way in Europe. He then stated:

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"Reductions must, of course, begin in areas where the bulk of the world's conventional arms and forces are concentrated. However, other countries should also join the process without much delay. This requires a basic restructuring of armed forces to serve defensive purposes only. Our objective should be nothing less than a general reduction of conventional arms across the globe to levels dictated by minimum needs of defence. The process would require a substantial reduction in offensive military capability, as well as confidence-building measures to preclude surprise attacks. The United Nations needs to evolve by consensus a new strategy doctrine of non-provocative defence. (A/S-15/PV.14, p. 18)

The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries stressed at their Conference at Belgrade that their Movement, based on the principle of ideological pluralism, stands for efforts to establish a more stable and peaceful world. They expressed their faith in the power of negotiations and co-operation and called for a realistic, far-sighted and creative approach to contemporary phenomena.

As was pointed out in the Finnish-Soviet declaration, "New Thinking in Action", approved at the recent summit meeting,

"Nobody should strengthen his security at the expense of others. Nor can any use of force be justified by one military-political alliance against another, either inside those alliances or against neutral countries, from any quarter whatsoever. Joint security calls for the dismantling of military confrontation."

We are convinced that the obvious and significant similarity of views among representatives of East, West, the Non-Aligned Movement and neutral countries opens up real prospects for progressive and irreversible progress towards a world without wars and weapons.

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Progress towards such a world would be facilitated by the establishment of a network of confidence- and security-building measures that would cover and pervade all military activities, without exception. Hence there is a need to turn from individual confidence-building measures, openness and glasnost to far-reaching policies of confidence-building as an element of a new security model. If deterrence is really necessary, let deterrence based on nuclear and military force give way to deterrence through openness.

It is our conviction that the trends evolving in today's world situation, which have been the subject of my statement, do not signal the end of history. Rather, they mark the beginning of the history of a world free from enmity and violence.

Mr. JANDL (Austria): My delegation's statement today will deal with one specific agenda item, namely, conventional disarmament.

On many occasions, in many statements and in many resolutions the international community has rightly stated that nuclear disarmament is of the utmost importance and of the highest priority. Nuclear weapons have a character of mass destruction, a feasibility of inflicting the most painful harm and danger on the world population and on the environment and the capacity to afflict and change the global climate in a lethal manner. Thus it is clear that the problem of those horrible weapons must be dealt with urgently.

However, we cannot uncouple nuclear disarmament from conventional disarmament, since both are closely interrelated. Progress in the field of nuclear disarmament can help to create a climate conducive to conventional-arms reduction. If the nuclear threat is decreased countries whose defence depends to a major extent on conventional forces will not feel obliged to amass vast arsenals of those weapons to ensure their security; hence, conventional arsenals will be reduced. If, on the

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other hand, agreements on conventional disarmament are achieved and implemented, States whose security relies on nuclear deterrence to match possible conventional attacks will no longer need to maintain their enormous nuclear stockpiles.

Nuclear disarmament is not feasible without conventional disarmament, and conventional-arms limitation is not workable without correlative steps in the nuclear field. My delegation feels that that interaction should be looked at more closely in all multilateral disarmament endeavours. Concentration on only one of the aspects will remain patchwork and will not lead to substantial disarmament. We are encouraged, however, by recent developments to look at security and disarmament issues in a more comprehensive manner. I am convinced that in the disarmament process too we should start to overcome the thinking pattern that holds: One reason, one effect.

Conventional disarmament efforts must, therefore, be an integral and essential part of overall disarmament efforts. We have always taken the view that disarmament is a step-by-step process through which a global balance of armaments should be established on as low a level as possible.

The costs for conventional weapons and forces are enormous. They amount to about 80 per cent of global military expenditure. Over the past four decades some 17 million persons have been killed by that type of weapon. Disregarding conventional disarmament would therefore result in an unrealistic assessment of the disarmament picture because an essential part of the requirements for international security would be neglected.

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Attention should be directed not only towards the quantitative aspect of armaments, but also to the refinement of arms in the light of recent technological advances. To overlook this qualitative aspect would result in the erosion of any progress achieved in the field of quantitative arms limitation.

It is common knowledge that Europe is the continent with the highest density of arms. Europe has for many years been trying to achieve disarmament on a multilateral basis, through multilateral negotiations based on multilateral efforts, while taking into account the characteristic features of the region.

The process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) started in 1972; the talks on mutual reduction of forces and armaments and associated measures in Central Europe were initiated in 1973. True, the latter have ended - without a tangible outcome - earlier this year. But the CSCE process has achieved, among other things, far-reaching results in the field of conventional arms reduction.

The Vienna Final Document of 15 January 1989 provided for a twofold set of talks in the conventional area: in the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe the 23 member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty undertake to achieve more stability through an equilibrium of conventional armaments on a lower level. The 35 States participating in the CSCE are going to elaborate new mutually complementary confidence- and security-building measures in a second range of negotiations. Both forums assumed their work in Vienna in March this year.

One of the main goals of this process is a substantial reduction of the military presence in Europe, leading to a new balance on lower levels of armaments. The atmosphere between the member States of NATO and the Warsaw Pact at

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the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe (CFE) and the business-like manner in which these negotiations are being conducted allow for a positive assessment of the chances for a successful outcome. The commitment of both alliances to the principles of military equilibrium on the lowest possible level corresponds to both general European and global security interests. Austria welcomes the fact that both alliances do not aim only at quantitatively reducing the offensive character of their respective military potential. The fundamental positive change in East-West relations gives rise to expectations that disarmament diplomacy has now entered a new phase, a phase in which far-reaching results are within reach.

In these talks, for the first time, agreement could be reached to work for the elimination of conventional imbalances in the whole of Europe - from the Atlantic to the Urals - in order to render impossible surprise attacks or large scale offensive operations. After the dynamic start of these talks, the 23 countries have already made considerable progress in the first six months of the negotiations. With a lot of dedication, political will and the necessary flexibility, a large area of common ground has been established, and there are good prospects that a first CFE agreement can be concluded next year.

Such a positive development is of essential importance not only for military stability in Europe but also for the political future of the continent. Never before have the conditions for successful disarmament in Europe been so favourable. Against the background of significantly improved East-West relations there is growing readiness to replace ideological and political differences by common co-operative efforts.

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A few days ago, the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Petrovsky, said before this Committee that the international community has now embarked on a process of de-ideologization and de-politization. My delegation is confident that this will lead to better concentration on the important tasks the community of States has to fulfil, especially in the field of disarmament.

In East-West relations, substantially increased political confidence is about to be established after decades of heightened mistrust. This should serve as the basis for radical changes in approaching the most crucial military-political questions. Early results of the CFE could create a new situation in Europe where European co-operation in all fields will no longer be hindered by military confrontation but will give additional scope and incentives for further progress also in other domains.

For Austria, a neutral country not participating in the CFE talks, the success of these negotiations would also be of great importance to its national security interests. My country is situated at the division line of the two military alliances and the establishment of real balance and parity on a lower level in the conventional field in Europe would have a direct and positive bearing on Austria's security environment.

Based on a positive assessment of the perspectives for a first CFE agreement, my delegation believes that we should now start looking further ahead. After the realization of the most important aims of the first CFE stage, that is, reduced equal limits in six arms categories, a radical restructuring of conventional forces in Europe should be envisaged in order further to eliminate capacities for offensive operations. There is no doubt that a common definition of generally acceptable criteria for the non-offensive character of armed forces will be a very complicated task. However, we note with satisfaction that general agreement seems to be evolving among the 23 States to work towards this aim.

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The second set of negotiations in the area of military security taking place in the framework of the CSCE process in Vienna are the negotiations among 35 CSCE countries on confidence- and security-building measures (CSBM). An essential task of these talks would be to expand and further develop the set of CSBMs agreed by the Stockholm Conference in 1986 and, at the same time, to elaborate new provisions on a comprehensive exchange of so-called static information and on constraining measures. In the view of my delegation, it is important that the established relationship between these negotiations and the CFE talks are well taken into account in the course of the deliberations. Both forums have their specific mandates but are, at the same time, of complementary character.

As a first result of the CSBM negotiations, agreement could be reached on a mandate for a seminar on military doctrines to be held next January in Vienna. For the first time, the 35 CSCE States would discuss in an official setting their military doctrines in relation to posture, structure and activities of conventional forces. We believe that that seminar will be another significant step towards greater openness and confidence between East and West. My delegation expects that the experience gained at the seminar will provide a useful background for the future deliberations of the Vienna talks.

My Government is convinced that CSBMs, in any case, can play an extremely valuable role in the accomplishment of international understanding, mutual confidence and openness and, hence, in arms reduction efforts. That is why we think that the process achieved within the CSCE with regard to those confidence- and security-building measures might also be of interest to other regions. As we stated earlier, Austria is prepared to organize, in co-operation with the United

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Nations, an international seminar on these issues for which it will also draw on the experience of experts from States participating in the CSCE process. This seminar could take place in Vienna in the spring of 1991. CSBMs and their practical applicability in other regions could be discussed at that gathering of experts from all the regions of the globe. The comparison of these CSBMs to relevant approaches of other regions where perhaps different conditions prevail would be of major interest to us all.

Experience in the European context has proved that there is a need, place and chance for effective multilateral disarmament undertakings in the conventional sphere. Conventional disarmament is a domain in which strengthened multilateral efforts could yield significant results in the future. Hence, we firmly believe that multilateral conventional arms reduction should be dealt with more intensively by the international community and, in particular, by the relevant United Nations bodies. It is our hope that the United Nations will take greater advantage of its vast potential in the conventional disarmament field.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.