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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. SIBAHI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): The question of disarmament is one of the most important matters that has preoccupied and is still of concern to the United Nations. It is of interest to the whole world because it concerns the restoration of peace and world security based on justice, law and equality. Disarmament and all related matters, such as the arms race, the negotiations on strategic arms limitations, the cessation of nuclear tests and the complete or partial prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction or new systems of such weapons as well as the denuclearization of vast areas of the world, are closely connected with world security and peace and are priority objectives of the United Nations, whether considered by the General Assembly or by the political committees in regular or special sessions.

If we place all these questions within the context of the policies of Member States and, especially, of the great Powers, particularly in the context of the cold war and peaceful coexistence, where we must apply the concepts of understanding and détente, we note the difficulties inherent in the solution of these problems, including all their ramifications and positive and negative consequences for world peace. This importance is made evident when the policy backgrounds and policy lines pursued are the concern of two great camps which in our contemporary world take all the political initiatives, I mean the peace-loving group made up of the Soviet Union and the third world, which we normally call progressive and socialist, on the one hand, and the side constituted by the United States and its followers, which we call the Western world. We say this because each of these two groups envisages the principle of peaceful coexistence and the concept of understanding and détente from a different point of view. While the Soviet Union, for its part, considers that peaceful coexistence, détente and entente are an objective necessity which should replace the cold war or the hot war, or as a doctrine that should replace that of regional and international blocs, the United States, for its part, considers that it is necessary to implement a strategic plan and apply a flexible political strategy designed to preserve the appearance of balance of power, whereas in actual fact, the United States seeks only to maintain its political and economic domination wherever possible.

(Mr. Sibahi, Syrian Arab Republic)

Bearing in mind this political background, what we are interested in in Syria, first and foremost, as a small country of the third world and as a developing country and member of the non-aligned group ... what we are essentially concerned with, I say, is world peace and security in the present and in the future for the generations to come. We wish all the developing countries politically and economically to have faith in the possibility of creating a different world from the one we live in today, where there is so much inequality. In other words, what we want is a world living in peace and security, a world where nations and peoples will see their sovereignty over their territories strengthened and their national security ensured through the liquidation of colonialism, the elimination of racism and zionism, and the guarantee of the rights of peoples struggling to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and its principles, and by virtue of the decisions taken by the international community. My delegation will support any resolution aimed at the achievement of these objectives which represent the fruit of the discussions in this Committee.

The Political Committee has discussed the 18 items on the agenda relating to disarmament. In view of the direct relationship between all these items ... and my delegation supports this procedure ... a large number of delegations took part in the general debate, in fact, about a hundred delegations at the last session. We hope that all these countries will participate to the same extent at the current session. By and large there is a general feeling according to which disarmament has become and should be one of the primary conditions for the establishment of world peace and security and a necessity for the achievement of economic, social and technological development of the whole of the international community. It should be pointed out that the items of the agenda increase in number from year to year, as do the resolutions adopted at each session. On the other hand, we note that the progress achieved in the field of disarmament is very slow and that, very often, negotiations and talks between the two powerful camps, the Soviet Union and the United States of America, are deadlocked. My delegation and my country consider that, through those negotiations and by reason of the existing divergence of views, the time has come for the international community to consider seriously the question of disarmament in a world conference which should be convened to guarantee the principle of universality and participation by all countries, because

(Mr. Sibahi, Syrian Arab Republic)

general and complete disarmament, and in particular, nuclear disarmament, are essential elements for world peace and security. The world community must endeavour to achieve this objective and therefore my delegation endorses the idea of convening a special session in 1978 for the preparation of that world conference, the discussions of which would be limited to disarmament matters. My delegation wishes therefore to associate itself with the non-aligned countries which have submitted a draft resolution in accordance with the decision of the Colombo summit conference. I hope the Secretariat will take note of the fact that my delegation now co-sponsors that draft resolution.

The work of the Special Committee on Disarmament has shown that the meetings held in 1976 have not yielded conclusive results as regards the fulfilment of the task entrusted to that Committee. Despite the fact that the wishes of regional groups were taken into account, two nuclear States at least refused to take part in the discussions of that Committee, if only indirectly and through the Chairman and Rapporteur of that Committee. In addition, each of the countries participating in the Committee has taken a very strict position differing only very slightly from the positions they stated at the previous meeting of the Committee. This is perhaps the reason why the work of the Committee progresses so slowly, whereas we have seen that it is necessary to create new conditions that would make it possible to convene that conference in the light of the directives that could be given by the General Assembly and on the basis of its recommendations.

Syria, although it is not a regular member of the Committee on Disarmament, none the less attaches great importance to the work and discussions of that Committee. We are also keenly interested in the work of the working group and we feel that participation in the work of the Sub-Committee by all members of the international community will make it possible for us to break the deadlock besetting that Committee for so many years, especially if we are able to convene an international conference, since disarmament matters are closely related with international peace and security and call for participation by all countries.

Are the United Nations statistics right when they state that disarmament expenditures exceed \$US 300 billion a year --- in other words, \$1 million per minute --- whereas over 1.2 billion human beings live in poverty, go hungry and

(Mr. Sibahi, Syrian Arab Republic)

suffer from disease? Is it true that military expenditures in 1975 are equal to the national gross product of 65 Latin American, African and Asian countries? If this is true --- and I assume it is, as borne out by the different statements made here --- if this is the situation, would it not be desirable to reserve one part of these funds for purposes that would ensure the well-being and prosperity of the whole of mankind?

(Mr. Sibahi, Syrian Arab Republic)

The representative of Syria stated in the General Assembly: "One of the foremost duties of our Organization is to implement the transfer of part of the funds spent by the super-Powers on the arms race to development purposes." (A/31/PV.19, p. 26). This was the appeal launched by the non-aligned countries, an appeal that should be heeded by all.

Would it not be preferable that the time and efforts devoted by the great Powers to spreading terror in the military field, this competition designed to create new weapons of mass destruction should be transformed into a sincere desire to put an end to the causes of this arms race? Military superiority could not prevent war or establish peace. Quite to the contrary, in the past military superiority has led to national chauvinism, to desires for domination, and it was thus that Hitler and Mussolini during the Second World War attempted to impose their domination in the hope that they would become the masters of Europe, Africa and the whole world. But in the end they failed in their effort. Could not military superiority in the present and in the future create greater tension and lead to a war of total destruction, which would destroy the human species? All the more so since technological progress and the fact that man has reached the moon would increase the capacity of nuclear weapons.

Rabelais said in the sixteenth century that science without conscience is but the ruin of the soul. This is an idea we should bear in mind at all times when we think of creating a new world such as the one we aspire to. It is for this reason that we must save ourselves from such illusions and, in a world conference, we must try to find the reasons for this arms race. In fact those reasons are already well known to all, and previous speakers have shed light on all their aspects. In our view, in order to create a better world and to achieve economic and social progress in the world, all peoples must feel that they live in peace and security after having been subjected to foreign domination for so many centuries and deprived of their right to dignity, sovereignty and freedom.

In this question of the interaction between these two factors, disarmament and peace and security, my delegation would like to endorse the conclusions of the sixth special session of the General Assembly held in 1974, which decided to establish a new economic order based on justice, equity, sovereignty, independence

(Mr. Sibahi, Syrian Arab Republic)

and co-operation among States. We also support the conclusions of the seventh special session held in 1975, which drew up the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. The decisions taken by these two special sessions, which were reaffirmed by the decisions of the Fourth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and by the Declarations of the Fifth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries as well as by the decisions of the Conference in Mexico, have shown the course that we should follow for the establishment of economic and social security in order to create that better international community to which the whole of mankind aspires on the threshold of this new era in the life of our Organization.

Within the context of political security, we believe that we can never achieve these objectives unless the international community puts an end to tension, aggression and illegal occupation that we see in many regions of the world --- in Asia, Africa and Latin America. I will leave it to my colleagues representing all these regions to speak about these aspects of the problem but none the less I think I should say something about the reasons for tension in the Middle East. And in any event we associate ourselves with everything that our colleagues may say concerning the need to put an end to such a situation.

Since 1948 the Middle East has become a hotbed of tension threatening international peace and security as a result of the continued aggression perpetrated by the Zionist régime against the Arab people in Palestine. These acts of aggression reached a peak in 1967 when Israel occupied the territory of three Arab States, Syria, Egypt and Jordan, and continued to occupy that territory in violation of the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law. During these acts of aggression Israel did not hesitate to resort to napalm, chemical and bacteriological weapons which were banned under international agreements. Israel is proud of possessing nuclear weapons and declares its intention of using them in due time. Israel states that it possesses nuclear warheads and it has refused to sign treaties and conventions prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Sibahi, Syrian Arab Republic)

Quite recently, Israel obtained from the United States of America weapons of mass destruction which had never been supplied by the United States to its allies in Europe. And this happened during the visit of the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Allon, to the United States last year.

Israel continues to violate human rights in the occupied Arab territories in order to strengthen its occupation. Israel did not sign the fourth Geneva Convention on the Treatment of Civilians. This area of tension in the Middle East, with all the complications it entails for the region, prevents the attainment of the conditions we all seek in order to ensure man's well-being. Thus tension in our region continues to threaten world peace and security.

(Mr. Sibahi, Syrian Arab Republic)

This was mentioned by many leaders from many countries in the course of their statements before the General Assembly at the beginning of this thirty-first session in connexion with the Middle East crisis, basing themselves on the responsibility incumbent on the international community to create that better world to which we all aspire in peace and security.

My delegation feels that there is no need for additional resolutions or recommendations, since the United Nations and this Committee, in particular, have already adopted a large number of resolutions. At the thirtieth session of the General Assembly alone, this Committee and the General Assembly adopted 25 resolutions concerning 20 items on the agenda relating to disarmament. Those resolutions were adopted either unanimously or by consensus. I repeat, there is no longer any need for additional resolutions.

The Foreign Minister of India, Mr. Chavan, spoke of that phenomenon of "routine" in the United Nations, and in the General Assembly in particular. On 4 October last he stated:

"... the expectations of developing countries have been clearly set out in previous sessions of the General Assembly and in various other conferences. But we still seem to be convening one conference after another for no ostensible reason other than to repeat and reaffirm earlier resolutions." (A/31/PV.15, p. 36)

I repeat once again: we do not need any additional resolutions. What is lacking is the political will -- the sincere desire to implement existing resolutions and recommendations so that they shall not remain a mere dead-letter or pious wishes.

In addressing this appeal to the representatives of all the countries of the third world, I also appeal to the representatives of the great Powers and of the developed countries, because it is through concerted effort that we shall achieve peace and security in the world. We must translate into reality the contents of the resolutions and recommendations adopted in the past.

With these few words we have attempted to contribute to this debate on the question of disarmament and hope later to be able to participate in this discussion when we consider the draft resolution relating to each of the items on the agenda.

Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic) (interpretation from Russian):

The demand for a halt to the arms race and effective arms limitation and disarmament measures is meeting with ever-widening support. More than ever before, the peoples of the world are expecting steps towards the halting of the arms race, which is assuming ever broader dimensions, and towards averting the threat to international peace and security which flows therefrom. Therefore the Organization's responsibility has inevitably grown -- primarily that of the First Committee -- for attaining tangible progress in resolving the problems facing this forum.

We are gratified that in the course of the general debate many delegations stressed the great importance of the present session of the General Assembly for the attainment of further progress in disarmament. We agree that disarmament is becoming more than ever a key element in the creation of peace and the development of peaceful co-operation among States. This indissoluble link between the preservation of peace, the development of international peaceful co-operation and disarmament measures was made clear in the course of the discussion of the proposal of the Soviet Union for the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

The process of détente would be limited if the progress made in this regard were not to be supported by broad measures for halting the arms race and bringing about disarmament. In United Nations documents, and in the course of the debate, sufficient examples have already been adduced to show that the fueling of the arms race is leading to the expenditure of material, spiritual and financial resources, and the burdens which flow from the arms race should be removed from mankind.

Unfortunately, we cannot help noting that the military industrial complex in certain countries, invoking an alleged need for preserving and restoring a balance of power, has been developing ever more modern and sophisticated weapons, thus fueling the arms race.

Moreover, the opponents of disarmament measures, in order to justify their increasing and astronomic military expenditures, are strenuously asserting that it is necessary to arm because the USSR and other socialist States have allegedly considerably increased their military expenditures.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

It suffices to compare a few figures to realize that these assertions are devoid of the slightest foundation. It is a fact, for example, that the annual military expenditures of the European NATO States actually doubled from 1970 to 1975. In the same period, the expenditures of the USSR for defence purposes were actually reduced.

The profound concern for radical measures to halt the arms race and to reduce military expenditures is woven into the very fabric of the socialist system. In the socialist countries no one would stand to gain from fueling the arms race for the sake of profit. Broad programmes for the development of a peaceful economy and the further enhancement of the well-being of the people of socialist States -- these programmes are well known -- can only be carried out in peaceful circumstances. The more stable the peace, and the less we have to spend on defence, the sooner we shall be able to resolve our major economic problems. Therefore there is no peace-loving and socialist State which could possibly have any interest in increasing its military expenditures.

For this reason the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist United Party of Germany, Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, stated on 17 September of this year:

"We favour the implementation of effective measures for limiting armaments and bringing about disarmament on the basis of the principle of avoiding anything which might be prejudicial to equality of security. We are also firmly in favour of supplementing political détente by military détente. Many present and future problems would be more easily and more speedily resolved if the vast resources which are now being invested in armaments were used instead for peaceful purposes."

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

This approach entirely determines our position with regard to all proposals and initiatives discussed in this Committee.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic believes that the memorandum submitted by the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Andrei Gromyko, at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly on questions relating to a cessation of the arms race and disarmament, is indeed a most timely initiative. This memorandum, in the light of contemporary conditions, facilitates the attainment of specific agreements on arms limitation and disarmament. The Soviet proposal, based on the programme of peace, adopted by the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, is a comprehensive, realistic programme on arms limitation and disarmament, and indicates concrete ways and means of solving the high priority problems in this area. The attainment of mutual agreement is facilitated by the fact that the Soviet document takes into account the positions of a number of States and is notable for its high degree of flexibility.

We whole-heartedly support this programme and we are convinced that it will serve to encourage a solution to the problems we face.

In accordance with the views and desires expressed by so many States, questions of halting the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament have now assumed the highest priority. In view of the large stockpiles of these weapons and their tremendous destructive force, their removal from the arsenals of States is one of the most important tasks towards achieving complete and general disarmament. We have noted with satisfaction that the memorandum of the USSR on the halting of the arms race and disarmament indicates specific and realistic means of halting the nuclear arms race, and of reducing and subsequently eliminating nuclear weapons. We share the view that for this purpose what is necessary, first of all, is a cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons and the supply of these weapons to armed forces. What is also necessary is a cessation of the development and manufacture of new types and new systems of such weapons. The use of the nuclear materials and power which would thereby be released for peaceful purposes would substantially facilitate provision of States with energy and the development of their peace economy.

Since all nuclear Powers have been called upon to participate jointly with interested non-nuclear States in working out concrete ways of resolving this problem

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

in practice, the security interests of all participants are taken into account and no one would obtain any one-sided advantages while everyone would stand to gain. The prohibition of all nuclear weapon testing should be one of the next steps aimed at halting the nuclear arms race. On this issue a wide-ranging exchange of views has already been taking place here in the United Nations and in the Disarmament Committee in Geneva. Last year, the United Nations General Assembly session, by an overwhelming majority, approved resolution 3478 (XXX) which called for talks on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon testing and the conclusion of a treaty on this subject. We noted with satisfaction that the Conference of Non-Aligned States in Colombo also heard insistent calls for a cessation of all nuclear weapon tests.

Any further delay in beginning talks on the part of certain nuclear States seems to us unjustifiable. Recently there has been an appreciable improvement in the conditions for holding such talks. This is shown particularly by the United States/USSR agreement on peaceful nuclear explosions signed on 28 May of this year, an agreement which could facilitate the attainment of agreement on the total prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. Once again, the USSR displayed flexibility and genuine readiness to come to an agreement and stated in its memorandum its readiness to participate in the search for a solution to the control problem which would be acceptable to all. This rebuts the reservation whereby certain States hitherto have attempted to justify their negative attitude.

We hope that the thirty-first session of the General Assembly will reconfirm its demand for the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests, and we appeal primarily to those nuclear States which so far have refused to take part in such talks to end their resistance and to heed the wish of the majority of Member States of the United Nations.

In the interests of limiting the nuclear arms race, we are ready to support all further measures which would promote the strengthening of the régime of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, we are in favour of improving and establishing such obligations with regard to the exporting of nuclear equipment as would make impossible any further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic
Republic)

It is obviously necessary, however, to broaden the role and functions of the International Atomic Energy Agency so that it can act in accordance with its growing responsibilities in view of the growing danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons which has arisen as a result of the export of nuclear equipment and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

We call on all States which export nuclear material and nuclear equipment and technology to bear constantly in mind their responsibility for observance of the principle of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We cannot permit a situation where, because of narrow commercial interests, the go-ahead is given for the proliferation of nuclear weapons so that new nuclear States can spring up. It is very important, in order to strengthen the régime of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, for all States, without exception, to adhere to the non-proliferation treaty.

After the thirtieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, particular attention was focused on the preparation of a convention on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons in accordance with resolution 3479 (XXX).

We continue to attach the highest priority to the performance of this task. We consider it a step forward that the Committee on Disarmament has embarked, with the participation of experts, on the discussion of defining the scope of any future agreement. We are in favour of continuing this work and we do not share the view repeatedly expressed by certain States that this is all a matter of a hypothetical weapon which should be banned only when its development has achieved a definite specific level. Experience has shown us that it is much more difficult to ban a weapon once it has already found its way into the arsenals of States. In the face of the precipitous development of science and technology and the subsequent possibility of the short-term creation of new forms of weapons of mass destruction, we favour the idea that the General Assembly of the United Nations should take further measures to put this initiative into effect, that is to say, the adoption of a convention.

It is an important matter of principle that the Western industrial, highly developed States should likewise pay more attention to this matter and to make a constructive contribution to the adoption of such a convention.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

In so far as concerns the banning of chemical weapons, we remain in favour of a comprehensive prohibition of these weapons and we think that the draft treaty submitted by the Socialist States in 1972 is a good basis for talks. In view of the refusal of certain States to agree with the comprehensive prohibition, we favour the conclusion of partial agreements. Our readiness to help to achieve the conclusion of partial agreements on limiting the arms race is also reflected in our approach to the draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. We, the German Democratic Republic, are in favour of complete and general disarmament under strict international control. But since it is unrealistic to suppose that this could be achieved in one fell swoop, we should approach the matter step by step, but consistently and firmly. Our experience has shown us that with the slogan "All or nothing" we cannot make progress in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. And we use this as our guideline in our approach to the draft convention of the Disarmament Committee on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of means of environmental modification techniques.

It is well known that the German Democratic Republic is one of the sponsors of the proposal submitted by the USSR in 1975. In the course of preparing this convention it emerged that in the interest of achieving agreement what was necessary was the readiness on the part of all parties to make compromises.

In our view, a decisive factor is the fact that the existing draft convention does constitute progress. This draft convention prohibits the extension of the arms race to new and unusual ways of waging war and is designed to strengthen trust among States and thus to facilitate the achievement of agreement in other areas. After all, it cannot be in the interests of those who favour submitting the draft of this convention for reconsideration by the Committee on Disarmament that the entry into force of this treaty is thereby delayed and that the States which enjoy the necessary conditions for this should abuse the absence of such an agreement for the purposes of stepping up the arms race in this field. Therefore, my delegation would request the sponsors of the draft resolution, which is a hindrance to the speedy implementation of the existing draft convention, not to insist on voting on their draft resolution, particularly because, in statements which have been made on this subject these States have said that in principle they are in favour of banning military or any other hostile use of means of influencing the natural environment.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

We are firmly in favour of limiting the arms race and welcome any progress which can be made in this direction; we are therefore in favour of broad support for the draft convention that has been submitted. My delegation agrees with the arguments adduced by the representative of Finland, Mr. Pastinen, in his statement on 5 November of this year, and has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution proposed by Finland, which we hope will be approved in this Committee and in the General Assembly.

The scope and difficulty of the tasks involved in achieving general and complete disarmament require a comprehensive approach. The German Democratic Republic therefore firmly favours the convening of a world disarmament conference. We continue to attach the greatest importance to preparations for this conference, in which all States should participate, and we note with satisfaction that the idea of holding a world disarmament conference is meeting with ever wider support.

The conference of non-aligned countries in Colombo for its part called upon States to agree, as soon as possible, on convening a world disarmament conference, which would contribute to the solution of the fundamental problems of general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

We agree with the recommendation of the Colombo conference that a special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations should be held on disarmament, particularly because the non-aligned States have proposed an agenda which would include an item on the convening of a world conference on disarmament. A special session of the Assembly cannot replace a world disarmament conference, but it should facilitate the convening of such a conference.

We are prepared to participate constructively in preparing for and holding a special session of the General Assembly on problems of disarmament

My delegation would like to pay a tribute to the work and efforts of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Convening of a World Disarmament Conference. It believes that the mandate of this Committee should be renewed once again by the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

The report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, submitted to the First Committee, testifies to the active and intensive work of that body in 1976. No one can deny that progress was made on a number of issues. Although that progress is still inadequate, we nevertheless have renewed confirmation that the Committee on Disarmament is a representative and effective organ for conducting talks and working on agreements for the cessation of the arms race and disarmament. We are sure that this body could discharge its important functions better if all States, by their political determination and by their readiness to achieve agreement on effective measures for disarmament, were to offer more active support for its efforts.

In conclusion, I should like to stress that the delegation of the German Democratic Republic is prepared to participate constructively in dealing with all disarmament problems. We shall support all steps which may promote the achievement of effective disarmament measures and we intend, in the course of the debate, to set forth our views on other items on the agenda also.

Mr. HUANG (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese Government's consistent position and views on the question of disarmament are well known to all. Here I would like to elaborate further on certain aspects of this question.

In our view, in discussing the question of disarmament, one must at no time deviate from the general international situation. What are the characteristics of the current international situation? As Chairman Mao Tsetung pointed out, the current international situation is characterized by great disorder under heaven, and it is excellent. As a result of the further sharpening of all the basic contradictions in the world, the world situation has been in a state of great turmoil. On the one hand, there are the rise of the third world, the constant elevation of the political consciousness of the third world countries and the world people against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism and the irresistible surge of revolutionary struggles. On the other hand, there is the intensified rivalry for hegemony between the two super-Powers, which has spread to all parts of the globe. The international situation has grown more tense. It can be seen clearly that in the present world the factors for both revolution and war are visibly increasing.

(Mr. Huang, China)

The rhetoric about "détente" cannot cover up the stark reality. Let us not delve into the distant past. The development over the past year shows that the rivalry between the two super-Powers, far from mitigating, has been further aggravated. Europe is the strategic focus of contention between the Soviet Union and the United States for world hegemony. Despite the European Security Conference, which was meant for appeasement and concessions, the Soviet Union has not shown any restraint in its wild ambitions, but has become even more rampant. It has kept on stepping up its military threat and political subversion against Western Europe. People can see that over the past year the Soviet Union has been increasing its troops and replenishing its arms equipment in Central Europe, steadily building up its aggressive posture in a sabre-rattling way. It has been stepping up its military pressure against northern Europe, frequently encroaching upon the territorial sea and air-space of the Nordic countries, and it has sent its task fleet to the North Sea in an attempt to control the Baltic Sea and the Barents Sea, thereby ensuring its capability to disrupt the sea lanes to the Atlantic. It is accelerating the readjustment of the command system within the Warsaw Treaty Organization and expanding its fleet in the Mediterranean, poking its nose into southern Europe and the Middle East to sow dissension and fish in troubled waters, in an attempt to create a situation of encircling Western Europe from the northern and southern flanks and placing it under crossfire.

(Mr. Huang, China)

What is more, it is carrying out expansion everywhere in its rivalry with the other super-Power for world hegemony under the signboard of "extending détente to all the continents". Shortly after the conclusion of the European Security Conference, it has reached out its grasping hands to southern Africa in an active endeavour to build up places of strategic importance capable of controlling sea lanes on the south Atlantic. While intensifying its military expansion in the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, it has stretched out its tentacles to South-East Asia, the South Pacific, the Atlantic and Latin America to seek a growing number of new footholds in its attempt to expand spheres of influence.

In these circumstances, it goes without saying that its stuff of "making détente irreversible" and "complementing political détente with military détente" is mere deceptive talk. It would be more realistic to change them into "making rivalry for hegemony irreversible" and "covering up military expansion with rhetoric about détente".

In fact, the rhetoric about détente is used by the Soviet representatives at the United Nations and in other forums merely for others to listen to, whereas they did say something honest elsewhere or within their own circles. Did not the Soviet chieftains clamour that the Soviet Union is "on a historic offensive" "along the entire front of global confrontation"? They also said that one must be aware not only of the "defensive functions" of the Warsaw Treaty Organization but of the need to launch "an extensive and actual general attack" outward "backed by military might". While rigging up once again a deceitful eight-point "peace programme" at the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union held not long ago, they could not refrain from declaring that they "have to reckon, in one way or another, with the state of affairs in virtually every spot on the globe" and that "détente in no way means the freezing of the status quo". Behind the rhetoric of détente, they have been carrying out all sorts of activities of arms expansion and war preparations, aggression and expansion, and sometimes they did make some candid remarks of confession.

Does not all this offer food for deep thought? The facts fully show that social-imperialism is the most dangerous source of war in the present world. As rightly pointed out by the representatives of certain countries, "détente" is mere deceptive empty talk and no country should "ever be duped by the empty talk about peace and lose sight of the global rivalry for power".

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In order to contend for world hegemony, the two super-Powers are bound to step up their arms expansion and arms race. That super-Power which shouts that it "is doing all it can to achieve progress along the road leading to general and complete disarmament" is actually "doing all it can" to press forward at an unprecedented pace along the road leading to "general and complete arms expansion". The Soviet leaders have extolled to the skies the so-called "peace programme" of their 24th Party Congress. But as a matter of fact, the five years since the production of the "peace programme" of the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union are precisely years during which the Soviet Union has been engaged in ever more frenzied arms expansion.

The Soviet nuclear arsenal has not been reduced in the least. On the contrary, Soviet strategic nuclear arms have greatly exceeded those of the other super-Power in quantity. At the same time, it is exerting great efforts to develop and deploy new-type intercontinental MIRVs and medium-range ballistic missiles, attempting to seize an all-round nuclear superiority. Soviet conventional armed strength is also developing rapidly with a drastic increase in the quantity of its tanks, artillery and military aircraft and a constant improvement in their quality as well. Its armed forces have already increased to over 4 million. The speed of its naval development is even more startling, and the total tonnage of its fleet has multiplied rapidly. Not long ago, its first aircraft carrier sailed into the Mediterranean and the Atlantic for a show of force. Its fleets have been active in all the oceans of the globe, undisguisedly pushing the gunboat policy everywhere. A Soviet military chieftain openly declared that "the Soviet navy always maintains that rivalry for supremacy over the sea is not the purpose, but a prerequisite for dominating the world".

This year, the Soviet leaders are raising another uproar, now over a new "peace programme" put forward at the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But it was at this Congress that a Soviet leader clamoured that the Soviet Union would "do everything to have the armed forces of the Soviet Union provided with all the necessary means for fulfilling their responsible tasks". Soviet military chieftains also clamoured that they wanted to strengthen

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the fighting power of the armed forces and to stress the development of offensive, mobile weapons with a powerful striking force.

Now people can see that, although the nuclear and conventional armed strength of the Soviet Union has long greatly exceeded the needs of its self-defence, it is still stepping up its all-round arms expansion. If this is not for outward expansion and for preparing to launch a new war of aggression, what other purpose can it serve? As the representatives of some third world countries have pointed out penetratingly, if all these weapons are for the purpose of defence, then where are the aggressors?

In face of the aggressive posture of the Soviet Union, the other super-Power, unwilling to lag behind, is increasing its military expenditures and stepping up its military build-up and the development of new weapons. While the SALT talks between the two super-Powers are going on in a marathon fashion, the so-called backfire bombers, cruise missiles and other new-type weapons are being manufactured and tested at an accelerated pace, and both sides are improving and increasing their offensive strategic nuclear power, giving impetus to a new round of the arms race. As a matter of fact, the Strategic Arms "Limitation" Talks have become a fig-leaf for covering up the "promotion" of strategic arms development. With the intensified contention between the two super-Powers for hegemony, the arms race between them can only grow in intensity and escalate without let-up.

Since the super-Powers are bent on desperate arms expansion, why should they, particularly the Soviet Union, engage in such high-sounding talk about disarmament? Superficially this seems self-contradictory, but in point of fact their words and deeds are mutually complementary. Like all aggressors in history, they cry out for disarmament precisely because they are going all out for arms expansion. Their shout for disarmament is for the very purpose of covering up their intensified arms expansion. The time when they are most vociferous in clamouring for "détente" and "disarmament" is exactly the time when they are stepping up arms expansion and preparing for new aggression. The most dangerous source of war today is precisely the biggest peace swindler of our time.

(Mr. Huang, China)

For many years now, the Soviet Union has been engaged in all kinds of acts of aggression and expansion in various parts of the world. But it comes every year to the United Nations to preach peace loudly. Having done this, it carries on its evil doings with redoubled efforts. Its performance this year is even more brazen. During the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly, Mr. Gromyko devoted three fourths of his speech to prattle about détente and disarmament, and even pretentiously put forward a so-called proposal on the "conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations". He knocked together all kinds of fraudulent disarmament proposals which he had peddled here over the years, and which had long been thrown into the garbage heap, to produce a so-called "memorandum on ending the arms race and disarmament". He tried to sell it to the Members of the United Nations, boasting that this "memorandum" was a so-called "reflection of the sincere efforts of the Soviet Union".

We have already exposed and criticized the substance of the so-called "world treaty on the non-use of force", and I am not going to repeat it here. In his "memorandum", Mr. Gromyko unabashedly declared that first of all there should be a "cessation of the nuclear arms race", that one should "stop manufacturing nuclear weapons" and bring about a "reduction of conventional armaments". One cannot help asking: Who is it that is frenziedly engaged in the nuclear arms race and going all out to expand conventional armaments? Is it not the Soviet Union itself? If the Soviet Union is really so concerned about nuclear and conventional disarmament, why does it not first of all do something in this respect as an example for everybody to see? Brezhnev already gave a reply to this question on another occasion. He said: no. The reason for arms expansion was that the Soviet Union had to "perfect its defences" since it was "faced with an endless arms race".

It is clearly the Soviet Union itself which is engaged in an "endless arms race" at a speed far in excess of the other super-Power, yet it says that it "has to" step up the "race" because of the existence of such a "race", even though it is so keen on disarmament. Such is its logic: "arms expansion is justified".

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The "memorandum" rehashes the proposal for a "complete and general prohibition of nuclear tests", demanding that all countries should sign the "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons". A nuclear Power, which has carried out countless numbers of nuclear tests and bragged that it could destroy the earth dozens of times, is talking so profusely about the cessation of all nuclear tests and nuclear non-proliferation. This can only reveal its features as a nuclear overlord which is trying hard to maintain its nuclear monopoly for continued wanton nuclear threats and nuclear blackmail against other countries. It is argued in the "memorandum" that the cessation of the arms race is dependent on "the prohibition of all nuclear weapon tests". This is all the more putting the cart before the horse and, therefore, absurd in the extreme. It is well known that with the two super-Powers already in possession of huge nuclear arsenals, a mere cessation of nuclear tests cannot in the least hinder them from continuing to produce, stockpile and use nuclear weapons. While propagating so energetically the complete prohibition of nuclear tests, Mr. Gromyko has totally evaded the question of the need to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons first, and he has all along adamantly refused to undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, particularly not to use nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear States and nuclear-free zones, still less has he any intention to realize the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. This fully shows that the "ultimate goal" of "complete elimination of all types of nuclear weapons" as alleged by Mr. Gromyko is nothing but a clumsy lie. Unwilling to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons now in their possession, and even less willing to destroy them, they are talking glibly about prohibiting the currently non-existent new-type weapons which are "more formidable" than the nuclear weapons and about the prohibition of "military use of environmental modification techniques". What practical purpose would such an exercise serve other than to mislead the public and divert people's attention? Leaving aside the crucial question of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons, the Soviet Union is engaged in empty talk about the conclusion of an agreement on the prohibition of the most dangerous, lethal types of chemical weapons. This is likewise a fraud designed to divert people's attention.

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Furthermore, Mr. Gromyko, after some patchwork, dished up again his proposal on the so-called "reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries", a proposal which had been thoroughly exposed a few years back and which he tried again to peddle. He said that "as a first step", "a figure either greater or smaller than 10 per cent" could be reduced in 1977. Let us leave aside the pitifully small military budgets announced by the Soviet Union every year. Only heaven knows how such a meagre sum could be sufficient to expand their daily growing armed forces and the "newest and most sophisticated technical equipment" which they boast they already possess. Here we would like to advise them to cease their mystical remarks about "a figure either greater or smaller than 10 per cent". Would it not be better for them to declare openly that all their past and present "military assistance" to developing countries would be gratis and that there would be no more need for debt-servicing and interest payment, all this as a "reflection" of the "sincere efforts" of the Soviet Union?

In recent years, quite a number of small and medium-sized countries have proposed the establishment of nuclear-free zones and zones of peace, and called for the undertaking of due obligations by the nuclear Powers. But the Soviet Union has all along refused to sign Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and refused to support the proposal for declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. This time Mr. Gromyko asserted that the Soviet Union would change its attitude towards the latter and would be ready to make a "contribution" to it. What kind of "contribution"? Firstly, he flatly denied the existence of Soviet military bases in the Indian Ocean region. This is tantamount to declaring that it would hang on to those bases of various descriptions. Secondly, he declared the readiness of the Soviet Union, together with other great Powers, to "seek ways of reducing, on a reciprocal basis, the military activities in the Indian Ocean and the regions directly adjacent thereto". The stress was on "a reciprocal basis" and on "seeking ways to reduce the military activities", and definitely not the "cessation" of military activities and "withdrawal" from the region. What is

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more, it would be free to "increase" and "expand" such military activities at any time on the pretext of the lack of a "reciprocal basis". Thirdly, its "contribution" would be conditional, that is: as the Indian Ocean is allegedly an important sea route connecting the European part of the Soviet Union with the Soviet Far East, there should be no obstacles to its so-called "freedom of navigation and scientific research" there. In this way it tried at one stroke to impose on the Indian Ocean peace zone the maritime hegemonism which it had obstinately clung to at the Conference on the Law of the Sea. Such is the "contribution" it would be ready to make and another "reflection" of the "sincere efforts of the Soviet Union".

At this point, is it not crystal clear what really are the various "sincere efforts" as reflected in Gromyko's memorandum? In the circumstances, in which the Soviet Union has shown no sincerity whatsoever for disarmament and refused to commit itself to the necessary pre-conditions which we have repeatedly put forward, the convening of a world disarmament conference which it has been advertising so energetically could only serve to lull the vigilance of the people of the world. This is of course what we are firmly against. The representatives of certain countries have rightly said that the lack of progress in disarmament is not due to the lack of appropriate international forums but due to the lack of the will for genuine disarmament on the part of the super-Powers.

While making a big issue of the question of the convening of the proposed special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament, the "memorandum" asserted that the special session should be made "an intermediate stage in preparation of a world disarmament conference" to "pave the way for a world disarmament conference", and so on and so forth. Brezhnev also made a big fanfare over it at a recent meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This fully reveals the Soviet Union's desperate attempt to use the convening of a special General Assembly session to serve its scheme of sham disarmament. It is very clear that under the present circumstances, in which the two super-Powers are engaged in frenzied arms expansion and war preparations and in fierce contention for world hegemony, particularly when the Soviet Union is carrying out aggression and expansion

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everywhere while peddling the fraud of sham détente and sham disarmament, the convening of a session in whatever form devoted exclusively to the question of disarmament could only spread illusions about peace, lull the vigilance of the world people and bring unfavourable consequences to the world people's struggle against hegemonism, imperialism and colonialism.

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In recent years, quite a number of small and medium-sized countries have at different international forums exposed and criticized the super-Powers for stepping up their rivalry, carrying out aggression and expansion everywhere and menacing the security of the peoples of the world. They have correctly pointed out that in the existing circumstances, if there is to be disarmament, there must first of all be disarmament by the super-Powers. They demand the prohibition of nuclear weapons, particularly nuclear disarmament by the super-Powers; they demand that the super-Powers should undertake not to use nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear countries, undertake to respect the nuclear-free zones and zones of peace, withdraw all their military presence from abroad and dismantle all their overt and covert military bases on foreign soil.

The Chinese Government firmly supports the above-mentioned just demands of the numerous small and medium-sized countries and is resolutely opposed to all frauds of sham disarmament and real arms expansion concocted by the super-Powers. The Chinese Government has consistently stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and maintains that, as a first step, all nuclear-weapon States should undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, particularly not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries and nuclear-free zones. In our opinion, it is entirely just for the small and medium-sized countries to put forward proposals for the establishment of nuclear-free zones and peace zones in order to oppose super-Power rivalry and nuclear threats and safeguard peace and security in their regions. We firmly support their proposals for the establishment of nuclear-free zones in Latin America, Africa, South Asia, the Middle East etc. and the proposal to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, and we are ready to undertake due obligations. At present, the principal obstacle to the true realization of nuclear-free zones and zones of peace comes from the super-Power policies of aggression, expansion and war. Therefore, if progress is to be made in the above efforts of the numerous small and medium-sized countries, these efforts must be closely linked up with the present struggle of the world people against imperialism and hegemonism.

People have been discussing disarmament with interest out of their concern over the fundamental issue of war and peace. It is fully understandable that the

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people of various countries who experienced the sufferings of two world wars eagerly wish to prevent imperialism from starting a new world war. However, one must be soberly aware that imperialism remains the source of war today. So long as social-imperialism and imperialism exist, there will be no lasting peace in the world. The elimination of war can only happen after the elimination of imperialism, the elimination of exploitation of man by man and of one nation by another, and not before. The emergence of nuclear weapons has not solved, and cannot possibly solve, the basic contradictions of our time. It can neither check the advance of human history nor change the nature of imperialism and all reactionaries. The realization of a "world without weapons, without armies, without wars" through "general and complete disarmament" as preached by Khrushchev in the past is a fraud which has long been mercilessly repudiated by history. The "complete elimination of the threat of war and aggression" as now propagated by Mr. Gromyko is all the more an absurd lie. The so-called world without weapons, without armies, without wars can only be a world without States. Yet Khrushchev and his disciples who preached "a world of three withouts" have spared no efforts on their part to carry out arms expansion and war preparations. This shows that they themselves know perfectly well what all this is about. At present, the United States has vested interests to protect around the world, and the Soviet Union seeks expansion. This state of affairs is unalterable. The continued fierce rivalry between the two super-Powers is bound to lead to war some day. This is independent of man's will. As the representative of a third world country clearly pointed out in his speech at the current session of the General Assembly,

"Conflicts between big Powers are inevitable so long as the drive for power and dominance remains the overriding consideration in international relations".

It would be a fantastic illusion to count on earnest disarmament by imperialism as a means to prevent the outbreak of imperialist war. Only by waging struggles and continuously exposing and frustrating the imperialist attempts of aggression and expansion, can the people of the world strive to delay the outbreak of imperialist war and get prepared and remain invincible once imperialism unleashes the war.

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Historical experience tells us that imperialism used to sing loudly the hymns of "peace" and "disarmament" when it was stepping up its preparations for a new war. This is the habitual tactics of all imperialists. When the fascist chieftain Adolf Hitler was plotting the march into the Rhineland and the invasion of Austria and other neighbouring countries, he was delivering his deceptive and demagogic "speech of peace" and even promised with sweet words the readiness of Germany to "destroy" its existing weapons and "dissolve" all its troops. One must not forget that it was in the very process of the disarmament conference held under the auspices of the League of Nations that Hitler covertly proceeded with stepping up his rearmament and preparations for war. At that time the disarmament conference had been going on for nearly three years, and many countries had been led into a kind of obsession about "disarmament" and a blind faith in Hitler's nice words and cheap promises. As a result, they suffered greatly from the surprise attacks launched by Hitler.

After World War II, in the two decades from Khrushchev to Brezhnev, the Soviet Union has been talking profusely about disarmament while engaging in frenzied arms expansion. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva has entered its 16th year. And in recent years there have been innumerable rounds of disarmament talks between the two super-Powers. But in effect the arms race between them has become ever fiercer, reaching a new high in history. The historical facts and the present reality show that the disarmament talks which have been dragging on for years, far from leading to "lasting world peace", can only be used by imperialism to spread illusions about peace, immobilize the world people and cover up its preparations for war.

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One may recall the past experience of certain people concluding the Munich agreement with Hitler in pursuit of the policy of "appeasement", and the result was well known. Today there are people in the West who, oblivious of the sanguinary historical lessons, invariably want to push social-imperialism eastward and divert it towards China by appeasing and making concessions to it and by recognizing its sphere of influence and giving it small favours. The European Security Conference reflected such a Munich line of thinking. But things go against their wish; one party wants to "divert the peril towards the East", whereas the other wants to "attack in the west while making a feint to the east". This has been borne out by the developments over the past year and more since the conclusion of the European Security Conference. The avarice of the aggressors can never be satisfied. Appeasement can only indulge the evil-doers, and nourishing a tiger breeds a source of trouble. The continued pursuit of the appeasement policy can only result in inflating the ambitions of the aggressor and hastening the outbreak of war, and he who does it will end up lifting a rock only to drop it on his own feet. Recently, quite a number of small and medium-sized countries, particularly those under the direct threat of Soviet offensives, have realized from their own experience that "over the last decade the Soviet Union has never been so aggressive as it is today". More and more persons with foresight and public opinion in general have pointed out the growing danger of war and reminded people not to repeat the same error of the thirties, and they call upon people to see the real situation clearly, cast away illusions, make the necessary preparations for self-defence, strengthen their unity and hold on against the Soviet expansionist activities. They also point out soberly that the Soviet Union has many weaknesses, that it is but a "colossus with feet of clay" and that it is nothing to be feared.

Under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, headed by Chairman Hua Kuo-feng, the Chinese Government and people will carry out the great leader and teacher Chairman Mao Tsetung's behests, continue unswervingly to implement Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and policies in foreign affairs, persevere in proletarian internationalism, never seek hegemony and never be a super-Power. We are determined to implement earnestly

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Chairman Mao's teaching "Be prepared against war, be prepared against natural disasters, and do everything for the people", make all the necessary preparations against wars of aggression and be ready at all times to wipe out any enemy that dares to invade us.

We maintain that the pressing issue before the numerous small and medium-sized countries now under the threat of super-Power military expansion is to fully mobilize the people and get prepared against wars of aggression. At present, a number of small and medium-sized countries stress the importance of developing their independent armed forces for self-defence; a number of other countries have put forward the proposition of strengthening co-operation on defence matters in a united struggle against hegemonism. We support these correct views. All countries that are subjected to the super-Powers' aggression, subversion, intervention, control and bullying should unite and form the broadest united front to wage tit-for-tat struggles against them. In the context of imperialist aggression against China, Chairman Mao Tsetung pointed out, "We are advocates of the abolition of war, we do not want war; but war can only be abolished through war, and in order to get rid of the gun it is necessary to take up the gun". Chairman Mao further pointed out: "All reactionaries are paper tigers." "The revisionist Soviet Union is a paper tiger too." We should get rid of the supersituation -- fear of social-imperialism. Blustering and swashbuckling, social-imperialism is in fact outwardly strong but inwardly weak and beset with difficulties. It has wild ambitions but lacks strength. It is politically unpopular, its economic base is weak and its battle lines are too far-flung. Its acts of aggression and expansion everywhere breed in themselves the seeds of defeat. Neither nuclear weapons nor conventional arms of the newest type can save the aggressors from their doomed defeat. Final victory will certainly belong to the billions of world people who dare to fight.

Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, first of all let me extend to you and to the other officers of the Committee the warm congratulations and good wishes of the Swedish delegation. We are convinced that, under your experienced and able leadership and guidance, the Committee will manage to deal with the many and complex disarmament issues in a most efficient manner. The present level of

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military expenditures and the unabated arms race are incompatible with the quest for a new international order. This gives a new dimension of absurdity to the arms race, adding a serious obstacle to efforts to rectify present inequalities, sufferings and devastation to the continuous threat of new wars, even nuclear wars, embodied in now existing arsenals.

In her recent book, The Home of Man, the British economist Barbara Ward quotes figures from the World Bank, showing that \$12.5 billion per year would be required over the next decade to meet the primary needs for private consumption and basic services of the least favoured regions of the world, in fields such as education, food, water, housing, transport, population and health. The figure of \$12.5 billion a year makes \$125 billion for the whole decade. Calculating the spendings on armaments at \$250 billion a year, she concludes that the total proposed expenditure on such proposed work for peace for an entire decade would amount to no more than half the world's bill for weapons for a single year.

The lack of results in development efforts is clearly related to the lack of results in efforts to stop the armaments race. The United Nations Committee for Development Planning, in its latest report of April 1976, recognizes military expenditure as the single most massive obstacle to development support.

The time is not yet ripe to enter into specifics about a link between a process of disarmament and development needs. We shall witness, however, ever stronger requests for a sensible, rational and humane use of scarce material and human resources to the benefit of the poorest parts of the world -- resources which are now to such a terrifying extent spent on preparations for destruction. I do hope that studies on how to translate these requests into concrete and operational terms will be started and yield quick results.

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Let me say a few words about another aspect of the absurd level of military expenditures. The complex role of the arms trade and military expenditures in the world economy is referred to by Ruth Leger Sivard in her report World Military and Social Expenditures in 1976. Mrs. Sivard shows that the average rate of price increase in the late 1960s and early 1970s followed an exceptionally rapid rise in military expenditures during these years. A generalized upward pressure on prices occurred, inter alia, because military spending created purchasing power without producing economically useful products for the civilian market. The impact on price levels of the constant diversion of a large quantity of the earth's resources to non-productive uses clearly must be considered one of the heaviest social costs of the arms race. To quote, once more, Barbara Ward: "At some point, some statesman is going to discover the link between arms spending and inflation ...".

I have referred to the lack of results in efforts to stop the arms race and start genuine disarmament. This is the area where the United Nations has made the least progress during its three decades of existence. A conclusion to this effect was one of the main points in last year's annual report by the Secretary-General. As little can be found in the year elapsed since then to justify a more positive judgement, the Secretary-General is right in repeating, this year, his dismal statement.

General and complete disarmament was the agreed purpose set for the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) on its establishment by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1962. Fourteen years later, this goal still eludes us. There do not even seem to be particularly bright prospects for the fulfilment of the far more modest concept that collective security can be reached at lower levels of armaments. Rather the reverse, utterly disproportionate financial resources continue to be allocated to armaments. As has been pointed out in the General Assembly, this deplorable development takes place, paradoxically enough, in an era of relaxation of East-West tensions. In the state of inertia prevailing in the disarmament negotiations, it should not be a surprise to anyone that sincere and well-founded discussion of disarmament matters tends to leave the impression of being mere rhetoric.

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After 30 years of disarmament negotiations, in which Member States have invested so much time and effort, one cannot escape the impression that attention has continuously been diverted from the central problems of disarmament to various collateral issues. In a few such areas, some limited progress has been achieved.

Still, as many delegations, including my own, have stated repeatedly, frustration and despair must never be allowed to get the upper hand, despite the general stalemate in the negotiations on substantive disarmament matters. All roads which can bring us somewhat closer to real and genuine disarmament must be explored. Particular efforts must be made to strengthen multilateral disarmament efforts. For, as gratifying as it is that the two super-Powers continue their bilateral negotiations, through the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and by other means, the increased emphasis that is attached to these talks has undoubtedly, as one of its effects, diminished the role of multilateral fora.

The initiative of the Swedish delegation last year, following the suggestion by the Secretary-General, to call for a review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament should be seen in this light. Progress in this vital area of the work of the world Organization must at least not be hampered by inappropriate procedures or inadequate resources.

The Ad Hoc Committee established last autumn by the General Assembly for this particular purpose has now fulfilled its task and its report is before the Assembly. The concrete measures recommended in this report were unanimously adopted in the Ad Hoc Committee. The Swedish delegation is informally circulating in this Committee a draft resolution calling for the endorsement of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. As I intend to return to this subject at a later stage, I now only want to express the hope that the draft will prove generally acceptable.

There are, as I said, not many inspiring elements in the present situation. One of the few such elements is the fact that an increasing number of States now demonstrate an active interest in disarmament matters. This enlarged participation by the world community is indeed to be warmly welcomed. It is evidenced, inter alia, by the proposal for a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. As was stated by the Swedish Foreign Minister in the Assembly's general debate, Sweden welcomes the idea of a special session, as it would give all the States Members of the United Nations an opportunity to contribute to the

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strategy for genuine disarmament. It is, furthermore, my understanding that, if adopted by the General Assembly, the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee concerning the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament should be considered as first steps, not in any way prejudging possible decisions by a future special session of the General Assembly. On the contrary, these first steps are, in our view, needed for an adequate preparation of such a session.

I referred, a few minutes ago, to the diversion of attention in our disarmament efforts to various collateral issues. One example of such a collateral issue is the draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. Its mere collateral nature is evident, as the draft treaty does not have any disarmament effects. It has the much more limited scope of banning the use of specific techniques for hostile purposes which as yet are largely undeveloped. Having said this, I of course welcome the fact that, for the first time in several years, a draft treaty in the general field of arms control has been presented to the General Assembly.

The draft was considerably modified in the course of negotiations and Sweden can, although with some misgivings, support it as it now stands. We should like, however, to make our position quite clear with respect to the complaints procedure envisaged in article V. We see the provisions for a consultative committee of governmental experts to carry out fact-finding in relation to a possible violation of the treaty as a step forward compared with previously concluded agreements, e.g. the Bacteriological Weapons Convention. It is fundamental, however, that obligations of States under any disarmament convention be entered into on the basis of equality. All States parties should accept the same obligations to co-operate in an investigation, should a complaint of violation be lodged with the Council. The right of veto of the permanent members of the Security Council tends to undermine this fundamental principle. Therefore, it remains a matter of decisive importance that the permanent members of the Security Council will not use their right of veto in a case of a request for an inquiry under Security Council auspices. This general principle was emphasized by the Swedish Parliament when, in December 1975, it ratified the Bacteriological Weapons Convention.

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I shall now turn to the key element in a real disarmament process and, therefore, the element which occupies the place of highest priority in the work of the General Assembly and CCD -- namely, the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban (CTB) treaty.

Besides being a most significant step towards real nuclear disarmament, a CTB treaty is necessary to ensure the credibility of the non-proliferation régime. I intend to revert to the complex and urgent problems of non-proliferation when the Committee, at a later stage of our deliberations, deals with agenda item 116, on the implementation of the conclusions of the first Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

It is a fact of life that for the outcome of the vital CTB issue the international community has to depend on the two dominant possessors of nuclear arms. Action by these two single States is needed if the necessary political impetus towards a CTB agreement is to be mobilized. Other States can only contribute in a marginal way. In the light of this situation, Sweden in the course of this year's session of the CCD, again took an initiative with regard to the much discussed problems of verification. A group of seismological experts was established under the auspices of the CCD in order to consider international co-operative measures to detect and to identify seismic events. My delegation is convinced that a global monitoring system for the verification of the compliance with a CTB, largely based on existing resources, can provide adequate deterrence for States parties to the treaty not to carry out clandestine testing. The expert group will provide a suitable forum for further discussion of this issue. The group has had a promising start, although there is a need for experts from more countries to join it in order to obtain better geographic coverage.

As my delegation has stated emphatically in the CCD, the fact that the expert group will need some time to fulfil its duties on the technical aspects of a monitoring system does not change our view that political negotiations on a CTB should start without delay. Such negotiations are in fact long overdue. In this context, the Swedish Government is encouraged by the statement of the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union in the General Assembly on 28 September 1976, indicating a willingness to find a mutually acceptable approach to what is considered remaining problems of verification. My delegation has studied with great interest the memorandum circulated by the Soviet delegation on the same day. It would appear from the text of that memorandum that the Soviet Union would be willing to discuss methods of ascertaining on site the relevant circumstances of a seismic event in addition to relying on international co-operation based on national means of verification. My Government sincerely hopes that these statements by the Soviet Government will stimulate efforts to reach agreement on a CTB.

Several options for facilitating political negotiations on a CTB should be considered. In this connexion, I would like to refer briefly to the so-called "stepwise" or "phased approach" to the ultimate goal of a CTB that I suggested on behalf of the Swedish Government in the CCD on 29 July 1976.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

As stated in its preamble the 1963 partial test ban was in effect considered a step and a fairly large step towards a CTB. The bilateral United States-USSR Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT) could be seen as a second -- though a late and small -- step within a phased approach to a CTB, as it introduced both a threshold of 150 kilotons for underground nuclear weapons explosions and a time delay of almost two years for its implementation. The Swedish delegation has stated several times in the CCD ever since the summer of 1974 that the TTBT will be of little practical value in halting the development of new nuclear weapons and weapon systems. Therefore, a new step, lowering the threshold significantly, effective at a date to be agreed upon, should be negotiated as an element in the process of phasing out nuclear testing. One of the aims of such an approach would be to maintain the nuclear balance and the security of the States concerned. The remaining gap, from the low threshold down to zero could be closed by an additional step in such a phasing out process. Sweden intends to return to this matter in a concrete way in the course of the work of the CCD. While we prepare ourselves for the urgently needed political negotiations for a CTB, we would do well to remind ourselves that at the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, the desire was expressed by a considerable number of delegations, including mine,

"that the nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty should as soon as possible enter into an agreement, open to all States and containing appropriate provisions to ensure its effectiveness, to halt all nuclear weapon tests of adhering States for a specified time, whereupon the terms of such an agreement would be reviewed in the light of the opportunity, at that time, to achieve a universal and permanent cessation of all nuclear weapon tests" (NPT/CONF/35/I Annex I, p. 8).

This recommendation was later endorsed by the General Assembly at its last session (resolution 3466 (XXX)). It is my hope that this suggestion will have gained momentum during the ongoing and intensified debate on the vital non-proliferation issue.

During the course of the disarmament debate in this Committee I intend to deal in greater detail with such urgent matters on our agenda as the conventional arms race as well as the use of incendiary and other specific conventional weapons, the reduction of military budgets, the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and the Review Conference of the NPT.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

Let me only conclude this statement on a more general note.

Most people are agreed about the need to break the momentum in the armaments race, to enter, at long last, the road to genuine disarmament and to use resources, now wasted on production for death and destruction, on efforts to rectify the inequities of the present world system. To achieve this, we cannot be content with only concluding one or more conventions or treaties on specific arms control or disarmament measures, indispensable as they are. We cannot be content with only a gradual and slow process of transition from a weapons economy to a development economy. What is also needed is a transition from a trust in weapons to a trust in peace. The amount of success that can be achieved in such an effort will largely determine mankind's chances to survive the twentieth century.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Sweden for her very kind and generous words addressed to me personally and to the other officers of the Committee.

Before calling upon the last speaker for this morning's meeting, I should like to announce that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America have become co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.5.

I have been requested to announce also that Cyprus, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela have become co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.4.

Mr. PETRIC (Yugoslavia): This year's general debate has again confirmed our grave concern at the situation in which the world, confronted with the unabated arms race and all its ensuing consequences, finds itself today. At the same time, the positions set forth in the debate point to the growing interest of the international community in the search for, and in the finding of solutions to the problem of disarmament, which is one of the most serious and complicated problems facing us today.

Activity in this field has been evolving in very complex conditions which have burdened the situation of the international community. It is under such unfavourable circumstances in the international community that activities aimed at halting the arms race have been taking place. The absence of some nuclear Powers from the negotiating process on this question has also had a negative impact on efforts to reach satisfactory solutions.

Today, some preconditions are emerging for setting in motion the process of solving substantive disarmament issues. However, the vestiges of the cold war, unresolved crises, tendencies toward strengthening military blocs, the widening of the existing gap between the developed and developing countries and other outstanding problems in the international community may adversely affect this process.

Yugoslavia, like many other countries, has been pointing to the disastrous consequences of the constant and accelerated arms race. As noted at the non-aligned Summit Conference in Colombo, the increase of the existing and production of new nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the sophistication of conventional weapons, are increasingly threatening peace and have, at the same time, proved the fallacy of the idea that peace in the world can be preserved on the basis of balance of military power and arms. The tendency of constant growth of military expenditures shows that the arms race is not of a transient character; and -- as we find ourselves on the threshold of a new technological and technical revolution -- military techniques and weapons will become ever more expensive, increasing thereby outlays for maintaining military forces. Such expenditures already border on the extreme possibilities even of the most developed countries themselves. The developing countries are compelled to spend considerable resources for defence purposes, in order to protect their sovereignty, territorial integrity and security, depriving

(Mr. Petric, Yugoslavia)

themselves of many indispensable programmes of economic development, so that their situation is becoming ever more difficult.

The relaxation of tensions achieved during the last few years is being seriously jeopardized by the accelerated arms race in general, and in certain regions in particular. Instead of lending economic assistance to developing countries and supporting their development programmes, a massive export of weapons has become the prevailing policy of certain developed countries. As a result of the continued nuclear arms race -- and we must bear in mind the non-existence of security guarantees that such weapons should under no circumstances be used against non-nuclear-weapon States -- it is possible that in 5 to 10 years, if this trend were to continue, from 20 to 30 countries will find themselves in the position to manufacture or to procure nuclear weapons, which will hamper the solution of the question of disarmament and will adversely affect peace and security in the world. The negative impact of the arms race is affecting most directly the building of the new international economic order, namely, it is slowing down processes in the development of new economic relations to the detriment both of the developing and of the developed countries. The continuation of the arms race constitutes an absurdity because it is less and less possible to achieve long-term political objectives by the sheer threat or use of force.

The efforts of the United Nations, as well as negotiations in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, and those on bilateral and regional levels have failed to produce the expected results and are quite out of proportion with the total effort invested in this field. However, even these modest results point to the need for more intensive and deliberate activity in the United Nations. It is indispensable to make strides forward for the purpose of achieving results with regard to basic questions of disarmament. If this does not happen, the international community will not be in a position to make substantive progress toward stabilizing peace and security on a global basis.

It is well known that the non-aligned countries, including Yugoslavia, raised -- as early as their first Conference in Belgrade -- the question of convening a world disarmament conference or a special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Yugoslavia also supported the relevant

(Mr. Petric, Yugoslavia)

resolutions of the General Assembly and stressed, at all the sessions of the General Assembly, the need for, and the importance of a world disarmament conference. My Government has repeatedly emphasized that such a conference should be convened as soon as possible and has made a number of constructive proposals concerning its agenda and the contents of its work, indicating the priority questions to be solved. It is obvious, however, that some countries were not in agreement or were not ready for convening the conference at the present time or, for that matter, in the very near future.

We still maintain that the holding of a world disarmament conference would be useful and hope that appropriate conditions for it will be gradually created.

Owing to all this, the non-aligned countries decided, at their Fifth Summit Conference of non-aligned countries in Colombo, to take the initiative and propose, at the current session of the General Assembly, the convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

May I be allowed to explain some of our considerations regarding this initiative. We consider the convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to be an indispensable action aimed at extricating the question of disarmament and discontinuance of the arms race from the state of stagnation where it finds itself today. We feel that the United Nations, as a universal Organization, offers optimal opportunities for considering and finding solutions to essential questions of disarmament, without negating thereby the significance and usefulness of negotiations conducted on bilateral or regional levels.

We are convinced that the special session can become an important action of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, provided all the Member States exert efforts and do their utmost during the preparations for the session. The proposed period of almost two years before the special session convenes provides adequate possibilities for thoroughly analysing United Nations activities, the results achieved, and the causes and obstacles preventing a satisfactory solution of this problem as a whole.

(Mr. Petric, Yugoslavia)

As you are all aware, in the first phase of United Nations involvement in this field, efforts were made to reach agreement on general and complete disarmament. However, as it became apparent that this objective could not be achieved at that time, it was decided to adopt the method of gradual disarmament agreements, i.e. the step-by-step solution of individual issues.

We believe that it would be possible to define, at the special session, a programme of appropriate measures and priorities which would result in reaching agreement on disarmament issues and on the halting of the arms race. We are convinced that a preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament could play a major role and contribute in many ways to the success of the special session. For this reason, its composition should be sufficiently representative and be open to those willing and ready to make a contribution. We are of the opinion that, at this stage, it would not be advisable to determine either the agenda or the programme of work of the preparatory committee, before the Governments of member States have the opportunity to express their views and to make suggestions in this respect.

Owing to the importance we attach to the special session, we think that it should be convened at a high political level. I believe that it would suffice, at the current session, to reach agreement on convening the special session in 1978. We do not deem it advisable to fix the items of the agenda in advance, as we would thereby prejudice issues on which agreement must be reached during the process of preparations for the special session of the General Assembly. Some ideas and suggestions for the agenda of the special session were put forward in Colombo. However, other States Members of the United Nations, too, should express their views and agree on questions of such great importance. One of the results of the special session should be the reaching of agreement on the creation of conditions enabling the United Nations to operate in a more satisfactory and better organized manner in the future and strengthening the role of the world Organization in the field of disarmament.

There are many disarmament items on the agenda of the General Assembly. My delegation will explain its position on some of these items in the course of the work of the First Committee.

(Mr. Petric, Yugoslavia)

With regard to nuclear disarmament, I must note that, unfortunately, no substantive progress has been made during the past year. The proliferation of nuclear weapons is continuing. It would be superfluous to engage in a repetition of generally known data and facts concerning this situation. However, it is necessary to point out that the partial test ban treaty has lost much of its importance, as it has failed to prevent the continuation of the nuclear arms race.

We continue to believe that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons could, and can, contribute to the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Although more than 100 States have ratified this Treaty, it will prove to be a weak barrier against the proliferation of nuclear weapons if the nuclear Powers maintain the right to strengthen their nuclear potential.

As regards other weapons of mass destruction, we would like to reaffirm once again our position concerning the complete prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons, and their destruction.

We have always emphasized that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is useful if such zones are acceptable to the countries of the region and are strictly respected by the nuclear-weapon-States. We shall continue to support these proposals, convinced that this is a serious step in the direction of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons in various regions, but they could lose their *raison d'être* if a complete ban on nuclear weapons is not achieved.

We believe also that the time has come to implement the General Assembly's Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We also consider as significant the initiative, approved in Colombo, for the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in the Mediterranean. If agreement on the establishment of such zones is reached, this will eliminate to a great extent the danger of confrontation between the major military Powers and will constitute an essential pre-condition for the dismantling of military bases and the withdrawal of foreign troops from foreign territories in general, and from these zones in particular.

The report submitted by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) contains, this year, a draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. We shall have something more to say, at a later stage, about the text of the draft convention relating to a limited prohibition of environmental modification techniques. On

(Mr. Petric, Yugoslavia)

this occasion, I wish to emphasize that --- after several years of stagnation in its work -- this is the first time for five years that CCD has submitted the text of an agreement to the General Assembly, as a result of negotiations which have contributed to some improvements in the draft convention submitted jointly by the delegations of the United States and the USSR. This is an encouraging sign, and we hope that CCD will continue to make progress in its work.

We believe that the time has come to exert fresh efforts to solve disarmament problems. We also believe that the vast majority of the States Members of the United Nations are ready to do their utmost to achieve this end.

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to inform the Committee that Austria has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.5.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.