

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records \*



FIRST COMMITTEE  
38th meeting  
held on  
Thursday, 19 November 1976  
at 3 p.m.  
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 38th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

CONTENTS

Reduction of military budgets: report of the Secretary-General [34]

Incendiary and other specific conventional weapons which may be the subject of prohibitions of restrictions of use for humanitarian reasons: report of the Secretary-General [35]

Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [36]

Urgent need for cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and conclusion of a treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [37]

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 3467 (XXX) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco) [38]

Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean [39]

World Disarmament Conference: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference [40]

Effective measures to implement the purposes and objectives of the Disarmament Decade [41]

Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa [42]

Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects: report of the Secretary-General [43]

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East [44]

Convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [45]

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia [46]

/...

\* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be incorporated in a copy of the record and should be sent *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, room LX-2332.

Corrections will be issued shortly after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL  
A/C.1/31/PV.38  
19 November 1976  
ENGLISH

Conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapons tests /47/

Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /48/

General and complete disarmament /49/:

- (a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament;
- (b) Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency;
- (c) Report of the Secretary-General

Strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament /50/

Implementation of the conclusions of the first Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons /116/

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

AGENDA ITEMS 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50  
AND 116 (continued)

Mr. CHRYSANTHOPOULOS (Greece): The Greek delegation welcomes the fact that many, if not most, delegations have expressed disappointment, impatience and even apprehension because of the slow pace with which progress is being made towards the solution of the problem of disarmament. This reaction is encouraging in so far as it may and should be a welcome sign that the present deadlock could be overcome. My delegation, because of Greece's dedication to peace in justice, certainly supports all efforts in this direction within this Committee and elsewhere.

However, logically, disarmament is perhaps the last step in achieving permanent peace in our times. The first step, of course, would be the establishment of goodwill and good faith among all nations. With these two prerequisites, there would be no problem that could not be solved. Granted, however, that these fundamental prerequisites might be considered utopian, there remain the peaceful means of solving international differences: mutual understanding, the spirit of conciliation, bilateral negotiations, good offices or mediation of third countries, respect of international agreements, respect and implementation of the resolutions or decisions of international bodies, activation of the peace-keeping functions of the Security Council, etc.

Some ground has been gained in these fields with great difficulties in this and other Committees, in the plenary and in other conferences and international bodies. Much more ground remains to be covered and time is working against us.

But the fact that, logically, the establishment of a full system for the peaceful settlement of disputes precedes disarmament should in no way preclude attacking this vital question of peace simultaneously on all fronts, including, of course, disarmament. It is, perhaps, the only practical way of tackling the problem efficiently. That is why my delegation fully supports any and all efforts leading towards peace, on any front.

(Mr. Chrysanthopoulos, Greece)

In particular, we are satisfied to note the proposals to convene a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament next year followed by a world disarmament conference. In our view it is desirable that all countries, whether or not they are members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD), be given an opportunity to participate actively and constructively in the work of the Committee which will prepare this special session.

With regard to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, which constitutes an indispensable prerequisite for the reduction of armaments and, subsequently of general disarmament, it is our view that adequate and convincing assurances must be given to the non-nuclear countries to persuade them that they have nothing to fear as a result of voluntarily refraining from the possession of nuclear weapons.

Before concluding, I should like to comment briefly on agenda item 45, relating to the draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. The CCD has presented a draft resolution concerning this matter, after long negotiations. We share the opinion that further consideration of this issue by the CCD would hardly lead to any immediate improvement of the present text and, therefore, we do not think that the draft convention should be sent back to the CCD for another round of negotiations. As the representative of Finland pointed out, we would be running the risk of not having a draft convention for consideration next year at all and such a way of proceeding would probably divert the work of the CCD from other high-priority items. My delegation will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.5/Rev.1 but will, at the same time, join with other delegations in expressing the hope that article I will be fundamentally improved.

Mr. ZEA (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): In the course of the lengthy and extremely tiring debate that we have had this year on disarmament, as in every year since the United Nations was founded, some speakers have pointed out that some optimistic voices and many pessimistic ones, have been heard. My delegation must unfortunately add its voice to the chorus of the pessimists. The two great super-Powers alone, that is, those who virtually hold the entire possibility of human survival on the planet in their hands, have said that in the very difficult

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

process of disarmament, some progress has been achieved. And that statement is seconded by those who represent countries that are very closely linked politically and militarily with the blocs that those two Powers represent in this Assembly. But the naked truth, or rather, the unchallengeable reality is that the phenomenon of the arms race and its destructive capacity is a far greater menace today than it was only a year ago, and a greater menace than it had been the year before, and thus, going backward in history, we can safely say that the danger of annihilation was far less 30 years ago than it is at these very moments.

When discussing disarmament, to take the floor on behalf of a weak country is of course a difficult task, particularly since one is speaking from a position of weakness. What meaning can the opinion of a State that carries very little weight in the balance of military power in the world have in the solution of one of the greatest and most serious problems confronting mankind? We are still far from being a universal organization, where the expression of majorities will have a deciding force; and even today, after 31 years of existence of the United Nations, when virtually all States in the world have joined the Organization, it is the power of the veto, set aside for only five nations from among 145, that can prevail in the adoption of the great decisions. This shows how pathetic is the puny voice of the small peoples when we are seeking effective and positive action to free mankind from the terrifying dangers that threaten him.

In the course of this prolonged debate this year, as in previous years, we have been given hair-raising information and data. If this data was a revelation, that is, if we were to hear for the first time in the world, what we are being told, if we were only now to learn that the nuclear arsenals are able, in a few minutes, to wipe out 100,000 million human beings, that is, more than 20 times the present population of the world, our consternation would know no bounds. Probably the communication media of the world would constantly be stressing that terrifying circumstance and the same would be true of Governments, congresses and national and international bodies. There would be no other subject of discussion; there would be no rest for any, and the pressure on those who possess those arsenals would be increased until the danger was ended. But, since we hear these facts year after year, what should lead us to despair for all mankind does

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

not even keep us awake at night. Without alarm or concern, we hear how those arsenals are maintained, how man's ingenuity conceives and produces the most deadly weapons and how we are going headlong toward the annihilation of civilization, the most unimaginable physical suffering, the total extinction of mankind, without any effective means being devised to stop it.

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

How, then, can we be optimistic, since there is in fact nothing more discouraging than to read the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD)? Although we must perforce repeat what has already been said here, let us simply look at what is happening with regard to the main items on the agenda of this Committee. The documents pile up -- reports, declarations, speeches, conferences, experts' views, government views, General Assembly resolutions -- and these mountains of paper are at times almost as large as the nuclear arsenals themselves. At the same time, military budgets, instead of being reduced, increase year after year. Incendiary and conventional weapons, which should be prohibited for merely humanitarian reasons, continue to be manufactured with a wealth of imagination and sophistication, in order to inflict limitless suffering. Because of the horror that has swept the world since the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons in the First World War, it might have been thought that agreement on the total prohibition of such weapons could be most easily achieved. But this has not been the case, and discussions continue on technical aspects that make confusion worse and the elimination of these weapons more difficult.

There has not been a single step forward in the prohibition of nuclear tests since the 1963 Treaty was signed, prohibiting such tests in the atmosphere, underwater and in outer space, and that Treaty has never been fully complied with. Thirteen years have passed since then, and no progress has been made. The General Assembly has insisted on total prohibition time and time again, and the CCD has constantly dealt with the matter, having a number of proposals before it, including a Soviet draft on general and complete prohibition. But the fact of the matter is that there has been reluctance on the part of some of the States that possess nuclear weapons to put an end to these tests, and that is the true reason why there has been no glimmer of light on the subject.

As far as nuclear-weapon-free zones are concerned, which the non-nuclear-weapon countries, in particular, have called for urgently, we know full well that the only international instrument that has in fact established a populated nuclear-weapon-free zone is the Treaty of Tlatelolco, covering Latin America. There are of course other agreements, but they refer to uninhabited areas such as Antarctica, outer space and the ocean floor. As for the other instruments that have been proposed for Africa, for Asia, for the Indian Ocean, for the Middle East etc., they have all been bogged down and held

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

up through a series of technical controversies that prevent any progress, and there is thus only a very remote possibility that agreements can be concluded in the near future.

Finally, with regard to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, we have seen that the countries that possess nuclear energy do not scruple to transfer facilities to other countries when their economic, political, military or strategic interests so dictate. And thus it has become impossible to ward off the ghastly prospects of a vertical and horizontal increase in nuclear weapons.

We all agree that the situation as described, and the formidable obstacles that have to be overcome to achieve disarmament, result not from technical considerations but exclusively from political ones. The technical difficulties that arise on the road to minimal agreements result solely from the attempt to disguise the political and military disagreements of individual Powers and blocs of nations. In other words, they are for the most part mere pretexts for avoiding any commitment that might at a given moment be deemed prejudicial to the interests of those blocs or Powers.

Reasons of national security are adduced, and we are asked to persevere on the road to détente. But détente does not necessarily spell confidence, and where there is no trust among nations, even though apparent success may have been achieved on the road to détente, not a single effective step can be taken towards disarmament.

Human history has taught us that power is not voluntarily relinquished, and unfortunately might is right. That is why disarmament has never been achieved, and general and complete disarmament is a utopian concept, since in practice it is consigned to oblivion. Moreover, in addition to political interests and considerations of national security, the industrialized nations have interests which, instead of being conducive to disarmament, promote the arms race and the development of new weaponry. What is worse, they feed and encourage the conflicts that break out daily in different parts of the world

I refer to the sale of armaments, the production of all types of arms for purely and exclusively commercial and material purposes. It is what we can term a gigantic and monstrous industry of slaughter.

An analysis of the significance of the arms trade in the world would certainly



(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

go beyond a statement of this nature. I shall therefore simply draw attention to certain points drawn from the same source as that used by a number of other delegations that have spoken in this debate, namely, the yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), and the bulletin issued by that Institute on 6 June of this year. According to SIPRI, the most dangerous aspect of the arms race is this trade which has been constantly and rapidly growing in volume and scope since the Second World War and which is now virtually out of control. Since data on weapons transfers are not revealed by the producing countries, with the exception of the United States, the total value of this trade can be only approximately estimated. However, a reasonable estimate is \$9 billion annually, with pending orders of up to \$20 billion. SIPRI points out that the Soviet Union supplies and currently exports more or less the same quantity of weapons as the United States, and that the other industrialized countries of Europe, such as France and the United Kingdom, also make a considerable contribution to that trade.

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

Technologically developed weapons are sought and received and there are neither scruples nor reluctance on the part of the great suppliers to distribute them. The great income that oil producers derive from the high prices of oil is generally invested in weapons as is borne out by the contracts of Iran and Saudi Arabia with the United States, which in June of 1975 rose to \$4.3 billion. The sales and production spirals continue to rise: their lethal power spawns the grave armed conflicts that break out in the world.

And in the midst of this Dantesque panorama the most disturbing aspect is the arms trade with the third world, which has the twofold aspect of the destructive power of weapons on the one hand, and, on the other, the limitations imposed by such trading on the efforts of those countries to overcome the tragedy of under-development. While wretchedness, ignorance and diseases spread, armaments grow.

It is impossible to understand how the unawareness of the world can be so blind in the developing countries when they devote to the macabre trading in weapons the resources that should primarily be used for the welfare of peoples. Thus we cannot understand why in a fraternal continent such as Latin America, in a continent where the armed strikes between the sister Republics is well nigh impossible, and where the most elementary needs of the inhabitants are only scarcely met and peoples live to a large extent at sub-human levels, purchases in weapons for 1975 rose to \$500 million. This is incredible and it is unjustifiable. However there may be an explanation which could be made extensive to all the countries of the world, and that is the requirements of the military groups that always want to be up to date with their modern and at times unmanageable destructive toys, even though their peoples have to suffer privations and needs. But what is most insensate and hateful in that situation is that to a large extent it has been created by the greed of the manufacturing countries; in many of them, much of their economy lies precisely in the production of weaponry, which means that the welfare that they are seeking with this production is paid for at the cost of pain, backwardness and even the destruction of the peoples

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

that are their customers. For all these reasons my delegation intends, together with other delegations, to co-sponsor a draft resolution which will ask the General Assembly to analyse and to study the international transfer of conventional weapons in all its aspects.

I would like now to refer to two questions that have been discussed at some length by delegations in the course of this debate. First, that of the Convention on the Prohibition of Environmental Modification Techniques for Military and Hostile Purposes. We have listened very carefully to what was said on this subject, and I must confess that we were impressed by the statements made by the distinguished delegations of Mexico and Argentina. In the light of what was said here, two draft resolutions have already been submitted in documents L.4 and L.5. The operative part of L.4 requests the CCD to continue talks on the draft treaty, bearing in mind the proposals and suggestions made in the course of the General Assembly, in order to arrive at an agreement by consensus. These, in a word, reject the draft treaty as submitted to us by the CCD and refer it back to the CCD for renegotiation, while the second of these drafts accepts the document as submitted to us.

The choice between these two proposals is a difficult one to make, since both are based on good arguments. It is clear that the draft treaty does have flaws, primarily those related to the wording of article 1, as was cogently proved by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico in his statement. But, be that as it may, the draft treaty contains provisions of undeniable utility that do spell progress in limiting artificial environmental changes for military purposes. Those limitations have already been agreed to, and acknowledged by those Powers most likely to acquire or use technology to make environmental changes, namely, the United States and the Soviet Union.

This leads us to believe, as the distinguished delegate of Brazil said and as others have echoed, that the rejection of the compromise text that has been put before us might indefinitely postpone adoption of the treaty. So from a realistic standpoint we find that, confronted by this dilemma, we might be better advised to support the draft now, in the hope that a broad interpretation of its provisions -- particularly with regard to the scope of the limitations set forth, as suggested by Ambassador Martin of the United States -- might somewhat assuage the concern that has been expressed on the draft treaty. My delegation will therefore support draft resolution L.5, submitted on this matter by the distinguished delegations of Finland and others.

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

My delegation would like to make some final comments on the efforts that have been studied for some time for the holding of a world disarmament conference, or to convene a special session of the General Assembly to study this problem.

These are now resources to which we are turning, because the Organization has shown itself impotent over the last 30 years in its efforts to achieve disarmament and unable positively to channel action of the greater and smaller nations towards renouncing the use and abuse of their weapons. It is now finally felt that either of those two events could open up more promising avenues, or if not, less discouraging avenues, in their untiring efforts. Quite frankly, we do not believe that such meetings will make too much difference or will significantly improve the situation. We, the States that are represented in this Committee, will ourselves be participants at those meetings. The statements that will be made at those meetings will doubtless be those self-same statements that have been made here, and that have been repeated like a monotonous litany in the course of the entire existence of the United Nations.

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

Is it conceivable that the conference would yield a universal convention and treaty that would order the destruction of all atomic arsenals? Or that it might even prohibit the proliferation of nuclear arms and put an end to its horizontal or vertical expansion or put a final end to the trading in weapons? Could a meeting of that nature, I ask, so radically change the present world and put an end to all conflicts and create trust among all nations so that those objectives of disarmament and peace could be achieved? Quite honestly we do not think it is possible. I doubt that there be a single delegation in this room that thinks it can be done. And let us of course not speak of general and complete disarmament which, as we have said, would be truly utopian. Yet since we must continue to make efforts despite the phrase of Nietzsche who said: "I will forgive man for everything except for his sterile struggles." But since we have to make those efforts, my delegation will not oppose the conference nor shall we oppose the idea of holding a special session of the General Assembly. The conference I see in the far distance. It would have to culminate in a universal treaty and for that it would have to be prepared over a long stretch of time. Perhaps not so long that when the time has elapsed our civilization will have gone with it. So let us try the second, even though it may be just another exercise by men who refuse to resign themselves to the impossible.

Perhaps in the future of our species disarmament will occur. But it will only occur when the wars end, and wars will end only when weapons are eliminated. That is the unshakeable vicious circle while the minds of human beings continue to think along warlike lines, while the symbol of glory for all nations on earth is armed strife, while the military heroes are placed in much higher niches than those of the true servants of mankind, while nations can brag of their military successes more than of their humanitarian and scientific feats, and while for the growing child what is most exciting is the thrilling excitement of the military parades, war will never be wiped out.

It is far too tremendous and profound a change that we are calling for in the education of peoples and in our customs and in what has been up till now our concept of what is heroic. And, until that occurs, what we are doing is trying to break down a huge steel curtain with paper pellets.

Mr. MESTIRI (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): By devoting 18 items on its agenda to the question of disarmament, the General Assembly has demonstrated the profound concern of the international community in the face of the serious dangers which the arms race poses, not only to international peace and security, but what is worse, to the very survival of the human race. If we merely read the titles of the items we immediately understand the complexity and gravity of the problems we must face.

The United Nations, ever since its foundation, has made it its primary task to combat the proliferation of arms, attempting in this way to reduce the dangers of a devastating and murderous war. The General Assembly since 1946 has never allowed a year to pass without discussing the causes and effects of the arms race. Theoretically speaking, the question has been examined from many standpoints. Every year we hear numerous speeches, all equally interesting professions of faith, attractive promises, declarations of good intentions.

If we listen to the general debate in the Assembly we get the impression that there is total unanimity in condemning the ills of the arms race in all its forms; and everywhere alarm is being expressed about the danger of the situation. However, we must realize that no decisive action has been taken to put an end to this scourge.

It would not be right to say that the discussions which have taken place here have been without result. Quite the contrary, they have made it possible to sound the alarm to mobilize world public opinion to the dangers which threaten us and thus to alert the world community to the complex and crucial problems of disarmament.

Nevertheless, we are entitled to wonder whether the results achieved measure up to our aspirations. Do we really possess the proper structures and adequate means to guarantee practical success in achieving our objectives? Do we have a clear and precise idea of these objectives? Have we agreed on the objectives to be attained and the strategy to follow? These are a few questions which we must give an answer to if we want to achieve decisive results in the difficult enterprise of disarmament.

The arms race which we deplore today is but the consequence of a certain concept of international relations, of a view taken by certain Powers of the notion

(Mr. Mestiri, Tunisia)

of national security and international security and, of course, initially, of the post-war ideological confrontations.

For some years now, we have seen the existing international situation called into question and have been witnessing a redefinition of relations between the various political and economic forces making up the world community as a whole. In the circumstances there is no reason why these profound changes and the emergence of new forces should not have an impact on such an important field as that of disarmament, particularly because the Charter has included it among the priority objectives of our Organization.

The search for a solution to such a problem, which concerns the whole international community, can therefore only be conducted within a general and egalitarian framework. The preparation and implementation of a global disarmament strategy necessarily entails the positive preparation and agreement of all members of the international community. No one should be left out of this global consultation process, because if some of us have not contributed to this proliferation of nuclear arms and the multiplication of other equally dangerous arms for the reason that we have no war industry, nevertheless we do suffer the consequences in one way or another.

For that reason, the Tunisian delegation welcomes the idea of holding a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament questions. We regard this as a welcome initiative which will provide an opportunity for all States to express their views on an equal footing and we hope, to come to agreement on the action to be taken and the means to be created to achieve the objectives laid down in the Charter. The importance of convening this special session lies in the fact that it would throw light on various aspects of the disarmament question. It would also make it possible to determine the nature and framework of efforts which have to be made to facilitate the attainment of general agreement on specific and radical disarmament measures. Of course, this session should be prepared with all necessary care and attention. The creation of a preparatory committee for this purpose seems to us to be a measure conducive to the success of the special session which, if it is convened in 1977, will strengthen the efforts made in other bodies dealing with disarmament and could facilitate the convening of a world disarmament conference.

It is clear from our debate here and the many concrete proposals which have been submitted here that there is renewed interest in the question of disarmament. We are entitled to expect, therefore, that the United Nations will become increasingly involved in negotiations, studies and analyses and also in the preparation and application of the decisions which the various bodies will be called upon to take. It is therefore urgent to strengthen the capacity of the Organization in this area. In order to meet its obligations, the Organization must be provided with the appropriate means and structures.

In this connexion, my delegation supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament and believes that it is particularly desirable for the Secretariat to be strengthened, particularly on the eve of the special session. The Tunisian delegation, which has co-sponsored a draft resolution recommending the adoption of the report of the Special Committee, would like to congratulate all those who took part in producing this report, particularly Mrs. Thorsson of Sweden, whose competence and objectivity are familiar to all of us.



(Mr. Mestiri, Tunisia)

The Tunisian Government has repeatedly expressed its profound concern at the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are now witnessing a veritable rush to acquire this dreadful weapon which supposedly was created to ensure the security of certain States but which is now something which there is a general desire to possess. The number of countries which possess or are capable of possessing nuclear weapons is growing from year to year, and this increases the risk of a general conflagration and thus reduces the usefulness, if any, of nuclear weapons. Tunisia believes that the prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons is a question of high priority which requires the adoption of effective and urgent measures. In this regard, it is worth pointing out that time is against us and that our hesitations and our procrastinations can only make even more remote the prospect of any serious solution to the problem of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Along with horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons, the arms race has undergone other developments which are equally disturbing, albeit rarely mentioned. During the general debate in the Assembly, my delegation thought it worth drawing the attention of the international community to a new phenomenon which, unless we are careful, may dangerously jeopardize our efforts to establish a more just international economic order. I mean by this the arms race among developing countries.

In this regard, we have noted with interest the statement made in this Committee by the representative of the United Kingdom, who dealt with this particular aspect of the arms race and stressed its seriousness. The Tunisian delegation would like once again to express its concern at the dangers represented by the massive transfer of arms, even conventional arms, to the developing countries. It is regrettable, not to say disastrous, that at a time when the underdeveloped countries are so much in need of financial, technological and human resources to fight underdevelopment, we are witnessing a staggering increase in their military budgets and an equally reckless wastage of their scanty resources. The industrialized world, which is constantly looking for new markets in a desire to extend its economic and political influence, and is anxious above all to

(Mr. Mestiri, Tunisia)

increase its wealth and to develop its industries, has unfortunately been able to find among third-world countries eager clients and a market which is as vast as it is profitable. As soon as the first sales contracts are concluded, these countries quickly realize that they have become involved in an irreversible process which makes them dependent on the increasingly sophisticated technology of the industrialized countries.

Succumbing quickly to temptation, fascinated by new types of armaments, they hasten to acquire weapons at the most exorbitant prices to replace those which they had accumulated and which had become outmoded and therefore useless.

We know that certain countries feel that, in order to prevent the minority of States which possess powerful armaments from imposing their domination on the rest of the world, it would be more realistic to give free rein to the transfer of arms of all kinds towards the third-world countries. We wonder whether this approach, particularly the acquisition of conventional weapons, really makes it possible to reverse the trend and is an effective means of ensuring equality among nations. We also wonder whether these weapons, once acquired, will be used against the minority of powerful States or rather to settle regional conflicts among developing countries. We have tried to understand what seem to be the underlying reasons for such conduct, but we see no good justification for it. We think that it is high time to curb this development, which is liable to force even those who are still holding out against the trend to arm themselves to the detriment of their development needs. We think that it is our duty to draw the attention of all countries -- both supplier countries, which, for strategic or economic reasons, foster this trend, and importing countries -- to the dangers of this senseless policy, whose pursuit is a further obstacle to the establishment of a new international economic order and a useless burden for the peoples which aspire to a better, prosperous future.

The Tunisian delegation has studied with interest the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. We are gratified at the progress achieved which, although it is not enough, does testify to the will of members of this Committee to advance the cause of disarmament. We have acquainted ourselves with the draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental

(Mr. Mestiri, Tunisia)

modification techniques. This draft has given rise to an altogether understandable controversy which testifies to the importance and topicality of this question. We understand the view of those who, like Mexico, have well-founded reservations as to the scope of this convention. We share their view regarding the need to try to revise the provisions of the text, and particularly those of article I. However, we think that this position of principle should not involve us in the risk of destroying this convention, which admittedly is incomplete but is nevertheless necessary, even in its present state. The history of disarmament makes it quite clear that progress in this field can only be gradual.

These are the few considerations that my delegation particularly wanted to bring to the attention of our Committee. We are aware of the fact that there are many other aspects of disarmament which we have not touched upon in the course of this statement -- important matters such as the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, or the prohibition of chemical, bacteriological or incendiary weapons. The Tunisian delegation hopes to be able to revert to these questions at a later stage in our work on this question.

Mr. REMEDI (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first time that the delegation of the Republic of Uruguay intervenes in this First Committee, I should like to offer you our congratulations on having been entrusted with the chairmanship of this very important Committee because of the nature of the items on its agenda, affecting as they do the very peace of the world. At the same time I should like to express to the other members of the Bureau our satisfaction at their election.

It is clearly beyond dispute that the community of nations as represented in this Organization has achieved great progress since its creation in 1945. We cannot, under any circumstances, fail to recognize the significant progress achieved in many fields by the Organization, particularly in cultural, political, economic and health matters. However, when we confront subjects such as those that this Committee is now studying and we turn our gaze backwards to what has been achieved in their consideration, we realize that what we have achieved is useless in the light of the instability of the world peace and the possibility of nuclear catastrophe. There are very few questions that are as important and as significant as those that touch on the arms race, on the development of nuclear energy for warlike purposes, on the increasingly sophisticated and growing arsenal of nuclear weapons and on the resources devoted to the production of weapons and to the industry of war. My country is gratified that among the first items considered in this Committee at this session, we find those that concern international peace and security. This surely can be considered as a positive proof of the will of nations to arrive as soon as possible at the adoption of effective measures that will guarantee peace for all nations of the world. The implications of the arms race upset any progress achieved by our peoples in their search for peace and reasonable welfare. There are many countries that do not cease to speak of détente and of disarmament, of the prohibition of the manufacture, improvement and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and it is precisely they who have continued to increase nuclear weapons at the fastest possible rate and at the widest possible scope, while at the same time extending their hold over different zones of the planet such as the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean or other regions in a demonstration of force that increases the tension and danger of war in many parts of the world. I shall not analyse the gravity of the present situation of the world, nor do I wish to cite or bring to bear statistical data on the millions

(Mr. Remedi, Uruguay)

invested in perfecting and manufacturing warlike matériel, while thousands of millions of human beings are suffering from hunger or dying of malnutrition. It is not the intention of my delegation to speak of these matters at this time. First of all, because other delegations that have preceded me have already dealt with this matter and given abundant data to prove where mankind is headed, and if we here, who represent millions of human beings that clamour for peace, are unable to adopt the necessary measures to put an end to the atmosphere of tension in which the world is living, what good is it to repeat it? Secondly, because we understand that man should not complain about the ills that beset him, but rather take the necessary steps to eradicate them. It is with that constructive thought that my country, together with other Latin American States, undertook a task between 1964 and 1967 which, following a series of international meetings, and, in accordance with the joint declaration of 29 April 1962 by a number of Latin American Presidents, concluded a multilateral treaty establishing the first nuclear-weapon-free zone of the planet.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco and its organ, OPANAL, are the result of the joint efforts of Latin American nations to ensure the denuclearization of our zone. Its careful juridical preparation has allowed us to state to this Committee more than once that the international system created by the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its additional Protocols I and II, is intended, through the military denuclearization of Latin America, to be a real universal instrument in the cause of international peace and security, pursuant to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. Year after year, the delegation of my country has expressed to this Committee our true satisfaction at the welcome given by the community of nations to the contributions that Latin America has made in strengthening one of its greatest hopes -- that of peace and world security. This has been reflected in tangible form, for more than 20 Latin American States have already signed and ratified the Treaty and more than 18 are already parties to it. Last year my delegation was gratified that two new States, Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada, were now also joining the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and we expressed our hope that very soon another State -- Bahamas -- would also sign and ratify that instrument. We are very pleased today to say that two further new States -- Bahamas and Surinam -- have entered the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear

(Mr. Remedi, Uruguay)

Weapons in Latin America. However, we do not see the same rhythm of acceptance concerning Additional Protocol II, open to the nuclear-weapon States, regardless of their geographical location. A number of General Assembly resolutions -- and the General Assembly was in a marked way closely linked to the process of development of the Treaty of Tlatelolco -- have repeatedly urged countries to sign and ratify Protocol II. Countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the People's Republic of China have already become parties to the Protocol, whereas silence still reigns as far as the Soviet Union is concerned.

At the twenty-ninth regular session of the General Assembly the leader of the Uruguayan delegation said:

"I wish to place on record here our surprise that it should be precisely that country, which has so often spoken support for the task of denuclearization and which has worked so hard on matters of peace throughout the world, which remains outside the scope of the guarantees requested by Latin America, by an act which could have been the best confirmation of its words. We know of no legal barrier or obstacle." (A/C.1/PV.2008, p. 62)

Today I reiterate what was said at that time and once again I appeal to the delegation of the Soviet Union to adopt a decision that can brook no further delay, namely, to sign additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Uruguay for his kind words addressed to the officers of the Committee.

Before adjourning this meeting I should like to announce that the German Federal Republic has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.7/Rev.1

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.