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Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

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Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia): The questions of disarmament, which are inseparably connected with the safeguarding of peace and security in the world, undoubtedly hold a dominant place among the problems the solution of which is called for by the present international situation. Quite a lot has already been done. During recent years in particular the danger of a new world conflict has been reduced, and in some fields the armaments race has been successfully slowed down. It would therefore be incorrect to underestimate the results achieved. We are, however, as yet far from the termination of the arms race as a whole. In most parts of the world the armies' arsenals are still being supplied with new stocks of destructive weapons. The necessity of reaching a radical change in the disarmament negotiations is increasing year by year, even day by day.

All peace-loving countries, all nations of the world, are expressing with ever growing determination their desire for disarmament and the permanent removal of the danger of a new world catastrophe. This is attested to by tens of millions of signatures on the new appeal of the World Peace Council in Stockholm. It has been confirmed by the declaration to the peoples of the world adopted by the representatives of the peaceful movement of 90 countries at this year's world disarmament conference in Helsinki.

In recent years questions of disarmament have become an issue discussed at important international conferences at the top level. Last year the participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe also expressed their conviction of the necessity of adopting effective measures directed at general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Important decisions adopted at this year's Conference of the highest representatives of the non-aligned countries in Colombo also attest to the significance those countries ascribe to questions of disarmament. Czechoslovakia has always consistently insisted on progress in disarmament, has participated in all international negotiations that could

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

assist in the achievement of that aim and has furthered the noble ideas of disarmament in its bilateral relations with other States. To strive for disarmament is also in accordance with the obligations we are duty-bound to fulfil as a Warsaw Pact country. We fully support the far-reaching goals of the programme on further struggle for peace, international co-operation, freedom and the independence of nations declared by the XXVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Gustáv Husák, at the XVth Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in April of this year, emphasized that:

"We consider it necessary that the easing of political tension be strengthened by détente in the military sphere, that the arms race be stopped and transition towards the limitation of stockpiles of arms and towards disarmament assured."

Armament in the world continues to absorb vast financial, material and human resources. Thus the threat to international security and world peace remains. Armaments expenditure is a heavy burden for all nations and countries and is preventing economic and social development.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

The enormous amount -- \$US 300 thousand million -- allocated annually to the means of war and destruction has become perhaps the main figure cited in this year's session of the General Assembly. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of India stated on 8 October in the general debate:

"It seems unlikely that there will be significant progress in social reform and economic development in developing countries as long as world military expenditure continues to grow at the present rate." (A/31/PV.15, p. 31)

It is really necessary at last to find a solution and to prevent further uncontrolled growth of expenditure on armaments. We have already been convinced that to flood these problems with technical details cannot lead to our goal. The delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic highly appreciates this year's proposal of the Soviet Union to commence negotiations on concrete percentage reductions of military budgets, and will make every effort to support such negotiations.

The Geneva Committee on Disarmament has again this year confirmed its irreplaceable role as the main organ for leading the disarmament negotiations. The report of the Committee (A/31/27) shows that the Committee, working this year under a particularly demanding programme, has attained positive progress on a number of issues.

There is no doubt that the main result is the draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques, submitted at last year's session of the General Assembly on the basis of the identical drafts of the Soviet Union and the United States. As a member of the Committee, the Czechoslovak delegation has also participated in the Working Group's preparation of the draft. Its submission proves that, with good political will, it is possible for the participating parties to solve successfully even the very complicated problems of disarmament. The difficult questions of control, for example, have been settled, and agreement attained on the establishment of a consultative committee of experts.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

As has already been mentioned, the aim of the draft convention is to prevent any military or hostile use of environmental modification techniques which could have widespread, long-lasting or severe effects for any other State party. The Czechoslovak delegation is of the opinion that in this respect a really optimal and generally acceptable draft has been submitted, and believes that the General Assembly will by its decision at the present session permit the opening of this important draft convention for signing.

The Disarmament Committee's task has been to commence negotiations on the draft convention on the prohibition of the development and manufacturing of new types of weapons of mass destruction and of new systems of such weapons, submitted last year by the Soviet Union. The deliberations of the Committee, with the participation of experts, including one from Czechoslovakia, have so far, no doubt, contributed to deeper understanding of that new and, as has already been convincingly proved, very important field of disarmament measures. The discussion, based on analyses of experts, has corroborated the fact that the ever-increasing pace of development in science and technology presents dangerous opportunities for the application of new scientific principles and discoveries in the production of new types and systems of weapons.

It is necessary to evaluate positively the fact that significant success has been achieved at this year's session of the Committee in the clarification and limitation or prohibition of those types and systems of weapons based on new physical, chemical, biological and other principles. However, it is not possible to delay solution until such time as those weapons have been developed and included in the arsenals of armies, or to postpone it until after the prohibition of existing weapons of mass destruction. It is clear that we must act without delay. At its present session the United Nations General Assembly should give new impetus to the speeding up of further negotiations in the Disarmament Committee, with the broadest possible participation, and thus open up prospects for working out an agreement.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

The Committee has, in our opinion, taken a step forward in the important question concerning the prohibition of chemical weapons. Negotiations of experts -- in which an expert from Czechoslovakia participated -- have helped to bridge the gap between the different existing views. In particular, it is the view that the basis for the context of prohibited chemical agents should be the criterion of general purpose, supplemented by the criterion of toxicity. Further, the majority of Committee members now share the opinion that the reliability of national means, in combination with the necessary international procedures, would represent a realistic guarantee of strict observance of the future treaty.

The important working documents recently submitted in Geneva which contribute to a better understanding of various aspects of the question of prohibition of chemical weapons and the possibility of its solution have been supplemented by a number of other documents. On that question there is no scarcity of proposals or materials. However, it is necessary to consolidate positions and commence work on a common text of the treaty. In the interest of progress it is possible to use a stage-by-stage solution. However, in our opinion, this does not mean that we should wait and not seek every opportunity to find ways to achieve a complete ban of chemical weapons and the destruction of their stockpiles. At its present session United Nations General Assembly should confirm the great urgency of this question, and the Committee should be asked to speed up its negotiations and to work out a generally acceptable solution on the basis of the proposals submitted.

The Committee this year devoted great attention to questions relating to the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. We think that the discussions in Geneva, with the participation of experts, have certainly assisted in the creation of a basis for future negotiations on the text of the treaty. This year, for example, they brought forward ideas

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

which can be taken into account in the future working out of treaty mechanism for control. They prove that the system of rational means of verification, supplemented by the necessary international procedures, would, no doubt, secure the observance of all obligations adopted in the framework of the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests.

The Soviet Union, in its endeavour to reach a solution, has submitted, this year, a significant new proposal concerning on-site inspection in cases of controversial situations, where the principle of voluntary agreement would be observed. We highly appreciate that initiative. It is clear, however, that in order to achieve agreement all nuclear States must participate. Negotiations in the Geneva Committee attest to that fact.

Therefore, the United Nations General Assembly should at this session, in our opinion, again firmly appeal for the implementation of last year's resolution 3478 (XXX), adopted upon the initiative of the Soviet Union, calling for negotiations with the participation of all nuclear Powers. A number of non-nuclear countries, both socialist -- including Czechoslovakia -- and developing countries, have expressed their interest in participating in those negotiations. It rests now with the four remaining nuclear Powers, which so far have refused to participate. These are the very negotiations that could be a turning-point in the endeavours for final solution of the technical and political problems, which so far have been unsuccessful.

The Treaty of May 1976 between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, together with the attached documents, is evidence that with good will a solution can be found. We have welcomed the fact that the signing of that Treaty has opened the road towards ratification of the significant Soviet-American Treaty on the limitation of underground nuclear tests of 1974. Thus a further step has been taken in the effort aimed at a complete and general nuclear test ban. At the same time, the development of international co-operation in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy has received a new impetus.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Much has been achieved on those questions in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also. The results of the negotiations of the IAEA Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Peaceful Nuclear Explosions, in which a delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic also participated, have justified our conclusions that the activity of the IAEA in that field has been developing in the right direction and at a satisfactory pace.

The Czechoslovak delegation would like to reaffirm its opinion that the IAEA should continue to be the main organ for negotiations on all aspects of international co-operation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear explosions. We should like to reaffirm our position proceeding from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that this international co-operation will in no way suffer from a complete and general ban on nuclear-weapon tests. That is why, in our opinion, the concept according to which the preliminary condition of the nuclear test ban should be the solution of the whole volume of problems with regard to nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes is untenable.

During the past year in particular there has developed an unjustified anxiety on the part of many countries because of the danger of the spread of nuclear weapons to other parts of the world. Dozens of countries, as has been confirmed at the present session of the United Nations General Assembly, are calling for the adoption of firm and effective measures to avert that danger. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, for example, expressed this in his statement in the general debate on 7 October. He said:

"New guidelines and enforceable regulations governing the supply of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes are obviously imperative. This is a matter which calls urgently for the attention of the world community." (A/31/PV.22, p. 83)

Czechoslovakia belongs among those countries which, as parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and as members of the IAEA, are exerting every effort to prevent the spread of the nuclear-weapon race to new parts of the world. It is a positive fact that the number of parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty has increased. We shall continue our endeavours to make that Treaty really

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

universal as soon as possible. International co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must also not be misused for political manipulations or for the purpose of commercial profit, also involving the danger of nuclear proliferation. We proceed from the recognition of the special responsibility that rests with the producers and exporters of nuclear materials, equipment and technology, and we abide by it in practice. We strive within the IAEA for continuous development and improvement of methods of control over the nuclear materials and equipment used by that organization, in order to continue to make lasting improvements to the guarantees that it offers. We now deem it urgent that the IAEA should work out in the nearest possible future a system of guarantees pertaining to the whole fuel nuclear cycle for all non-nuclear countries.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world would, in our opinion, strengthen the régime on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as security throughout the world. We support the idea of and aims for the establishment of such zones, and we participated last year in the working out of a comprehensive study on those problems with a view to seeking solutions. From the study submitted to the United Nations General Assembly at its thirtieth session, however, it does not follow that nuclear-weapon-free zones could attain their aims when the respective decisions are adopted unilaterally or on the basis of the non-existent prerogatives of any international body. We therefore think that it is necessary to continue seeking generally acceptable principles that would in practice be applicable in concrete negotiations on the establishment of individual nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Even if it is obvious that the main task is the attainment of progress in questions pertaining to weapons of mass destruction, we cannot leave aside so-called conventional weapons. This is all the more true because it is today already possible to compare the effects of the mass employment of the most advanced types and systems of those weapons with the destructive consequences of the possible use of common types of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. So far as conventional weapons are concerned, the armaments race is not lagging behind the pace of that in nuclear armaments. Czechoslovakia advocates the termination of the armaments race, the reduction of the

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

stockpiles of weapons and disarmament in the field of conventional weapons also. We are proceeding from this position in the talks on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in central Europe which are going on in Vienna.

I should like to conclude this part of my statement with the words of our Minister for Foreign Affairs, who said in his statement in the general debate on 6 October that:

"... there is a whole range of concrete proposals which require some dynamism, a dynamism which we hope would lead, in the near future, to further agreements and measures on disarmament. If we wish to achieve our goal, we should not bury these problems in complicated procedural issues, in lengthy discussions on what, how and why negotiate, because as a result the main issue -- the achievement of an effective agreement -- may be lost." (A/31/PV.19, p. 16)

The memorandum of the Soviet Union on questions of ending the armaments race and of disarmament, submitted at the present session of the General Assembly in document A/31/232, can serve as an example of goodwill, a constructive approach and an effort at compromise on the most complex questions. The Czechoslovak delegation identifies itself fully with the aims of that important document. Together with the proposal on the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, it will constitute a new opportunity for us in our endeavours to achieve an all-round strengthening of international security, disarmament and the further development of co-operation and understanding among nations.

In conclusion I wish to mention a question which, in view of its importance, should rightly be in the foreground of the attention not only of the majority of the Members of our Organization but of all of them. It is the question of the convening of a world disarmament conference, which has for many years been blocked mainly by those very few countries that still refuse to negotiate on the problem of disarmament as a whole. Proof of that is found in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee for the World Disarmament Conference submitted to the present session of the General Assembly in document A/31/28.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

The Czechoslovak delegation is of the opinion that the time has been ripe for a long time to hold such a conference at which it would be possible not only to consider the questions of disarmament but also to adopt practical decisions. The conference should be prepared with the assistance of a special session of the United Nations General Assembly, about which many earlier speakers have already spoken at great length.

The Czechoslovak delegation has explained its opinion on some of the main items on the agenda of the Committee and the General Assembly. We will strive to make the results of our present negotiations a start on the road of progress. We share the concern that if we do not succeed in stopping the armaments race it will block the road to a further deepening of political détente in relations among States, which is our common goal. It is, therefore, necessary to continue purposefully with negotiations and to prepare a movement towards general and complete disarmament, even by way of partial measures.

Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius): It is with a feeling of worry that I address the question of disarmament, and this feeling is completely justified if we only have a quick look at the background against which our debate is taking place. We live in an era of opposing blocs, with powerful armies poised against each other, and an era in which the reaction time of automated nuclear missiles is immeasurably swifter than the pace at which diplomacy normally works. It is an atmosphere which generates fear and a sense of insecurity. The massing of armaments and the continued development of new weapon systems cannot but generate more suspicion and greater tension than existed at the start and, by doing so, provoke hostile reactions ranging from a stepping up of military expenditure to talk of war on the part of those who feel threatened.

Annually \$300 billion is spent on armaments all over the world. Since the Second World War, the total military expenditure has exceeded \$6,000 billion at present prices. This unimaginably large figure is roughly equal to this year's gross national product for the countries of the entire world and is more than five times the gross national product of all the developing countries put together. It represents an investment of \$1,500 for every man, woman and child on earth.

All this is happening while some 750 million people, about 46 per cent of the total population of developing countries, live in absolute or relative poverty -- "absolute" meaning a per capita income less than the equivalent of \$US 50 per annum, and "relative" referring to less than one third of national per capita income. These levels are presumed to represent a poverty line

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

below which minimal standards of health, nutrition and shelter are difficult to maintain. The hungry, the ill-housed, the sick and the illiterate are in great part the same people. More than 400 million people are malnourished, and millions more subsist on diets that are far below minimal needs. According to 1975 statistics, more than one billion people in 66 developing countries live in areas where malaria is endemic.

This situation we can no longer afford and we should no longer tolerate. When we discuss these questions, we do so in a completely new international environment. The qualitatively new environmental factor which is to be taken into account in dealing with the armament race is the acceptance by the international community of the objective of establishing a new international economic order as this concept is defined in the relevant General Assembly documents. The arms race is incompatible with efforts aimed at establishing a new world economic order.

There is already an agreement that the question of nuclear disarmament deserves absolute priority. When the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was signed and later on entered into force, this was considered a milestone in the curbing of the nuclear arms race. But what actually happened? While the non-nuclear-weapon States observed fully the obligations they had undertaken under the Treaty, the nuclear-weapon States observed none of those obligations which were intended to establish a balance between the rights and duties of nuclear-weapon States and the rights and duties of non-nuclear-weapon States. Even more, an attempt is being made to present the Treaty as consisting of only two articles: articles I and II. The United Nations Secretariat, and in particular the Office of Public Information, has itself contributed to the wide spreading of this misconception, as was done, for instance, by a recent publication of the Office of Public Information entitled Suggestions for Speakers. I referred to that at the last session.

The operation of the Treaty was reviewed last year by the Review Conference, at which I had the honour of leading the delegation of Mauritius. Regretfully, one has to admit that nothing has changed since then. The nuclear weapon testing continues despite the provisions of the tenth preambular paragraph of the Treaty. The promised benefits contained in paragraph 2 of article IV, regarding the exchange of equipment, materials and scientific

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, have not materialized. On the contrary, an attempt is being made to institute a monopoly in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as the recent "secret" agreement in London proved. The present state of affairs demonstrates that developing countries cannot rely entirely on the advanced industrialized countries, on their fulfilling their obligations under article IV of the Treaty. The over-emphasized dangers of horizontal proliferation as a by-product of peaceful nuclear technology are used as a folding screen to hide monopolistic aspirations.

I wish to repeat the call I made last year in this Committee for the transfer of nuclear material from military to peaceful purposes. This call is particularly relevant today as the latest survey of uranium resources production and demand prepared by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Nuclear Energy Agency at the end of 1975 shows that discoveries in the last two years have increased total reserves by about 200,000 tonnes to the figure of 1,080,000 tonnes. The report points out that, while there is a great expansion of prospecting and development resulting in major new discoveries, there will nevertheless be formidable problems in ensuring that there is enough uranium to meet demands over the next 25 years. The report estimates that by the year 2000 there will be a requirement for 4 million tonnes of uranium, and by the year 2025 this may more than double to 10 million tonnes. It will be necessary to invest about \$20,000 million in exploration during the next 25 years, and a similar sum in mining and milling.

No positive result could be recorded in the implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. While repeated calls for a moratorium on supplies for peaceful activities are voiced, no similar call was heard from the nuclear-weapon States for a moratorium on the production of nuclear weapons and their subsequent reduction and liquidation. This is so because the dilemma for the nuclear-weapon countries is how to dissuade other countries from acquiring nuclear weapons, as they are very anxious to do, and rightly so, without re-emphasizing the importance they attach to their own. The fact is, of course, that the nuclear-weapon States cannot have it both ways.

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

The question of the non-use of force in international relations has been brought up here and a draft resolution was adopted by this Committee last week. As I stated on the occasion of that debate, we are still waiting for the negative security assurances which the nuclear-weapon States have to give us.

With all that in mind, my delegation would be willing to support -- and even join in sponsoring -- any resolution expressing profound dissatisfaction with the way in which the Non-Proliferation Treaty is being implemented and requesting the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their obligation in the spirit and the letter of that Treaty.

In view of the now prevailing situation in the field of armament and disarmament negotiations, the Fifth summit Conference of the non-aligned countries, held in Colombo last August, proposed the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament with the aim of examining the situation and trying to move disarmament negotiations out of the deadlock which exists today. It is the considered view of my delegation that a special session of the General Assembly should reaffirm our commitment to the cause of general and complete disarmament; it should also adopt a broad, comprehensive programme for disarmament measures and review and update the principles and machinery for disarmament negotiations.

While regretting that this is another year in which the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) has recorded no serious results, I wish to welcome the new form of its report. A reading of that report gives a much clearer picture of the work carried out in the CCD, which, in the view of my delegation, represents a rather large investment of intellectual and political energy.

My attention was drawn to the positive fact that, taking into account the recommendation made by the delegation of Nigeria, the Committee decided to consider during its 1977 session the question of a comprehensive programme dealing with all aspects of the problems of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) proclaiming the Disarmament Decade. I only hope that that consideration will produce the expected positive results.

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

The draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques, which is reproduced in the CCD report together with the comments of some delegations on the text and dissenting views or reservations, deserves most careful consideration. I shall refrain from entering into the details of the matter. I would nevertheless stress that my delegation shares the kind of views regarding the draft convention expressed by the representative of Mexico in that Committee.

The views of my delegation on the strengthening of the United Nations role in the field of disarmament are well known and can be summarized as follows.

First, the United Nations bears responsibility under its Charter with regard to the principles governing disarmament and the achievement of general and complete disarmament, one of the most important issues confronting the world at present. The United Nations bears responsibility with regard to all matters pertaining to disarmament, in particular the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. All peoples and countries of the world have a vital interest in disarmament negotiations. These postulates have found expression in the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly over the years.

Secondly, the approach to the question of disarmament should be comprehensive, and for this purpose it is indispensable that work be resumed on the elaboration of a comprehensive programme for disarmament.

Thirdly, the methods of work of the First Committee in dealing with disarmament items should be improved so that each item receives due attention and priority is given to the question of nuclear disarmament.

Fourthly, the Disarmament Commission should be revitalized as the main United Nations disarmament body. Its mandate should include the co-ordination of all disarmament efforts, including the implementation of existing disarmament agreements, so that a comprehensive and well-balanced approach is ensured.

Fifthly, the Secretary-General of the United Nations should establish contacts and be represented in all multilateral disarmament talks.

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

Sixthly, the United Nations Secretariat should be requested to submit to Member States analytical papers on the various disarmament proposals brought before the United Nations, assessing, inter alia, the relevance of such proposals to the disarmament objective and their compatibility with disarmament efforts under way and existing international agreements.

Seventhly, a periodical should be published on disarmament affairs to provide information concerning current facts and developments of importance to disarmament, including a digest of disarmament literature.

Eighthly, consideration should be given to the publication of a disarmament yearbook.

Ninthly, channels of communication with interested non-governmental organizations should be developed so that their voice could be heard and their expertise used by the United Nations.

Tenthly, the parties to multilateral disarmament agreements should designate the Secretary-General of the United Nations as the depositary of such agreements. There is no longer any justification for maintaining the procedure set up by the 1963 partial test ban Treaty.

Lastly, parties to multilateral disarmament agreements should submit information on the implementation by them of the respective agreements to the Secretary-General, who, in turn, should communicate it to all States.

The report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Strengthening of the Role of the United Nations contains only some of the elements of the position of my delegation. The recommendations contained in that report represent the minimum common denominator, the minimum consensus which could be achieved in the Committee in present conditions. My delegation considers that those recommendations represent only a first step in the right direction. The General Assembly should adopt those recommendations in their entirety and ask the Secretary-General to implement them with a sense of urgency. The General Assembly and all its disarmament organs should constantly review the ways to fulfil their role in the field of disarmament and update their procedures and structures.

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

In conclusion, I cannot but fully subscribe to what the Secretary-General has stated in the introduction to the annual report on the work of the Organization:

"It is essential that public opinion in the world should be actively aware of the dangers of present developments in the armaments field and should not adopt a defeatist or fatalistic attitude in the face of the appalling reality of the arms race. Mobilized public opinion has shown itself increasingly effective on a number of important issues in recent years. It seems to me that it is time that world public opinion became far more actively involved in the struggle for disarmament, which may well be a struggle for nothing less than human survival." (A/31/1/Add.1, p. 11)

Surprisingly, awareness of the catastrophic destructiveness of nuclear war seems to have become buried so deep in man's consciousness that he has ceased to feel his erstwhile anguish over the ever present danger that nuclear war could in an instant end our lives and our society.

Mr. ROMULO (Philippines): Each year at this time we recite the sad litany of the arms race.

Annually at this time we recite the arithmetic of armaments.

Each year at this time we take note of the unheeded appeals and the lack of progress since the last Assembly. As I stated in my remarks in the general debate, not one ship, plane or missile has been dismantled except because of old age.

We must honestly confront our failures; and we must honestly admit that they are shortening the life expectancy of the human race. Year after year the General Assembly pleads for steps towards arms control and disarmament. Where lies the cause of the failure of those appeals? Let the response be measured in the response to the resolutions approved by the membership. There is nothing fundamentally faulty in those resolutions, subscribed to by an overwhelming majority of Members of all geographical areas and political tendencies.

How shall we hail what are set before us as accomplishments when those accomplishments have so far led only to an intensification of the arms race?

There are no political goals important enough, no ideological tenets significant enough, no mistrust deep enough, to justify the continuing jeopardy of human existence on earth.

Nuclear mutual deterrence may be necessary among super-Powers until better days are with us. But where does mutual deterrence end and mutual threat become compelling? There lies a point somewhere on the path of arms accumulation at which additional arms serve only to arouse deeper suspicion, only to assure a higher threat perception, and thus dangerously to reduce the security of the States concerned and of the world. Thus, fear that mutual deterrence is inadequate leads directly to greatly increased danger.

This point has now been passed in the nuclear arms race. The policy of détente is creaking under the burden of the ever accelerating arms build-up. Only drastic and substantial arms cuts can be expected to salvage the valuable policy of détente, allay new and greater fears and provide the possibility of avoiding a nuclear collision between two or more Powers.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The United States and the Soviet Union have achieved essential parity in nuclear over-kill capability. Therefore, they can safely cut back arms on a basis of parity, increasing their security as tensions lessen and thereby increasing the security of the world as a whole.

As first steps, they can jettison new programmes and new weapons not yet in production or deployed; for the only effect of such weapons and programmes is to complicate the task of arms control and to heighten the mutually perceived threat.

There is a third major contender arising, of which the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are both naturally sensible. The nuclear threat to peace from the third Power is as yet minimal, affording the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics broad opportunities for arms reductions; opportunities which will disappear as time goes on. One must expect that the third Power will in time wish to achieve parity also for the same reasons as have been operating in United States and Soviet Union relations.

Parity will be more quickly reached and therefore disarmament or substantial arms control will be a greater likelihood if the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have already substantially reduced their level of mutual deterrence.

Such an approach to arms control among the most powerful nations runs counter to primary human instincts, which have led to the concept that maximizing the quantity of arms results in increased security. In the nuclear age, however, atomic weapons have become the great equalizer. Beyond a certain level, nuclear weapons do not create deterrence but threaten it. This lesson, it seems, has yet to be learned and the question arises whether it can be learned in time to arrest disaster. The history of the nuclear arms race is one of opportunities for control which, when missed, do not recur. The present opportunity for the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to begin a process of reduction to a much lower level of mutually agreed mutual deterrence will not recur because if they delay, a build-up to match them will in time be undertaken by other nations and then reductions will become impossible for a further and very critical period.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

If the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics initiate actual reductions, not only will the threat perceived by them be radically lessened but the threat perceived by other States will also be lessened, leading to a climate in which further steps, wholly inconceivable now can be considered a possibility.

We have dwelt upon the gravest aspect of the arms race for two reasons: because our very familiarity with it and the difficulties inherent in it have caused us to turn our attention elsewhere; and because it remains the key threat to human survival. In so doing, I do not minimize the rapidly growing threats to world peace deriving from the spread of nuclear weapon production capability throughout the world. The adventures of new countries in the development of nuclear explosive devices and the sale and purchase of nuclear reprocessing plants are a potential calamity for the human race. It is true that we have not had the example of restraint before us; yet that does not and cannot excuse the proliferation of nuclear weapon potential throughout the world. That proliferation may be in the process of becoming a communicable disease, a disease increasingly more difficult to contain and a disease which can have no end other than catastrophe.

The hazards of peaceful proliferation, if we may so term it, have apparently become understood widely only very late. Therefore restraint, renunciation and development of mutual controls and safeguards are essential to security. The concept of international or regional reprocessing centres for spent nuclear fuel, because of its inherent safety factor, has the unqualified support of my Government.

I have up to now been addressing myself to the dynamics of the nuclear arms race and to the necessity for reducing the level of mutual deterrence and with it the perceived threat. But arms reduction is not disarmament and even while we grapple with the immediate and overriding dangers we must at the same time give thought to the longer-term effort incumbent on us. All too seldom have we considered the societal prerequisites for disarmament. We have declared disarmament a goal without reference to the conditions under which it can be achieved. We have dealt with disarmament as a disembodied problem, not bearing on the other factors which surround it.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

In this context, let me raise just one important issue. While substantial arms reduction can be conceived of in the present international situation, disarmament is another matter. Disarmament cannot be conceived of outside the context of an international security system, a system of international law and order which is a viable alternative to national arms and armies. Nations cannot and will not disarm in a vacuum devoid of alternatives and proven methods of and machinery for keeping the peace, settling disputes and, incidentally, guaranteeing disarmament.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Thus, before we can conceive of real disarmament, we must look to our international institutions and in particular to this world Organization and assess the state of international security arrangements and peace-keeping capability. What we see is far from encouraging. We see a world Organization whose membership fails to enforce even the unanimous decisions it takes, which cannot agree on elementary procedures for further peace-keeping and which is reluctant to consider improvements in the capability of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

One conclusion is inescapable: the precursor of disarmament is an alternative and effective international security system. The same intensity of effort must be focused on the development of such a system as is focused on plans for arms cutbacks and, ultimately, disarmament. Otherwise, we are deluding ourselves that disarmament can ever be achieved. Nations will rightly ask: Who is going to protect us? Where will security come from, if not from unilateral force of arms?

The necessity for an effort parallel to disarmament deliberations, to design an effective and agreed international security system which operates through common consent is obvious and fundamental to any real progress in the ending, once and for all, of the unilateral use of armed force.

Turning now to the immediate and specific issues before us, my Government is fully in support of the holding of a special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament. We realize that such a meeting will fall somewhere between a full-fledged world disarmament conference and our annual disarmament discussions here in the First Committee. We believe, therefore, that to be useful and successful, the special session must have limited but specified goals appropriate to its nature. Such a session will provide many advantages, among which are an opportunity for adequate discussion of points such as I have raised all too briefly today about the dynamics and context of the arms race, which require to be more fully understood; an opportunity to see our immediate efforts against the setting of our longer range goals; an opportunity to consider the possible venues in which fruitful negotiations involving all militarily significant States might be conducted; an opportunity for the world public to become more familiar with the problems and challenges which face the world Organization in working for disarmament.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

In the view of my Government, the answers to two important questions will largely decide the effectiveness of the special session. First, will fully adequate preparation be made by the Members for creative participation in the session; and, secondly, will that participation be at a significantly high level? If the answer to these questions is yes, then we believe a very productive session can be expected.

Among the most important contributions in the field of disarmament today are those coming from various especially skilled non-governmental organization sources. I have in mind contributions of such groups as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), from which we have all benefited. It seems important that the basis be laid for appropriate participation in the special session by such qualified groups to which much is owed by the international community. I should add that the super-Powers must be part of that special session.

We are glad to note this year that there appear to be signs of interest from the USSR and possibly also from the United States in support of the concept of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. Indeed, the logic is overwhelmingly in favour of nipping in the bud a naval arms race in the Indian Ocean -- one which would be costly to those involved and threatening to the States in the area and would result in a net decrease in world security. Opportunities to arrest an incipient arms race before it begins are few, and this opportunity must be seized with enthusiasm and vigour, before it disappears.

My Government welcomed the effort to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations in supporting the work of the membership on disarmament. It is axiomatic that the United Nations Disarmament Affairs Division must be enabled to provide all possible support on this the most crucial problem of our times. It is surprising that such improvements have not been undertaken before this time. Now that they have been, my Government fully supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament and urges their rapid implementation.

In my statement in the general debate, we recommended steps which could break the deadlock now over key disarmament problems. We noted the small progress made in small things, and we are grateful for any progress at all, but we are far from satisfied. Surely, it is time for a real, total

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

complete and comprehensive ban on nuclear testing, first by the super-Powers and, then, through extension, by the other nuclear-weapon and nuclear-device nations.

We have called for -- and we reiterate it here -- an "act of high statesmanship" by an appropriate State in declaring a halt to all nuclear tests in all environments, as well as a moratorium on peaceful nuclear explosions, the value of which is now in considerable doubt. Such an action is bound drastically to change the atmosphere in which discussions are taking place and could lead towards a world-wide comprehensive ban on all nuclear tests. Those who chose not to comply would pay a heavy price vis-à-vis world opinion.

We also noted the snail's pace progress towards a ban on the most lethal chemical weapons -- the nerve gases -- and again we recommended action to break the deadlock. Bacteriological (biological) weapons were banished and destroyed as a result of the far-sighted initiatives of a President of the United States, who declared that the United States would not use and would destroy its germ warfare capabilities. That humane action led directly to the successful negotiation of a Treaty banning these deadly weapons and to their destruction. The esteem of the world will go to the first country appropriately to take corresponding action with regard to nerve gas and other lethal chemical weapons, and we do not doubt that the outcome would be a successful treaty, including such verification measures as would provide confidence in the agreement without being unduly onerous to States' parties.

I have spoken by implication about the circumstances attending the second round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II). It appears that, in dealing with details -- and necessarily so -- the SALT negotiators have lost sight of the overwhelming necessity for a swift reduction in nuclear armament and delivery systems to achieve the following ends: first, to salvage the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which depends above all, at this point, on the arrest of the vertical proliferation of ever higher nuclear stockpiles; secondly, to alter radically the atmosphere in which negotiations are taking place, and thus to support the continuation of détente; thirdly, to provide assurances to other concerned parties that the United States and the USSR are serious about halting the arms race and adopting a non-threatening posture; and, fourthly, to prevent the investment of huge new sums in what is from the beginning known to be a "zero-sum" game leading to no advantage.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The less fortunate nations of the world have repeatedly, if gently, pointed out that the sums expended on non-usable, non-consumable military hardware would more than provide for a leap forward in assistance programmes for meeting the goals of the Second Development Decade. The countries that expend money should themselves also expect handsome dividends in money, energy and materials available for human purposes and needs.

Yet, the futile arms race is allowed to consume what we all need and could have. Is it not time that we took real steps to put an end to this folly? At present, total world economic aid is equal to only 6 per cent of military expenditure. The arms race is expensive to the mighty Powers as well as to the poor. The United States ranks only twenty-ninth in the world in terms of available hospital beds, while the Soviet Union ranks twenty-ninth in terms of infant mortality. The arms race is insupportably damaging all aspects of human life and threatening our very existence.

One of the major items not on our agenda concerns the runaway traffic in so-called conventional arms, many of which now involve killing power that is near-nuclear in scope. There was a time when arms traffic consisted of a trickle of cast-off arms of major military Powers. It now comprises not a trickle but a torrent of the most sophisticated and advanced weaponry in today's arsenals, with major Powers competing vigorously as arms salesmen to the world. This is a grave danger. What from experience can we expect the results to be if not sharply increased destructiveness in so-called local wars and the debilitation of nations through an attempt to match weapon for weapon with their neighbours?

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

While the conventional arms race has many facets and some legitimate causes, as well as many which are not, it is in fact an opened artery in the economic life of countries that can ill afford it. And it is a problem which is both complicated and unyielding to simplistic solutions, involving as it does the very fabric of international society. Yet the conventional arms race is a problem that must be faced if every effort at development and economic self-sufficiency is not to be cancelled. This forum has avoided this issue for many years, and does so at its peril. We would urge that members begin to consider approaches to the damping down of conventional arms sales and races, approaches which can be brought to this forum for examination and discussion.

We are pleased that we shall have before us the Secretary-General's report on measurements and reporting for the reduction of military budgets. The United Nations has been lamentably slow -- much slower, indeed, than the League of Nations -- in developing the means to provide needed statistics concerning the arms race. We anticipate, and would support, appropriate institutionalization and implementation of the reporting system outlined in the report of the Secretary-General, in the belief that it can lead to further sensitization of the world community concerning military expenditures, and thus open new doors for their redeployment to human needs -- strengthening the link between disarmament and development, an approach advanced by the Philippine Government.

Disarmament awaits the emergence of a viable world order system providing for international security. But giant steps in arms control need not wait on any other considerations than the political will and desire to achieve them. Each substantial step will improve the atmosphere and prospects for the next. The incentives seem adequate: human survival in the first instance, human betterment in the second.

Let us work toward the end that the appeals of this Assembly be heard and that mankind be given surcease from the ever-present threat of nuclear extinction. Let us, rather, come of age as a race and decide to shift our priorities to life-serving ends.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Iran, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference.

Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran): It is not easy to speak after so distinguished an orator as General Romulo. But my name is on the list of speakers; I am here and I cannot escape; so I shall have to proceed.

It is an honour for me once again to address the First Committee in my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, in order to introduce its report.

I am happy to say that this year again the Ad Hoc Committee has been able to submit to the General Assembly a consensus report in conformity with its mandate, set out in resolution 3469 (XXX).

Before outlining the substance of this year's report, I should like to call the Committee's attention briefly to resolution 3469 (XXX). By this resolution the Committee's previous mandate under resolution 3260 (XXIX) was reaffirmed in its entirety. Furthermore, the composition of the Committee remained unchanged and, as before, the nuclear Powers were invited to co-operate or maintain contact with the Ad Hoc Committee, while enjoying the same rights as other members. Under that provision, France, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union participated in the work of the Committee, while China and the United States maintained contact with it through its Chairman.

Pursuant to resolution 3469 (XXX) this year's report was to include an analytical study of the conclusions contained in the previous year's report (A/10028), as well as any observations and recommendations deemed appropriate with respect to its mandate. Under this renewed mandate the Committee, of course, once again had to give priority to the preparation of its report on the basis of consensus, as has been the case since it was originally established under resolution 3183 (XXVIII). Accordingly, it was decided that the Working Group, established in 1974, should resume its work with the aim of preparing the Committee's draft report.

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

This year the Working Group held 29 meetings, between 10 March and 12 July, under the very able chairmanship of the Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Antonio Elias of Spain. In addition to its formal meetings, the Working Group held informal consultations which greatly facilitated its task of arriving at a consensus report. I wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Mr. Elias and his colleagues in the Working Group, who laboured so diligently to provide the Committee with a preliminary draft report.

It will be observed that in this third report of the Ad Hoc Committee there are five chapters, the first being a short introductory one. In addition, the annex to the report, compiled from verbatim and summary records, comprises the pertinent views of Member States on the world disarmament conference as expressed since the publication of the last report of the Ad Hoc Committee.

In its second chapter the report undertakes a rather detailed review of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee since its inception. It notes the main features of the Committee's previous reports to the General Assembly, contained in documents A/9628 and A/10028. It further recalls the operating principle that the Committee's decisions be adopted by consensus, noting that this has made possible the involvement of all five nuclear-weapon States in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee -- a feature that is noteworthy in the circumstances now prevailing and given the basic divergence of opinion among the nuclear-weapon States on the convening of a world disarmament conference.

The report goes on to provide a succinct but accurate synthesis of the views of Governments regarding the convening of a world disarmament conference, as contained in the Ad Hoc Committee's previous reports as well as in the annex to the present report. It is necessary perhaps to dwell briefly here on the various views that the Committee has been able to identify.

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

First of all, a large group of States demands the convening of a world disarmament conference as soon as possible, after due preparation, with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States. Those States are of the opinion that such a conference could approve guidelines for universal disarmament and for the utilization of resources freed through disarmament. That same group of States would agree to the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament if it should become evident that a world disarmament conference would not be possible in the near future.

Other States have come out in favour of negotiation and implementation of concrete disarmament measures through a world disarmament conference and consider that this might stimulate action in other international forums.

A third group decisively supports the holding of a world disarmament conference, maintaining that the matter assumes greater relevance each year, that political conditions for the convening of a conference are ripe, that preparatory steps should include, above all, the precise definition of questions to be discussed at the conference and that issues advanced as preconditions of a conference could be more appropriately dealt with by the conference itself.

Furthermore, some States maintain the view that the Ad Hoc Committee has completed its study of the attitudes of States and that the General Assembly should at the present session take a decision on the appropriate course of action leading to the convocation of a world disarmament conference.

Another viewpoint is that the Ad Hoc Committee should draw the attention of the General Assembly to the fact that, despite the uniqueness of certain features of its work and despite collective efforts undertaken to achieve progress, the Committee feels that the mechanism it provides, while significant, is far from adequate.

Continuing its review, the report notes that one nuclear-weapon State holds the view that in current circumstances it is not the lack of a forum but the lack of political agreement that creates the obstacle to disarmament and that a world disarmament conference would probably hinder rather than assist the process of reaching concrete arms-control agreements. Hence, in its opinion, it would be premature to convene or prepare for a world disarmament conference. Another nuclear-weapon State would agree to a conference or preparation for a conference

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

only if all nuclear-weapon States, and in particular the two nuclear-weapon Powers, would undertake an obligation (a) not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and (b) to end all forms of their military presence on the territory of other countries.

As we all know, resolution 3469 (XXX) directed that the main focus of this year's report should be on elucidation, through an analytical study, of the conclusions contained in the Committee's previous report.

Turning now to the chapter dealing with this analysis, we find that the Ad Hoc Committee elaborated the following points.

The concept of a world disarmament conference enjoys wide support, but its realization requires adequate preparation and universal participation including especially that of the nuclear-weapon States. At the same time, there is a basic divergence of opinion among the nuclear-weapon States with regard to the timing and conditions for the convening of such a conference. Furthermore, some States consider that the aim of the conference could be to provide the United Nations with an effective disarmament system.

As far as the main objectives envisaged for a world disarmament conference are concerned, these range between two specific models. In the first place, there are those who think that the purpose of the conference should be to arrive at agreements on concrete measures of disarmament. Some States, on the other hand, perceive a different function for a world disarmament conference, which would be to streamline machinery, propose guidelines and give impetus to disarmament negotiations. In this connexion it is acknowledged that the various aspects of the conference and its preparation would vary according to the specific functions assigned to it. But, regardless of the scope and function of such a conference, adequate preparation and the participation of all nuclear-weapon and militarily significant States are deemed essential, while in one view certain preconditions must be satisfied.

The final paragraph of this chapter refers to the outcome of the Ad Hoc Committee's latest series of consultations with the nuclear-weapon States. Those consultations have revealed that the USSR believes that

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

a world disarmament conference should be convened immediately. On the other hand, the United States continues to believe that political conditions are not yet ripe for such a conference, and China's position calls for fulfilment of the preconditions I have already mentioned and which are noted in the report. Finally, France and the United Kingdom feel that the conference could play a useful role in the field of disarmament provided it is convened with the participation of all nuclear-weapon and militarily significant States and after adequate preparation.

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

Moving on to the concluding chapter of the report, on observations and recommendations concerning the Committee's mandate, we note the assessment that there is a general desire among a number of States to see progress in the field of disarmament, and that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support, though with varying degrees of emphasis and differences of opinion regarding conditions and certain aspects related to the question of convening the conference.

Among its observations, the report points out that no consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference has yet emerged among the nuclear-weapon States. The Ad Hoc Committee, therefore, believes that efforts towards the creation of appropriate conditions for the convening of such a conference should continue, and that opportunities conducive to the achievement of progress in disarmament should be fully explored.

With respect to its future, the Ad Hoc Committee has made no substantive recommendation, other than to point out to the General Assembly that it may wish to examine the advisability of the continuation of its work on the world disarmament conference.

If I may be permitted to say so, it is only natural to expect that the mandate of the Committee will be renewed only if clear-cut guidelines emerge as to how and in what general direction we in this Committee wish our efforts in the General Assembly to be channelled.

Before concluding, I think it is not inappropriate for me to refer to a very welcome development concerning the time frame within which our work was completed. The Committee this year produced its report within some 25 fewer meetings than were originally scheduled. And I am proud to say that we were able to eliminate the need for a September session of the Ad Hoc Committee. That session would have coincided with the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, and thus added to the work-load of the Organization during a critical period.

While I feel that this overview of the different elements of the report and the attempted clarification I have offered in presenting it to you should assist members in their consideration of it, I stress that they are not intended in any way to modify the actual language of the report, which is

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

the product of a difficult and very delicate balance. By its objectivity and precise use of neutral language, the report, I believe, reflects accurately the evolution of the situation and the current state of thinking regarding the question of convening a world disarmament conference. This it does without the use of unnecessary words, and without any hint of either undue optimism or unnecessary pessimism.

We are all acutely aware that the problems which have proved to be inevitable stumbling blocks in the past are still with us. We also know that the intricate complexities besetting this question are not about to disappear. Progress will come about only as a result of constructive action and a realistic approach. And it is in this spirit that I have tried to render an impartial presentation of the report prepared by the Committee, in the hope that my presentation will assist the General Assembly and the members of this Committee in taking the appropriate action required.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Iran, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, Ambassador Hoveyda, for his presentation of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. I would like to congratulate him on behalf of the First Committee, for his very efficient direction of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. I share his hope that the report just presented by him will assist and, may I add, further stimulate the discussion in this Committee on agenda item 40, pertaining to the work on the disarmament conference.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to inform the Committee that, in view of the lack of speakers, I shall request the Secretariat to cancel tomorrow afternoon's meeting. We do, however, have a fairly full list of speakers for tomorrow morning's meeting.

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

I wish also to draw representatives' attention to the letter of the President of the General Assembly of 29 October 1976 addressed to heads of delegations, in which he appeals to all delegations to co-operate in ensuring punctuality of attendance at all meetings of the plenary Assembly and of the main Committees. The President of the General Assembly draws attention to the fact that:

"The record of time lost due to delay in starting meetings of the plenary and of the Main Committees makes disturbing reading, as hours lost mean a financial waste, which the United Nations can ill afford at this stage."

He goes on to say:

"I am confident that I can rely on the co-operation of all delegations in this matter".

I can only say that I fully subscribe to that appeal by the President of the General Assembly, and I am confident that I can count on the co-operation of the members of this Committee in this respect.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.