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Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

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

AGENDA ITEMS 34, 35, 38, 40, 42, 43, 45, 48, 49, 50 and 116 (continued)

Mr. ELLIOTT (Belgium) (interpretation from French): Twice now, Belgium, in the course of this session of the Assembly, has dealt with problems of regional aspects of disarmament. The Belgian Foreign Minister, in his statement in the General Assembly on 29 September last, pointed out that perhaps the United Nations in the past had not given sufficient attention to the possibilities offered by the regional approach to disarmament and the regulation of armaments. More recently, at the 26th meeting of our Committee, the representative of Belgium, Mr. Mundeleer, a member of the House of Representatives, took up the same theme and announced a specific intervention of Belgium on this subject. The Belgian delegation today would like to develop, to some extent, these ideas with regard to this regional approach already mentioned by our representative.

An analysis of the regional negotiations with regard to disarmament since the creation of the United Nations leads to the conclusion that these results have so far been rather limited. There are, of course, two international instruments which come under the regional approach -- the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 and the Treaty of Tlatelolco of 1967, making Latin America a nuclear-arms-free zone. If we bear in mind the sui generis nature of the Antarctic Treaty, which relates to an uninhabited portion of the globe, it may be concluded that the Treaty of Tlatelolco hitherto has been the only regional achievement ever brought about in juridical terms in a subject relating to disarmament.

We do not like to underestimate here the importance of the many proposals and declarations formulated, in particular, with regard to the creation of nuclear-free zones in different parts of the world. But these initiatives have not hitherto led to the actual elaboration of new international juridical instruments apart from the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Two recent initiatives do, however, constitute an illustration of the possibilities offered at the regional level for negotiations on disarmament and arms control. Firstly, the Declaration of Ayacucho, signed in 1974, whereby the

(Mr. Elliott, Belgium)

Andean countries expressed their intention to work towards limitation of their arms. Secondly, negotiations began in 1973 in Vienna on a reduction of forces and armaments in Central Europe. It is symptomatic that these negotiations took place in the very heart of a continent where political tension was particularly high in the years immediately following the Second World War. These talks were in themselves a test as well as an illustration of an improvement in political relations in Europe.

A number of delegations at this session have already voiced the possibilities of regional negotiations as a means of taking action against the increase in the arms race and the transfer of arms throughout the world. The possibilities of regional negotiations deserve to be given more attention in the General Assembly.

(Mr. Elliott, Belgium)

The requirements of security can sometimes be more easily perceived between States of the same region, and the elements of negotiation may in these cases often be more rapidly identified. It is certainly not the intention of Belgium to try to draw a distinction between regional and global disarmament. Quite the contrary: these two approaches are complementary, and each has a contribution to make to the strengthening of international security.

This, indeed, can be endangered by imbalances or conflict situations developing at the regional level. Any negotiations or measures or arrangements liable to increase confidence or stability among the States concerned at the regional level would help to improve the international situation, to such an extent that interdependence has now become a dominant factor in inter-State relations within the international community.

The Belgian delegation is aware of the complexity of the subject to which it is addressing itself. That is why we would like to see the General Assembly, if not at this session, then at any rate at a later stage in its work, call for a comprehensive study of the question -- a study which might be carried out by the Secretary-General with the assistance of qualified governmental experts.

This comprehensive study could be modelled on the one undertaken in 1975 on the subject of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The latter study also concerned a regional measure although a highly specific one. This time we would be undertaking a more general and exhaustive examination of all the measures which, at the regional or even the subregional level, could be the subject of negotiations.

Apart from nuclear-weapon-free zones, which were already examined in 1975, many other possibilities exist. Thus, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe initiated, in the realm of military security, measures which, although modest in themselves, are nevertheless calculated to increase confidence among States of the region. These measures concerned notification of military manoeuvres, exchange of observers in the course of these manoeuvres, notification of military movements and the exchange of military missions. Other confidence-building measures, particularly the release of information concerning military budgets, could also be contemplated. Although these measures are not strictly disarmament

(Mr. Elliott, Belgium)

measures, they could contribute to an improvement in the climate in certain regions and pave the way for true disarmament or arms control measures. As to arms control measures, the study advocated by Belgium could indicate all the possibilities of limiting or reducing forces in a given region, as well as non-armament measures. It could also deal with measures to control the transfer of arms in the regions. It could also consider the possible relationship between regional disarmament measures and the transfer of arms to the States concerned in the region.

It is obviously for States to make their own security arrangements in exercise of their sovereignty and to determine their needs and the level of their defence forces. But in certain political circumstances, the States of a given region might consider it to be in their interest to seek regional disarmament agreements in conjunction with neighbouring States. Without wishing to supplant the States themselves in determining the advisability and precise form of possible measures, the General Assembly could none the less, for the benefit of States, undertake an over-all examination of the various possibilities. Perhaps certain regional organizations could also undertake studies on their own part.

If Belgium has taken the initiative of raising this subject at the current session, it is because it considers that, without renouncing the goals already set by the international community in the field of disarmament, new efforts should be undertaken and new concrete avenues explored in order ultimately to succeed in controlling the arms race.

It seemed to us that the special session of the General Assembly to be held in 1978 should provide a good opportunity for a comprehensive re-examination of objectives and methods in work on disarmament. In our view, the regional aspects of disarmament should naturally find a place within such a re-examination.

Because of the complexity of the subject, the Belgian delegation does not intend to submit a draft resolution on the subject at this session of the Assembly. We have, however, drafted a short memorandum which has been circulated to members of our Committee in document A/C.1/31/10. We shall revert to this subject in due course. We would call on all States to do some thinking about the ideas contained in this memorandum and in the present statement. If some delegations

(Mr. Elliott, Belgium)

felt that they would like to put forward at this session, either formally or informally, their views on the regional aspects of disarmament, the Belgian delegation would be particularly interested in receiving their comments.

Mr. NEAGU (Romania): In connexion with the draft resolutions which are being examined at this final stage of our debate, devoted to various problems concerning the cessation of the arms race and the adoption of effective disarmament measures, primarily nuclear, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to an aspect to which the Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania attaches particular importance. I have in mind the efforts undertaken within the framework of the United Nations and at the European or Balkan level in order to further the adoption of regional measures aimed at achieving military disengagement and disarmament.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

The Romanian delegation has followed with deep interest the views expressed on building a lasting system of security and co-operation in Europe.

In my country's opinion, the attainment of the final goal, which is general and complete disarmament, requires sustained efforts on a world, regional and even individual scale, first and foremost on the part of some big, heavily armed nations.

As rightly pointed out by the distinguished representative of Belgium, these efforts, far from being contradictory, are of a complementary character, since the measures adopted at one level are likely to favourably affect the course of events at other levels, thereby stimulating the over-all process of military disengagement and disarmament.

The measures agreed at regional level present some advantages due to the fact that they are worked out and adopted under rather homogeneous geopolitical conditions; the security interests of the States are generally similar if not identical; the number of States involved in the negotiations, liable to become parties to the agreements expected to be reached, is comparatively small; the respective States are acquainted with each other and are linked not only by their geographic position but also by the common ties of history; there is usually a network of bilateral and multilateral agreements.

We already had the opportunity to welcome the agreements reached and to explain the grounds on which we support the proposals now under discussion regarding the establishment of various denuclearized zones. We really feel that the further development of regional approaches should also include other steps aiming at strengthening the confidence and stability and at reducing the armed forces and armaments.

This need is particularly felt in Europe where -- more than in any part of the world -- there is at present an unprecedented concentration of armed forces and modern armaments, including nuclear weapons. It is here that the two military blocs -- NATO and the Warsaw Treaty -- are confronting each other. At the same time, Europe presents the advantage of disposing of an institutional mechanism which offers an adequate frame, agreed upon by all the participants, for adopting measures of military disengagement and disarmament. I have in mind the system of periodical meetings agreed upon in the Final Act signed at the highest level in Helsinki in 1975.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

The next meeting, as we know, is scheduled in Belgrade in 1977.

During the first all-European conference, a series of principles has been agreed upon.

It is precisely in compliance with these principles that effective measures had to be taken within a complex process proceeding from simple to complex, from initial to increasingly significant actions. It has then been agreed to proceed in the negotiations on military disengagement and disarmament in the region from the following essential considerations: the complementary nature of the political and military aspects of security; the interrelation between the security of each participating State and security in Europe as a whole; the relationship which exists, in the broader context of world security, between security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean area; respect for the security interests of all States participating in the Conference; the importance that participants in negotiating fora see to it that information about relevant developments, progress and results is provided on an appropriate basis to other States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and, in return, the justified interest of any of those States in having their views considered. It has also been agreed that the elaboration and adoption of effective measures in this field have to constitute, by their scope and by their nature, steps towards the ultimate achievement of general and complete disarmament.

As a first such step the States adopted certain confidence-building measures such as prior notification of major and other military manoeuvres, exchange of observers at such manoeuvres, prior notification of major military movements, restraint and military activities. Now it is high time to add new, more effective measures. Romania considers that energetic actions are required for the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the territory of the European States that do not possess such weapons and the conclusion of a treaty whereby each of the CSCE participants undertakes not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against the other participants. Measures are also to be taken for the dismantling of military bases and the withdrawal of foreign troops from the territory of European States within national frontiers. At the same time, sustained efforts will be necessary on the part of all European States, to bring about a reduction in national armed forces, armaments and military expenditure.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

In this day and age there is an increasing need to make every effort to bring about the simultaneous liquidation of both NATO and the Warsaw Treaty and as a first step in this direction, the abolition of the two military organizations. A practical move will be to prohibit the enlargement of the two military and political groupings and alliances.

It is obvious that an impetus given by the General Assembly of the United Nations to the efforts made by the States for adopting military disengagement and disarmament measures at the regional level would significantly contribute to the attainment of one of the fundamental goals of the United Nations, namely general and complete disarmament. We support in this respect the idea put forward in the Belgian aide-mémoire on the regional aspects of disarmament and arms control (document A/C.1/31/10) concerning the elaboration of a study containing all the aspects of military disengagement and disarmament at regional level. Romania is ready to associate its efforts with those of other interested countries in order to work out such a study as a starting point for the adoption of concrete and effective measures of military disengagement and disarmament at the regional level, as a part of the general process which is imperatively required for the achievement of general and complete disarmament in the world.

Now I should like to address myself to the draft resolution introduced by Sweden on strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. My country attaches particular importance to the United Nations as a most valuable instrument available to mankind in solving international problems, promoting the ideals of freedom and progress for all peoples, fostering understanding and co-operation among all States, strengthening security and safeguarding enduring world peace. We consider that the affirmation of a new course in international life aimed at the establishment of an atmosphere of confidence and understanding between States and at the settlement of international problems of general interest, with the broadest possible participation of all States, requires an adequate strengthening of the role of the United Nations as the centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

The great importance that we attach to United Nations activity in international affairs prompted Romania to request the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session to include in its agenda an item entitled "Strengthening of the role of the United Nations with regard to the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between States".

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

Having considered this item, the General Assembly has adopted every year since then resolutions which are of particular relevance to the discussion we are having today. By these resolutions the General Assembly expressed its conviction of the need to take into account the new realities of the world, called for continuous improvement of the functioning and effectiveness of its principal organs and manifested the considered desirability of keeping constantly under review the over-all problems connected with the role and the effectiveness of the United Nations.

Mindful that disarmament negotiations in the United Nations framework had not led to any significant new agreements in recent years and that the role which the United Nations was playing in disarmament was far from adequate, Romania strongly supported the idea that the General Assembly should consider a basic review of the role of the United Nations in disarmament. We consider that it is imperative to give the United Nations an enhanced role in the field of disarmament in which it should exercise direct authority in the negotiation and conclusion of disarmament measures and in supervising their implementation. My country considers that the United Nations General Assembly should fully exercise its powers with respect to this problem and make this one of its fundamental preoccupations.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament has received a very large number of views and suggestions on ways and means to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. A mere reading of those views and suggestions gives a very clear picture of the great preoccupation shown by States to enhance the place the United Nations occupies in the field of disarmament.

At this stage the Ad Hoc Committee agreed on certain proposals, most of them of a procedural or organizational nature. This represents an achievement, since the United Nations objectives and the strengthening of its prestige and authority in international life are indissolubly linked with the improvement of its structure, organization and operation.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

Meantime I want to stress that the adoption of these proposals should be viewed not as the end of an effort, but just as a beginning of a longer process to put the United Nations in its natural place in the disarmament field. It is in this sense that we read the first operative paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.11 that considers these proposals to be only a step towards the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

For the same reason, we wish also to emphasize the importance of operative paragraph 2 by which the General Assembly decides to keep the question of the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament under constant review.

In concluding, I want to express our hope that the revised version of the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. HARMON (Liberia): Mr. Chairman, in my statement in this Committee on 5 November, I announced that my delegation would in the course of this debate, introduce a draft resolution, in the hope that it may contribute constructively to our common search for what is now obviously the intractable problem of disarmament. You kindly took note of my intention, accordingly, I am now putting this draft before the Committee. However, before doing so, it might be helpful if I recalled to delegates briefly the main points of my previous statement.

First, that after 30 years of intense United Nations efforts the volume of armaments continues to proliferate and seemingly is running out of all control to a point which constitutes a crisis in the world security situation. Many delegates bluntly stated that there had been no real progress and Mr. Azzout of Algeria said the lack of progress was total in the past 30 years of our endeavours.

My second point related the entire problem to the world economic issues and the intolerable poverty of scores of nations. I underline the extravagance of arms expenditures as a tragic diversion from funds needed to deal with the sad consequences of under-development. This was a recurring theme in the general debate, particularly by the Foreign Ministers of Singapore, Denmark, Botswana, and many others and in this Committee by Mexico, Ecuador, Bangladesh, Colombia,

(Mr. Harmon, Liberia)

Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Mali among others. It was noted in Committee Six in a draft convention on economic law presented by the Philippines. In Committee Two, Australia deplored the insufficiency of the UNDP fund and in the Special Political Committee the growing crisis of refugees was stressed in terms of money shortages. The whole world programme is lagging in every part of our vast agenda for mankind for lack of money for peace, while the treasures of nature are buried in hardware for war. But in my statement I went further than a mere choice of priorities. I warned that unresolved problems of global poverty, were themselves becoming a new cause of new wars. I am not speaking of wars between nations over economic interests, although we all remember the war threats by certain nations against OPEC action on oil. I mean the struggle that begins on the streets of nations with hungry people and ends in civil wars, moving on to intervention by rival States.

In this connexion, I would mention the Foreign Minister of Sweden who stated that the struggle between rich and poor nations: "in the long run can endanger peace", and the Foreign Minister of New Zealand, who noted Mr. Waldheim's warning that an economically divided world "could not and would not be politically stable".

My third point, which follows from this new economic component, was the upheaval in our former orientation which constituted the rationale of our past premises and the resulting need for a new approach to the world problem. The same feeling pervaded our whole general debate, although with varying views. To cite a few: Foreign Minister Romulo of the Philippines questioned the efficacy of the concept of deterrence, a concept held as an axiom for the past quarter of a century. Mr. Carlos Bueno of Brazil said that the time had come for a comprehensive reassessment of our difficulties. Mr. Jacques Lecompte of France, one of the five big Powers, said: "New machinery and a fresh momentum should be created to promote disarmament more effectively."

(Mr. Harmon, Liberia)

A Federal Republic of Germany paper released underlined an expanding theory that nothing could constitute a greater threat to détente than another arms race, while Prince Al-Faisal, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, went further to state that disarmament was no longer merely an aspect of détente but a problem of universal dimension. For his part, Bulgaria's Foreign Minister Mladenov saw the intensification of international tensions in most cases as a result of the arms race. For the Common Market countries, the Netherlands saw the regional conflicts --- as in Lebanon --- intensified by the excessive global increase in armaments.

Now, I am not commenting on the merits of all these statements, but merely wish to illustrate the mental and intellectual strain in this Committee and in the general debate in the search for a new set of theories to explain the roots and the proliferation of the new armament races now mushrooming in our world.

This is the quintessence of my previous statement. I said that what was needed --- if we can attune our thinking to a radical revision of basic principles --- was "a new philosophy" that would reflect the impact of political evolution on arms policies. The word "philosophy" may sound strange in our ears, strange indeed in our accustomed disarmament rhetoric, but perhaps no stranger than the paradox of arms increasing in direct ratio to our scores of disarmament resolutions. On the other hand, did we not adopt a formulation for a new economic order, when the old economic concepts became dangerously obsolete?

My fourth point was the importance of making a new start on the whole disarmament problem. I think we undoubtedly shall, and when we do we shall have to develop not only a new approach, but also a new partnership. I think this point was best conveyed by Mr. Hussen of Somalia, when he supported the view of the Secretary-General on the urgency of focusing world public opinion on the problem and on generating a new approach; and by Mr. Templeton of New Zealand, who emphasized the importance of full participation of the smaller nations in the negotiating process. But to do this, he added significantly, there was a need for a greater awareness on the part of world public opinion as to what was actually happening.

There is, of course, the eternal question how the people of the world can be recruited in this difficult task. My delegation believes that the most dramatic way to begin is with a United Nations declaration on what I called a new philosophy on disarmament.

(Mr. Harmon, Liberia)

Accordingly, on behalf of the Liberian delegation, I now have the honour to introduce the following draft resolution:

"The General Assembly,

"Gravely concerned at the mounting rise of armaments in the arsenals of the world's nations, despite many efforts and many years of the United Nations to achieve progress in the reduction of armaments and eventual complete and total disarmament,

"Convinced that the peoples of the world must be made more fully aware of the dangers this condition poses to peace and economic progress, and that such awareness can be made manifest by a declaration on the nature of the disarmament problem,

"Issues the Declaration of a New Philosophy on Disarmament, enunciating the major principles, premises and problems as a common approach by Governments, international institutions and the people in a collective partnership in the development of an agenda for the reduction of armaments and complete and general disarmament."

As part of that draft I shall read the following draft Declaration:

"Declaration of a New Philosophy on Disarmament"

"The General Assembly of the United Nations is impelled to issue a general statement on the crucial issue of disarmament.

"Despite 30 years of sustained United Nations effort by the United Nations and Member Governments, the volume of armaments in national arsenals is greater than ever, and the total annual appropriations for more and newer arms is running into the astronomical figures of hundreds of billions of dollars. Seemingly an accelerated armaments race is running out of the control of the human society.

"Ironically this dedication to maximum arming coincides with man's greatest effort in contemporary history to attain an order of final peace. This is an intolerable contradiction and, if not resolved, could undermine every basic endeavour launched to build a better and safer world for all mankind.

(Mr. Harmon, Liberia)

"With so much at stake we categorically reject the growing pessimism that huge armaments are the historic fate of man and nations. In the dogged spirit of international aspirations we must never give up trying to bring the deadly race to a standstill, and beyond that to dismantle the structures of war until nations learn to live without guns in their hands, in amity and peace.

"Thus, we end our thirty-first session with the conviction that a new beginning must be made, a new approach fashioned --- an essential component initiated chiefly to mobilize the peoples of the world in a new and more effective endeavour. Such a mobilization would, in fact, only be a fulfilment of the United Nations Charter whose first three words --- "We the people" --- makes them beyond all Governments and interstate institutions the primary custodians of the United Nations and its historic peace mission. It is our firm conviction that the people must now fulfil that responsibility in the entire area of the United Nations disarmament objectives.

"To make such participation effective the people must be informed as to the nature of the problem, the difficulties involved, the issues at stake. They must understand that ideas on disarmament, like weapons, can become dated, that new causes arise for new rivalries, that new problems demand new answers.

"Nations produce arms to assure their national security. But behind every concept of national existence is a philosophy of the international condition. Today this philosophy is undergoing profound change.

(Mr. Harmon, Liberia)

"It is the aim of this Declaration, in the interest of an enlightened public participation, to outline what is evolving as a new philosophy of disarmament.

"The new philosophy mirrors the change in the world security situation. In this change the cold war struggle, main root of the arms race, is largely reduced and with it fear of a major war among the big Powers. Despite some hangovers there is an improved relationship among erstwhile hostile nations, and as this develops, arms reductions should hopefully follow in proportion.

"But new causes of fear and uncertainty have emerged. The technological perfection of new and more sophisticated weapons surpasses all scientific expectations. The race is now less ideological and more technological.

"Another new disturbance is the poverty of new nations whose hundreds of millions of people are rebelling against legacies of exploitation, disease, hunger, malnutrition, infant mortality -- and above all hopelessness. Their frustrations on many continents are overthrowing Governments, creating civil wars which, in turn, invite foreign intervention and convert entire nations into a battleground in a new kind of war -- less ideological and more economic. The gap between rich and poor peoples threatens to become war between nations.

"In the interest of peace and justice the United Nations has launched a new economic order to speed up the development of some 100 nations. This will require hundreds of billions of dollars over the years -- vast sums that are now diverted into the production of destructive weapons.

"Thus we are confronted with a kind of molecular chain reaction. New weapons creating new arms races siphon off the vast sums needed to halt economic wars which drive nations into new arming.

"It is a vicious circle threatening the world's two major peace objectives: freedom from political wars through disarmament, freedom from economic wars through economic development.

(Mr. Harmon, Liberia)

"To paraphrase a famous prophecy: they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and the ploughshares shall make no need of swords.

"This is the new philosophy of disarmament. If it becomes a universal creed, peoples working together with Governments and the world organization, in a three-way partnership, can make the age-old dream of a truly peaceful world an eventual reality." (A/C.1/31/L.28)

In conclusion, I wish to make several points briefly. Our proposal is not made in rivalry of any other drafts submitted by delegates, most of which we shall support and some of which we are already co-sponsoring. We are putting forth this Declaration as complementary to other draft resolutions, as something needed to get a new start, to begin from a new beginning, to take the first step in the quest for a new approach. Also, we are open-minded on the Declaration and will co-operate with any other interested delegations who may have their own views on its formulation. I would be pleased if any delegation would wish to join us in this effort and make whatever suggestions or amendments may be necessary to enable us to leave this session of the General Assembly on a high note for the future.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Liberia for his statement in the course of which he introduced draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.28.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): On repeated occasions, but more particularly since 1971, in connexion with the item entitled, "World Disarmament Conference", the General Assembly has expressed in unequivocal terms its conviction that all the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of the disarmament negotiations and that all States should contribute to the adoption of measures for the attainment of that objective. The General Assembly has also stated repeatedly and insistently that nuclear disarmament should be given the highest priority in disarmament negotiations.

To understand how well founded this conviction of the Assembly is, suffice it to recall the fact that the destructive potential of existing nuclear weapons stockpiles would be more than adequate to annihilate life on our planet. While nuclear-weapon States have developed a large variety of such nuclear weapons

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

systems, it is the United States and the Soviet Union who with the greatest enthusiasm have increased and perfected their respective nuclear weapons arsenals. It was for this reason that those two super-Powers decided seven years ago to undertake bilateral negotiations on the limitation of their strategic nuclear weapons systems. This was the reason too why in the Joint Vladivostok Declaration of November 1974, which -- as may be seen from document A/C.1/1070, distributed last year at the request of the Mexican delegation -- includes the provisional agreement of 1972, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to set certain limitations on the number of their strategic nuclear weapons. The total number of offensive nuclear vehicles to be maintained by each of the two super-Powers is 2,400. That figure includes intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and heavy bombers. It was further agreed that out of that total of 2,400 units 1,320 could be equipped with multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles known as MIRVs.

The aforementioned Vladivostok agreement was described by the representatives of the Governments subscribing thereto as an important step forward which would curb the strategic nuclear weapons race. However, the ceilings set on that occasion were much higher than those of two years earlier for each of the parties and even greater than those contemplated for 1977 in the provisional agreement. As regards the number of multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles allowed, the total figure of 1,320 represents a substantial increase for both countries. Earlier the United States had announced its intention to equip a total of 1,046 ballistic missiles with multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles, that is, 550 land-based Minutemen and 496 Poseidon submarine-based missiles. A year ago, the United States possessed about 800 missiles equipped with multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles. Therefore, the 1,320 ceiling is much greater than what that Power had or thought it would have.

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

The case of the Soviet Union is very similar. At present it is developing several types of ballistic missiles equipped with independently-targeted re-entry vehicles, such as the SS-17, the SS-18 and the SS-19. The last two would replace the SS-9 and the SS-11, respectively. It is difficult to determine accurately the number of ballistic missiles that the Soviet Union intended to equip with multiple independently-targeted re-entry vehicles, but there is no doubt that the total of 1,320 is much higher than what that super-Power had planned.

The alarming situation we have just described has once again prompted the delegations of Argentina, Brazil, Nigeria, Peru, Sweden and Mexico to request the reproduction and distribution of a draft resolution relating to the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation of their strategic nuclear-weapon systems. That draft is contained in document A/C.1/31/L.25 and the purpose of the present statement is to introduce it formally.

The content of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.25 is almost identical with that of resolution 3484 C (XXX) of 12 December 1975. This is due to the fact that in the 12 months that have elapsed since the adoption of that resolution, there has been no progress whatsoever in the SALT talks. In the preamble to that draft the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the initiation of those negotiations is recalled. Mention is also made of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly on the subject in the last four years. Reference is made further to agreed measures, including the provisional agreement of 26 May 1972, which is to expire next year, as well as the time-limits set for the conclusion of new agreements. Note is taken of the information contained in document A/31/L.25 of 8 July 1976 and the preamble concludes with a paragraph whereby the General Assembly would reiterate its opinion to the effect that "... disarmament negotiations move very slowly in comparison to the obvious perils posed by the enormous arsenals of nuclear weapons".

The operative part consists of four paragraphs in which first, regret is expressed at the absence of positive results during the last three years of the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation of their strategic nuclear-weapon systems. Secondly, concern is expressed anew by the General Assembly for the very high ceilings of nuclear arms set for themselves by both States, for the total absence of qualitative

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

limitations of such arms, for the protracted time-table contemplated for the negotiation of further limitations and possible reductions of the nuclear arsenals, and for the situation thus created.

Thirdly, the United States and the Soviet Union are urged anew to broaden the scope and accelerate the pace of their strategic arms limitations talks, and, once again, the necessity and urgency of reaching agreement on important qualitative limitations and substantial reductions of their strategic nuclear-weapon systems, as a positive step towards nuclear disarmament, are stressed and lastly, those two Governments are again invited to keep the General Assembly informed in good time of the progress and results of their negotiations.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize the importance that the co-sponsors attach to the exhortation addressed to the two super-Powers concerning the necessity and urgency of reaching agreement on important qualitative limitations and substantial reduction of their strategic nuclear-weapon systems as a positive step towards nuclear disarmament. In this connexion, my delegation notes with satisfaction that the super-Powers in recent declarations made by very high-ranking personalities have begun to use expressions such as "nuclear disarmament" and "real disarmament" to describe the objectives pursued by their bilateral talks.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement, in the course of which, he introduced draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.25.

Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands): I am taking the floor on behalf of the nine member States of the European Communities and I should like to make a few brief comments on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/31/L.10/Rev.2, which has recently been circulated on the subject "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons".

Last year the delegates of Italy, then representing the Presidency of the nine member States of the European Communities stated that, while our own nine countries shared in principle the objectives behind the proposal of the delegation of the Soviet Union, it was not clear to our nine countries how these objectives

(Mr. Kaufmann, Netherlands)

could be met in the best possible way. The nine countries did not consider the draft agreement submitted by the Soviet Union as a sufficient basis for discussion, inter alia, because it did not define any specific prohibition. Despite these doubts, those members of the European Communities which participate in the work of the CCD attended several meetings with experts to discuss the definition and possible scope of a prohibition with respect to the development of new weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

(Mr. Kaufmann, Netherlands)

The meetings in Geneva indicated that certain examples of such weapons -- examples given by some experts -- were already covered by existing treaties. All nine countries take the view that a discussion of the problem of new weapons of mass destruction must not be allowed to cast any doubt upon the scope of existing instruments in the disarmament field. Other examples cited of such weapons were already the subject of negotiations. In our view it is important that the negotiations of the priority items in the CCD and in other disarmament fora, should not be further complicated by discussion of the same weapons under different headings. Moreover, all nine countries are not persuaded that a convention encompassing all possible new types of weapons of mass destruction represents a practical approach to the problems involved. Every weapon system has its own characteristics which must be taken into account, particularly with respect to appropriate verification methods.

Finally, in the view of the nine Governments of the European Communities, only individual agreements dealing with specific weapons systems, rather than a single convention affecting many disparate branches of science and technology, would adequately meet the need to distinguish between peaceful research and weapons development, and that, as a result, peaceful research is not unduly impeded.

For the reasons that I have just mentioned, the delegations of the nine countries of the European Communities will abstain when draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.10/Rev.2 is put to the vote. I should like to stress, however, that all nine countries have in principle a positive attitude towards the problem of preventing the development of new weapons of mass destruction. Those members of the European Communities that participate in the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament stand ready to engage in tactical discussions on potentially dangerous developments in science and technology, whenever such developments come into view. If such discussions lead to the conclusion that in certain areas potentially dangerous developments are to be expected, the particular problem involved can be tackled at that time. In the opinion of the nine countries of the Communities, this would represent a more practical way of handling the subject under discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: I have several announcements to make. First, that Iceland and Paraguay have become co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.20, and that Yugoslavia has become a co-sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.10/Rev.2; next that Bolivia has requested me to announce that it is a co-sponsor of resolution A/C.1/31/L.5/Rev.2. Bolivia listed itself as a co-sponsor of that draft before revision 2 was issued but was left out by mistake, so this is being corrected.

I now call on the Secretary of the Committee to make a further announcement.

Mr. BANERJEE (Secretary of the First Committee): It has been brought to our attention that the names of the delegations of Liberia and Bolivia have inadvertently been omitted from the revised draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.5/Rev.2) that was circulated this morning. This will be rectified in tomorrow's Journal and subsequent documents of this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to remind the members that the time-limit for the submission of draft resolutions expires this afternoon at 6 o'clock and that the time-limit for the introduction of draft resolutions expires tomorrow at 6 p.m.

The meeting rose at 12 noon