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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 23rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BOATEN (Ghana)

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ENGLISH

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Mr. BYELOUSOV (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): In the discussion at this session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, many delegations have referred to the subject of the prohibition of chemical weapons. The total elimination of chemical weapons from the arsenals of States, the prohibition of their development, manufacture and stockpiling, and the destruction of stockpiles of those weapons, is something which properly belongs among the most important and urgent measures of genuine disarmament. Chemical weapons are one of the types of weapons of mass destruction which have existed for a comparatively long time. A beginning was made on limiting these weapons as far back as 1925 when the Geneva Protocol was adopted on the prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous and other similar gases and bacteriological means of waging war. An important step forward was taken by the 1972 Convention prohibiting and providing for the destruction of bacteriological, biological and toxic weapons. Toxic weapons, incidentally, may of course be one of the forms of chemical weapons.

The progress towards an international agreement on the total prohibition of chemical weapons has this year, I believe, begun to assume a more intensive character. As is shown by the report of the Committee on Disarmament, quite a number of official and unofficial meetings were devoted to this topic in 1977. The course of the discussion has shown that at the present time attention has been focused on determining the scope of a future prohibition and also on procedures for implementation, including verification.

As we know, the socialist countries, as far back as 1972, submitted a draft convention providing for the total prohibition and elimination of chemical means of warfare. At the same time, readiness was expressed also to seek partial solutions to this problem which would go just as far as the other parties to the talks appeared ready to go.

(Mr. Byelousov, Ukrainian SSR)

Now, however, it has become clear that an all-embracing prohibition is something which is winning an increasing number of supporters. Now, not only the draft of the socialist countries, but also the documents submitted by other delegations, by and large, are based on the principle of as complete a prohibition as possible of chemical weapons. This new development, of course, is a positive one and warrants support. Control over the implementation of agreements on disarmament is something, of course, of great significance. But it does seem to us that some delegations have unduly exaggerated the importance of imposed methods of control.

The Ukrainian SSR agrees that the control of the implementation of agreements should be based on national means of verification, in conjunction with certain supplementary international procedures. Such control, in our view, would not be prejudicial to the sovereign rights of States. It can be exercised by various means of extraterritorial control, including the use of artificial earth satellites.

Something of great importance, in our view, is the method of exercising control over the destruction of stockpiles of chemical weapons, in particular not only an accounting of the quantity of the substances destroyed, but also a qualitative accounting. On this, as we know, a constructive exchange of views is going on. As has already been pointed out, talks are continuing between the United States of America and the USSR with regard to their joint initiative in the Committee on Disarmament on the question of prohibiting chemical weapons.

We share the view that the early conclusion of those discussions would help the Committee in its work. Noting the active and comprehensive nature of the current discussion of the problem of prohibiting chemical weapons, the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR believes that the General Assembly should call for an acceleration of work to produce an agreement on this question and it is ready to take part in the preparation of an appropriate draft resolution.

(Mr. Lyelousov, Ukrainian SSR)

For the second year now, in the United Nations and in the Committee on Disarmament, a discussion has been going on regarding the proposal to ban the development and manufacture of new forms and systems of weapons of mass destruction. The urgency of this matter is becoming more obvious every day, in the light of the development of science and technology and their application to military uses. This is something which is also confirmed by the continuation of the process of improving existing forms and systems of weapons of mass destruction.

The adoption of such a prohibition requires a measure of political boldness, an ability to look forward, to recognize the danger of the emergence of a new channel for the arms race, at the moment when it is just opening. The Ukrainian SSR supports the proposal that the ban on the development and manufacture of new forms and systems of weapons of mass destruction should take the form of an international treaty binding on the parties to it.

(Mr. Byelousov, Ukrainian SSR)

We should bear in mind that general appeals and recommendations can do nothing to prevent the development of new means of destroying people through the use of advances in science.

In the course of the discussion on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new forms of weapons of mass destruction, attention was devoted to the problem of defining weapons of mass destruction and new forms and systems of such weapons. Indeed, such a definition, which should find a place in the text of the future treaty, requires agreement. A number of delegations insist, however, that the so-called 1948 formula is perfect and should be adopted; that is a definition of weapons of mass destruction which is contained in one of the resolutions of the United Nations Commission on Conventional Armaments.

It is difficult, however, to consider perfect a formula which, at the time when it was produced, was worked out without taking into account the views of all the parties to the talks.

In its attempts to achieve agreement, the Soviet Union has proposed giving a definition of new forms and systems of weapons of mass destruction which would be as close as possible to the 1948 formula, but which would also take into account experience acquired and the purposes and aims of talks on disarmament. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR would like to support that proposal and draw the attention of delegations in the General Assembly to it.

Granted all the importance of the search for a definition, the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR would nevertheless like to stress that the main thing, the most important thing, is to demonstrate political will and come to an agreement on a binding prohibition of the development and manufacture of new means of mass destruction. We believe that the talks on this question, which have been taking place with the participation of qualified governmental experts, should be continued. Furthermore, we take into account the fact that this question is also being discussed between the United States and the Soviet Union, which are considering in the context of that question one aspect in particular of the prohibition of new forms and systems of weapons of mass destruction, that is, a prohibition on radiological weapons.

(Mr. Byelousov, Ukrainian SSR)

A number of delegations in their statements have expressed their views about the convening of a United Nations conference on the question of prohibiting or limiting the use of specific types of conventional weapons, including those which can be viewed as causing excessive harm or of being indiscriminate in their effects. Such a conference, as has been pointed out, would have to take into account both humanitarian and military considerations. In the view of the Ukrainian delegation, this question should be considered and resolved within the general complex of disarmament problems in appropriate international forums. Obviously, in organizing any such forum we must base ourselves on existing experience of conferences on questions pertaining to disarmament and affecting the security interests of States.

The Ukrainian SSR favours the adoption of genuine measures that would lead to a cessation of the arms race and to disarmament. That is a policy of principle which has been followed for 60 years now by the Soviet land. As Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev put it:

"There is no type of weapon - and particularly no type of weapon of mass destruction - which the Soviet Union would not be ready to limit or prohibit on a reciprocal basis by agreement with other States and subsequently eliminate from the arsenals."

That readiness was energetically stressed in the statement of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, in a statement on 2 November at a ceremonial meeting in Moscow devoted to the anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. We note with satisfaction that the new Soviet proposal in the field of disarmament contained in that statement immediately attracted the attention of delegations in the Committee and has already met with positive response.

Experience tells us that a solution to the problem of disarmament is entirely possible, if parties to talks demonstrate the necessary political will and adopt realistic and constructive positions.

Lord GORONWY-ROBERTS (United Kingdom): It gives me great pleasure to return to the United Nations to take part in the thirty-second session of the General Assembly, at a time when the international atmosphere is becoming conducive to further progress in arms control and disarmament. We are fortunate in having as our Chairman in this Committee the distinguished representative of Ghana, Mr. Frank Boaten. His diplomatic skills will surely guide us through a busy session and make our deliberations fruitful. I also congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their appointment.

The British Government is guided by the view that arms control measures can enhance both international stability and national security, provided we can achieve multilateral agreement on practical steps. The United Kingdom has played a prominent part in all the multilateral disarmament negotiations since the United Nations was founded, and is a party to all the treaties which have been produced. Our contribution to the major arms control measures for which we stand as a depositary Power - the partial test ban Treaty of 1963, the outer space Treaty of 1967, the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968, the sea-bed Treaty of 1971 and the biological weapons Convention of 1972 - is well known. We accept that as a nuclear-weapon State we have a special responsibility in the arms control field. We are determined to carry out that responsibility to the fullest extent.

The past year has seen some consolidation of earlier arms control efforts. The Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques has been opened for signature, and has already been signed by 40 countries. Another review conference, on the sea-bed Treaty, has proved the value of regularly assessing whether a multilateral arms control treaty has effectively fulfilled the purpose for which it was designed. The role of the United Nations in disarmament has been demonstrated by the valuable work of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament, whose 1976 Yearbook is an excellent achievement.

But 1977 was even more a year of new beginnings. We have seen the inauguration of a President of the United States who has made arms control one of his foreign policy priorities. We have observed the emphasis



(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

with which the President of the Soviet Union speaks of disarmament as a key to the improvement of international relations. We have followed with great satisfaction the progress of these two countries in tackling many arms control issues, and the growth of a co-operative effort which is vital to the success of global endeavours to limit armaments. Important measures which have eluded us for years are now at last within our grasp.

If 1977 was a year of beginnings, 1978 must be a year of decision and achievement. In particular, the British Government welcomes the initiative of the non-aligned countries in calling for a United Nations special session on disarmament in May and June of next year. This will be the first occasion of its kind for many years when disarmament in all its aspects will be a major focus of international public attention. The meetings of the Preparatory Committee, in which the United Kingdom has played an active part, have already demonstrated that States are approaching the special session in a constructive manner, with the emphasis on achieving consensus.

This is a good portent. Given a spirit of mutual understanding and a willingness to work together in a common cause, we have a unique opportunity to reach agreement on the general principles for practical measures of arms control and disarmament. Already the preparations for the special session have given a renewed impetus to long-standing negotiations and brought a significant reappraisal of rigid attitudes. What is needed now is a new look at the whole sphere of disarmament with a view to establishing what is feasible in both the short and the longer term.

We must resolutely keep in mind our ultimate objective - general and complete disarmament under effective international control. The British Government sees value in the various quantitative approaches to general and complete disarmament, such as the reduction of military expenditure. It is worth considering whether there is scope for agreement on the universal and balanced reduction of military budgets.

Failure in the past to implement formal proposals for the limitation of military expenditures has been attributed to a general lack of trust between countries, and their unwillingness to provide the kind of information

necessary to maintain confidence in the observance of expenditure limits. Success depends upon finding a satisfactory system of measurement and comparison of military expenditures. Agreement in this area would be an important first step towards effective limitation.

The Secretary-General's group of experts on the reduction of military budgets has done valuable work on this question. After taking into account the comments submitted by States in response to United Nations General Assembly resolution 31/87, the experts have suggested that arrangements for the completion of the international reporting instrument by States should be handled by a panel of experienced practitioners in the field of military budgeting, under the aegis of the United Nations. They recommend that a start should be made with a pilot study involving a small number of countries reflecting as varied a group as possible of different military budgeting and accounting systems.

I am sure this is the right way to proceed, and I appeal to my colleagues from Eastern Europe to support an early start. Without the co-operation of all States, with diverse economic systems and at different stages of development, it will not be possible to accomplish the ultimate aim - a balanced and verifiable reduction of military expenditures leading to the release of resources both nationally and internationally for urgent economic and social needs. Close consultation is also needed to ensure that this kind of arms control measure does not create a strategic imbalance and thus undermine international security.

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

As the new report of the Secretary-General's study group on economic and social consequences of the arms race and of military expenditures makes clear, the developing countries have a special interest in the expenditure limitation approach. Their share of world military expenditure, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute estimates, increased from 6 per cent in 1966 to 15 per cent in 1976. In this context, I should like to refer to the interesting proposal of Sweden and other Nordic countries that the United Nations should carry out the new in-depth study of the economic and social implications of the alternative use of resources currently devoted to defence. The subject is highly complex and very incompletely understood. It cannot be taken for granted that the redeployment of military resources to civilian purposes will be achieved without a measure of economic disruption and industrial restructuring. The Nordic proposal could throw more light on these problems and might be considered an appropriate follow-up to the Secretary-General's exercise on the reduction of military budgets.

A universal and balanced reduction of military budgets would have the additional advantage of helping to limit the acquisition of armaments. But we also need wider approaches. We must find a means of reducing the massive build-up in conventional arms throughout the world without prejudicing the security of States, particularly those that rely on imports.

The British Government has always taken careful account of all the factors involved in arms sales. We shall continue to urge international discussion of possible arrangements for restraints, on the part of both suppliers and customers, in conventional arms transfers. The United States has recently taken an important initiative by adopting a policy of constraint on United States arms exports. President Carter has spoken of the need to reduce the rate at which the most advanced and sophisticated weapon technologies spread around the world. We recognize the difficulty of reconciling restraint with the inalienable right of all States to defend themselves. But we are convinced of the necessity of agreed measures of multilateral restraint. We believe that the regional approach could offer hope for progress.

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

At last year's session of the General Assembly, the Foreign Minister of Belgium first suggested that the regional aspects of disarmament deserved greater study. The British Government shares the view that this is potentially a productive approach to arms control even though previous regional efforts may not have been crowned with complete success. My own Government is actively engaged with other nations in complex talks on mutual and balanced force reductions which have still to overcome the central problem of the imbalance of conventional forces in central Europe. We see merit in the idea in the Sri Lanka working paper of 18 May for regional conferences on disarmament issues. We welcome the efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union to come to agreement on mutual military restraint in the Indian Ocean.

The United Kingdom strongly supports the aims of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, but is concerned that the Latin American nuclear-weapon-free zone is not yet in force for a large part of that continent and that one of the nuclear-weapon States has not yet endorsed the Treaty. Nevertheless, we believe that nuclear-weapon-free zones could make an important contribution to regional security and non-proliferation. We shall view with sympathy attempts to establish any further zones in clearly defined land areas that meet these basic criteria: a voluntary decision to participate by the States in the region; an enhancement of security for all participants; the inclusion of all militarily significant States - preferably all States - within the region; and adequate arrangements for impartial international verification.

We should like to see an agreed definition of what is meant by the concept of "zones of peace". There would clearly be scope for action in several parts of the world if a peace zone was defined as an area in which the regional States agreed to exercise arms limitation, to settle their disputes peacefully, and to develop their relations with one another in order to create conditions of peace. Such a peace zone would help to reduce tensions and to establish greater trust between neighbours. It might even be possible to introduce confidence-building measures of the kind agreed in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Some valuable progress has been made in recent years in promoting détente and the relaxation of international tensions. The Final Act of the Conference

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

on Security and Co-operation in Europe remains the most important example of the détente process. But détente is, and must remain, indivisible, and therefore cannot be confined to Europe. The global application of détente was underlined by the two sides when the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. David Owen, visited the Soviet Union three weeks ago. To quote from the communiqué issued in Moscow:

"In confirming their commitment to a policy of détente, they declared their determination to contribute to its extension to all areas of the world and to encouraging better and closer contacts and understanding between their peoples, and thus to making progress in détente irreversible".

The Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union presented on 28 September a memorandum and draft declaration on the deepening and consolidation of international détente containing many ideas that are shared by the British Government. We agree that détente needs to be deepened and consolidated and that we should do all we can to reduce the risks of nuclear war. That is why we took the initiative in proposing an Anglo-Soviet agreement on the prevention of accidental nuclear war which was signed in Moscow on 10 October. The purpose of this agreement is to guard against the danger of nuclear war arising from the accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons. Together with similar agreements between other countries, it contributes to a reduction in the risk of crisis which could have disastrous consequences for the whole of mankind.

However, as Mr. Gromyko told the General Assembly on 27 September, States should avoid putting forward proposals which they know other States find unacceptable. We were therefore surprised at the reappearance in the draft declaration of several proposals which previous experience has shown do not command universal acceptance. For example, many countries believe that the proposed world treaty on the non-use of force adds nothing to the United Nations Charter and might even tend to weaken its authority.

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

I should like to turn now to the control of specific weapons. First, there is an urgent need to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. The British Government, which possesses no offensive chemical-weapon capability, is committed to the early achievement of an effective ban. It was for this purpose that the United Kingdom submitted a draft convention in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) in August 1976. The wide range of discussion in the CCD and the nature of the responses show that the draft has served to focus attention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, particularly in the difficult area of verification. I hope the draft will also be useful when the CCD gets down to serious negotiations on a ban.

The question of chemical weapons is at present being discussed jointly by the United States and the Soviet Union, and we understand that some solid progress has been made. We would hope to see a joint initiative from those two countries in time for the CCD to start negotiating a treaty text in 1978. While agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union is obviously essential, it is equally important that there should be a real role for the CCD and the rest of the international community so that the end product can command universal acceptance. I would add that if all nations were prepared to state clearly their present policy with regard to possession of chemical weapons, as has been suggested by Yugoslavia, this would be a positive step pending the achievement of the ban we are seeking.

Then there is the question of those conventional weapons which may be considered to cause unnecessary suffering or to have indiscriminate effects. The United Kingdom was disappointed that during the final session of the Diplomatic Conference on humanitarian law earlier this year the Ad Hoc Committee on Conventional Weapons was unable to complete its work of considering new prohibitions or restrictions on inhumane weapons. Accordingly we co-sponsored a resolution calling for a new conference to be held not later than 1979 to continue the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. We believe that here, as in other fields, it is

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

essential that the consideration of proposals should proceed by consensus, and we hope that on this basis the 1979 Conference will reach final agreement on a number of proposals which we and other countries have put forward.

The last two years have also seen a review of the whole problem of weapons of mass destruction. The informal meetings of the CCD with experts have underlined the validity of the definition of weapons of mass destruction laid down by the Commission on Conventional Armaments on 12 August 1948. All the categories named - atomic explosive weapons, radioactive-material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons - are the subject of existing treaties or current negotiations, bilateral and multilateral.

We are therefore now concerned with the last part of the 1948 definition, that is:

"... any weapons developed in the future which have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of the atomic bomb or other weapons mentioned above".

While we have not been able to find any evidence that there are any new weapons of mass destruction - or indeed that there is the potential for them - other than those based on the scientific principles of the groups of atomic, radiological, chemical or biological weapons and thus the subject of existing agreements or negotiations, such weapons could nevertheless appear in due course and the British Government agrees with the need to try to prevent that. The difficulty is that any treaty about futuristic developments is bound to be uncertain in its scope. Nor would it be possible to devise appropriate verification procedures when the nature of the activities to be monitored was unknown.

We believe that a more fruitful approach would be an appeal by the world community in the form of a declaration calling on States to refrain from the development of new weapons of mass destruction, coupled with a request to the CCD to keep the matter under review. From time to time the CCD may decide to negotiate specific instruments to deal with the development and production of particular weapons of mass destruction based on new

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

scientific principles. The United Kingdom has therefore joined with other countries in submitting a draft resolution for this purpose. We believe it merits the support of all United Nations Members and we strongly urge that it be approved by a consensus vote. It would provide a fitting expression of the principles underlying the Soviet initiative of 1975.

This brings me to the greatest problem of all, how to curb the nuclear arms race and prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons. The world is looking for assurance that the nuclear-weapon States are carrying out their obligation under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The British Government strongly supports the efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union to reach agreement on the limitation of strategic arms, and we welcome the recent statements by both sides that they are within sight of such an agreement. Success in the second round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) would be an important milestone on the road to an actual reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the super-Powers. The British Prime Minister has welcomed President Carter's commitment to work for reductions in strategic arms, with the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The British nuclear deterrent has always had a defensive purpose. President Carter pledged here on 4 October that the United States would not use nuclear weapons except in self-defence; that is, in circumstances of an actual nuclear or conventional attack on the United States, its territories or armed forces or its allies. We welcome this declaration as a constructive clarification of the American position in the interests of peace and security for all. It makes explicit a policy which we have always regarded as being implicit in the possession of nuclear weapons.

Another major question which I wish to discuss is a comprehensive test ban. Since the partial test-ban Treaty came into force in 1963 discussions on a comprehensive test ban have been conducted in the United Nations and other forums but until this year no really significant progress has been made. Meanwhile there have been over 500 underground nuclear tests.



(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

The British Government is therefore very pleased to have started negotiations on a comprehensive test ban with the Governments of the United States and the Soviet Union. The fact that these tripartite negotiations in Geneva follow direct consultations between the three Heads of Government testifies to the importance attached to them. Delegations from our three Governments met for over two weeks in July and resumed their negotiations on 3 October. There has been serious, detailed and encouraging discussion of the main issues.

The British objective in these negotiations can be simply stated: a multilateral comprehensive test-ban treaty of unlimited duration, the banning of all nuclear explosions and effective provisions for verification. It is also our aim to arrive at a treaty to which the maximum number of States, nuclear and non-nuclear, will wish to accede. We believe that such a treaty should enter into force as soon as possible. I warmly welcome the priority given to this subject by President Brezhnev in his speech on 2 November. I can assure this Committee that the British Government, as one of the three parties to the comprehensive test-ban negotiations, will consider this significant statement urgently and positively. We regard it as a major step forward. We fully share the hope expressed by President Brezhnev that our negotiations will be brought to an early successful conclusion.

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

The United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union were the first to develop nuclear weapons. The same three countries have made progress towards limiting those weapons, first in the partial test ban Treaty of 1963 and then in promoting the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. It is right that the three should, in the spirit of our undertakings in those treaties, seek to agree on the principles of a comprehensive test ban, and I believe that the world expects no less of us. But it is also right that, once we have agreed on the key elements, the details should be passed to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament so that a treaty text can be worked out multilaterally. Such a treaty would reduce nuclear weapons competition, strengthen détente, and make a very important contribution to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

If the international community is to control nuclear proliferation, it must remove the incentive to acquire nuclear weapons. It is essential to foster an international climate hostile to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The adherence of over 100 States to the non-proliferation Treaty is evidence of the very great support for measures to ensure that nuclear weapons do not spread. We have repeatedly urged all States to adhere to the Treaty. My Government strongly believes that South Africa should allay international fears by adhering as soon as possible to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and by accepting international safeguards on its nuclear facilities.

The commitment in the Non-Proliferation Treaty to curb the spread of nuclear weapons is accompanied by the equally important commitment under its article IV to promote the further development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The central requirement is how best to reconcile these two objectives. The international safeguards system is a major part of the answer to this problem. We must constantly strive to make it as watertight and non-discriminatory as possible. That is why for the past two years the British Government has advocated the general application of full fuel cycle safeguards. Following our initiative a model agreement had been drawn up by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to enable nations that are not party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to accept full fuel cycle safeguards on their nuclear industries.

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

In parallel with this work on safeguards, the nuclear suppliers group has been concentrating on the harmonization of nuclear export policies, as called for by the NPT review conference in 1975. Some critics have described the activities of the group as being monopolistic, aimed at increasing the profits of the suppliers from the sales of nuclear technology. In fact, the opposite is the case. The purpose of the group's discussions in London has been to ensure that safeguards and the non-proliferation aspects of sales of nuclear materials and equipment take precedence over commercial considerations. The group has established guidelines which have that very beneficial effect, and is making them available to the Director-General of the IAEA.

I believe that it would be useful to open the nuclear suppliers group to a wider membership. We have to establish an international dialogue based on our common recognition that all countries, whatever their stage of development, are entitled to feel confident that their future nuclear energy needs will be met. Without that feeling of confidence, general agreement on measures to control the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in the cause of non-proliferation, will not be possible.

We also have to examine what fuel cycle would most effectively contribute to non-proliferation objectives, while taking into account environmental, economic and of course energy supply considerations. This is the starting point for the international nuclear fuel cycle evaluation initiated by the United States. A wide international effort will be needed to make that evaluation a success, requiring the support of many nations, suppliers and customers alike. My Government has been pleased to accept, together with Japan, the co-chairmanship of an important study group. We shall, of course, play an active role in all these studies.

As I have indicated, a major event for all of us concerned with disarmament will be the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament, now only six months away. I very much hope it will be attended by all militarily significant States, including all the nuclear Powers. There are two items on the provisional agenda adopted by the Preparatory Committee which I should like to discuss.

First, the agenda calls for a review of "the international machinery for negotiations on disarmament". I have referred at several points today to the indispensable role of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) as a negotiating forum. The body has proved its technical competence and its ability to reconcile different views in the interests of international agreement on arms control measures. It may be that the CCD's methods are still short of perfection; we ourselves have made proposals for improving them. The British Government was pleased that a compromise was achieved in the spring which enabled the CCD to reform its working procedures to the particular benefit of States that are not members of the CCD. But we were disappointed that it did not prove possible to agree on means of associating non-Members of the Committee even more closely in the discussion of treaty texts being negotiated.

My second point concerns the proposed adoption by the special session of a "programme of action on disarmament". This is directly related to the work to be done by the spring session of the CCD on a comprehensive negotiating programme for disarmament. It will certainly be useful to have an outline of the task before us in all its major aspects. But one lesson we have learned in the 32 years since the United Nations General Assembly started the disarmament process with its historic resolution 1 (1) is that the political conditions for achievements in this field mature at various speeds and for a vast assortment of reasons often beyond our control. We must be ready to seize the opportunity when conditions can be made right for progress, and we should avoid setting rigid and over-optimistic timetables which result in frustration and public disillusionment.

(Lord Goronwy-Roberts, United Kingdom)

The British Government has been greatly encouraged by the careful preparations for the special session which have taken place and the welcome emphasis on co-operation rather than confrontation. We have put a great deal of effort into the work of the Preparatory Committee so ably presided over by Mr. Ortiz de Rozas. We are determined to play an active and constructive part in the search for a declaration on disarmament which all countries can accept and a set of agreed direct objectives. We shall seek to promote certain ideas which we believe will be helpful to progress.

In conclusion, may I say that at the beginning of my remarks today I expressed optimism about the prospects for progress in 1978: the special session is a great opportunity for us all. Clearly, arms control and disarmament can make a major contribution to the general improvement of international relations, and I affirm that the United Kingdom will be persistent in seeking practical measures by multilateral negotiation. As Mr. Callaghan, our Prime Minister, said recently, it is by following the road of negotiations that we shall ensure real security for our people. Slowly, one by one, the building blocks of peace are being assembled. It is our task to see that all those working in the disarmament field are given a blueprint for constructing the edifice we seek: a state of peace and security in which we can concentrate on the solution of the many other difficult problems which beset the world.

Mr. DOLGUCHITS (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): On the eve of the anniversary of the Soviet State, the peoples of which, together with the whole of progressive mankind, in a few days time will be solemnly celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, we take particular satisfaction in drawing the Committee's attention to the fact that the leading role in the initiative in the struggle for peace, the cessation of the arms race, and for disarmament, has been played by the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community.

(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

The founder of the Soviet State, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, proclaimed disarmament to be the ideal of socialism. He included among the practical objectives of the foreign policy of the socialist State, the eradication of militarization which would free mankind from the burden of armaments. The objective of complete and general disarmament has been solemnly enshrined in the new Constitution of the USSR.

As they have been for all the 60 years of the existence of the Soviet State, the initiatives of our country in the international arena are aimed today at removing the threat of war, restraining the arms race, deepening and broadening co-operation, all of which would be of benefit to all States.

Both in the course of the general debate in the plenary Assembly and in statements in the First Committee, many delegations have stressed that the objective of ceasing the arms race, implementing real disarmament measures, up to and including complete and general disarmament, is at once the biggest and the most important problem of the world political scene today. The intense and persistent yearning of the peoples of the world for a limitation on armaments and for disarmament itself is easy to understand. The world which has throughout its long history suffered from the bloodshed of innumerable local and two world wars is becoming ever more ready to espouse the idea that a halt to the arms race, together with disarmament, are the most important factors in preventing new armed conflicts and preserving and consolidating peace.

In a speech at a dinner in honour of the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Desai, on 21 October of this year, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade Brezhnev, stated:

"The main danger threatening the peace and tranquillity of the world today is undoubtedly the continuation of the arms race. To stop it, to prevent the world, as it were, through sheer inertia, by virtue of the crazy logic of the escalation of military arsenals, from edging towards nuclear catastrophe is the heart of the matter today."

(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

The funds now being spent on the manufacture of armaments - virtually \$1 billion a day - are essential in meeting the urgent economic and social needs of mankind and to raise the living standards of the peoples of the world. The conscience of mankind cannot resign itself to the monstrous waste of effort and funds of so many nations on the production of ever newer deadly weapons. At present, one and a half times more money is being spent on armaments than on education, and three and a half times more money than on health.

We are sure that an end can and must be put to the arms race because the struggle against war and for peace, and the curbing of the arms race, now has a reliable basis, namely the might of the forces of socialism, the forces of peace and democracy, freedom and the progress of peoples. It is for this that we must now act. We must find sensible solutions which, as soon as possible, could lead to genuine disarmament, and to the materialization of détente, which must become a truly universal and irreversible process.

Many delegations, at this very session of the General Assembly, have already pointed to the fact that in recent years it has been possible to take definite steps towards restraining the arms race. Reference has been made here to the agreements between the USSR and the United States, France and the United Kingdom, designed to prevent nuclear war and to reduce the danger of its accidental outbreak. The Soviet-American agreements on the limitation of strategic weapons, the treaties on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water; the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons in outer space, on celestial bodies, on the sea-bed and the ocean floor; the international convention on the prohibition of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and on their destruction; the Convention on the prohibition of environmental modification techniques for military and other hostile purposes, signed in Geneva this year by the Byelorussian SSR, among others.

(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

The peoples of the world place great hope in the continuing Soviet-American talks on the limitation of strategic armaments, in the course of which there occurred a definite break-through. Reference has been made here to other steps which, albeit small, are nevertheless steadily bringing the world closer to removal of the threat of nuclear war. In this context we feel that any steps are to be welcomed.



(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

It is very important, however, to redouble our efforts to deepen and consolidate international détente and to prevent the danger of nuclear war. Concrete proposals to that end, submitted by the Soviet Union at this session, are also being discussed in our Committee; they have won support and approval from many delegations.

We also share the view that the approval of a declaration on the deepening and consolidating of international détente and the adoption of resolutions on prevention of the danger of nuclear war will create even more favourable conditions for disarmament talks. That goal would also be served by practical measures for the further improvement of the international climate in Europe and the reducing of the danger of military conflict there. For that we must, first and foremost, remove the obstacles to solution of the problem of reducing armed forces and armaments in Central Europe.

Of vast importance too would be the conclusion by the participants in the pan-European conference of a treaty committing parties not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against another and implementation of the proposal by the socialist countries on the renunciation of expansion of existing, or the creation of new, closed military groupings. The acceleration of a solution for the problem of disarmament would be served also by positive steps towards détente on other continents and in other parts of the world.

The interests of universal peace would be served by agreement on the reduction of military activities in the Indian Ocean. Although the Soviet-American talks on certain questions relating to the Indian Ocean are bilateral in character, the Soviet side is taking into account the interests of the coastal States of the Indian Ocean in turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. The Soviet Union has repeatedly stated its readiness to take part on an equal footing in efforts to that end. The key issue for the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean is the elimination of foreign military bases in that area.

Apart from the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, of great importance also would be the withdrawal from the Mediterranean area

(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

of vessels and submarines carrying nuclear weapons and the creation of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. The time has come to make a start on more radical measures in the field of limiting armaments and of disarmament.

A broad comprehensive programme of disarmament measures that are most urgent at the present time is contained in the Soviet memorandum on questions of halting the arms race and disarmament submitted to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly; they are also to be found in documents submitted by the seven socialist countries to the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament.

In a report to the ceremonial meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Russian Soviet Socialist Republics in celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution on 2 November 1977, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade L. Brezhnev, said:

"We believe that we should begin to bend downwards the curve of the arms race and gradually lower the level of military confrontation. We want to see a substantial reduction and, subsequently, the total elimination of the threat of nuclear war, the most serious danger to mankind; and this is precisely the aim of the well-known proposals of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

"Today we are proposing to take a radical step: to come to an agreement on the simultaneous cessation by all States of the manufacture of nuclear weapons - all weapons of this kind, be they atomic, hydrogen or neutron bombs or shells. Simultaneously the nuclear Powers could assume the obligation to proceed to a gradual reduction of already accumulated stockpiles of those weapons, progressing towards ultimately the total, 100 per cent, destruction of those stockpiles. Atomic energy - only for peaceful purposes.

"That is the appeal addressed to the Governments and peoples of the world in the year of its sixtieth anniversary by the Soviet State."

(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

The Soviet Union has also stated its readiness to come to an agreement, along with the prohibition for a specific period of all nuclear-weapon tests, to declare a moratorium on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. We should like to express our satisfaction at the fact that a number of delegations in the Committee have responded favourably to these Soviet initiatives. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR expresses the hope that all the peoples and States of the world will properly assess those important steps by the USSR.

It is obvious that efforts to attain disarmament are undermined if at the same time there is a continued deployment of new systems of weapons which are substantially more sophisticated and have even more destructive power. As science and technology develop, so too the probability of increase and emergence of new and extremely dangerous types of weapons for the destruction of mankind. In this connexion, in 1975 the Soviet delegation submitted a proposal to conclude an agreement on the prohibition of the manufacture of new forms and systems of weapons of mass destruction. That initiative was widely supported at the thirtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament is working on a draft agreement.

Particular concern over the continuation of the manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction - and especially the neutron bomb - has been expressed also in statements at this session of the General Assembly. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR associates itself with the views of those delegations which have called for the earliest possible conclusion of the work on the text of an international agreement on the prohibition of new forms and systems of weapons of mass destruction. This session of the General Assembly should give new impetus to the conclusion of that work.

In this regard we hope that the draft resolution entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons", submitted by the German Democratic Republic, Hungary and the USSR in document A/C.1/32/L.4, will find complete support in this Committee.

(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

An important and urgent problem is the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons. As far back as 1972 the socialist countries, including the Byelorussian SSR, introduced in the Committee on Disarmament a draft of a new convention on the prohibition of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of reserves of chemical weapons and their destruction. The approach which underlay that draft was to ensure the solution of the problem of the total prohibition and elimination of chemical means of waging war. However, because of the negative attitude of certain Western countries it was not possible to make progress in finding a solution to this problem. The wish to overcome the inertia in talks is what dictated the agreement of the USSR, by way of a first step, to the banning of the most dangerous and deadly forms of chemical weapons.

This year there were bilateral Soviet-American consultations with the purpose of giving further consideration to questions relating to a possible joint initiative in the Committee on Disarmament. In the course of those consultations questions were discussed connected with determining the scope of the prohibition and control measures for a possible agreement on chemical weapons. The Byelorussian delegation notes with satisfaction that the USSR and the United States of America are continuing work with a view to preparing the text of an appropriate document designed to bring about the practical implementation of the joint initiative.

(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

For many years now the United Nations has been discussing the problem of the reduction of military budgets. The Soviet Union has long been proposing that we reach an agreement on practical measures in this field. Even at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, readiness was expressed, along with the United States, the United Kingdom and France, to proceed to a freezing and, indeed, to an actual reduction of military budgets by 10 to 15 per cent. At the same time the Soviet Union unilaterally reduced its own military expenditures, thus demonstrating and setting a worthy example for others to follow. At the same time, the Soviet Union expressed its readiness to come to an agreement that a specific proportion of the funds saved through the reduction of military budgets of the major Powers should be earmarked for the provision of economic assistance to the developing countries.

The attainment of these objectives is something which is served by resolution 3093 A (XXVIII), adopted on the initiative of the Soviet Union by the General Assembly, which contains a recommendation to all States permanent members of the Security Council to reduce military expenditures by 10 per cent and to allocate part of the funds released as a result of this reduction of military budgets for the provision of assistance to developing countries, for the purpose of carrying out the most urgent economic and social tasks.

But this proposal so far has not been complied with because of the resistance of those States which have been stubbornly pursuing a policy of stepping up military appropriations.

History teaches us that the struggle for disarmament is a long drawn out and difficult struggle, requiring tremendously hard work on the part of everyone. There has hardly been a single important proposal designed to limit the arms race which has not met with the most stubborn resistance from imperialist reaction and other opponents of disarmament; but experience also shows us that, given goodwill and the combining of the efforts of all peace-loving forces, it is possible to curb the forces of militarism and reaction.

(Mr. Dolguchits, Byelorussian SSR)

At the international meeting of peace partisans in Minsk, devoted to celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the victory over fascism in the Second World War, a candidate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, First Secretary of the Byelorussian Communist Party Central Committee, Mr. Masherov, said:

"In the years of the second world war, as we know, a fighting alliance was operating of the opponents of fascist barbarism, an alliance of all democrats, in spite of social and ideological differences. This was dictated by the times. Today the times dictate that we free mankind from the threat of nuclear war, and this makes just as imperative the unity of action on the part of the peoples and of all people of goodwill in the struggle against reaction and militarism. The Communist Party and the Soviet State believe in the need to make détente irreversible, to extend it to all countries and continents and to strengthen political détente by military détente, that is, genuine progress towards the consistent elimination of the arsenals of war. It is only in this way that we can stabilize the foundations of universal peace and, on behalf of the glorious memory of those who perished in the struggle against fascism, to strengthen peace in the name of the most vital and most urgent interests of the present and succeeding generations. All of us should make a contribution to such a humanitarian and noble task."

Mr. CORREA DA COSTA (Brazil): Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to express to you the satisfaction of the Brazilian delegation on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of the Political and Security Committee. I would also wish to convey our congratulations to our Vice-Chairmen, the permanent representatives of Finland and Hungary, Mr. Pastinen and Mr. Hollai, and to the Rapporteur, Mr. Correa of Mexico.

It is all too easy to forget that what is ultimately at stake here is the very survival of mankind. It is all too easy to resign ourselves simply to go through the motions of a debate on disarmament without realizing

that failure to achieve meaningful results can ultimately spell disaster for mankind. Universal annihilation has long ceased to be a theoretical possibility. It is all too easy to let ourselves be lulled into a false sense of confidence in the future by the optimistic statements of those who, for reasons of their own, would seek to convince us that disarmament is just around the corner. It is not.

Thirty-two years ago, mankind was just recovering from a devastating war that spread unprecedented destruction over the face of this planet. With a new lease on life, it was eager to renounce weapons as an instrument of politics and to commit itself to a future of peace and understanding. We did not get much further than that. Not only did disarmament not materialize, but the arms race got off to a swift start. The arms race soon became a nuclear arms race. And it was not long before megatons, overkill and countless other ominous expressions became part of our daily vocabulary.

We have learned to live in fear. Numbed, we have learned to shrug off the very real threat to our existence and to find comfort in unreal rationalizations about balances of terror and second-strike capabilities. We have even grown accustomed to hearing, with nary a shudder, of the latest developments in the increasingly sophisticated technology of war: nuclear weapons that conveniently destroy expendable human beings while leaving intact valuable material assets, satellites that search and destroy other satellites, strategic missiles that play hide-and-seek in underground tunnels. The list goes on and on.

However sceptical and disillusioned we may have become, we cannot fail to look forward with anticipation to this yearly debate on disarmament. The chances for a breakthrough are growing slimmer indeed, and we know that we will probably be frustrated in whatever expectations we may still have, but we cannot forego the effort, we simply cannot afford to stop trying.

Year after year we listen with patience and care to the necessarily noteworthy statements on disarmament made by the two countries that share the primary responsibility for the continuation of the arms race, and of the

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

nuclear arms race in particular. And we read and reread these statements in the hope of finding some sign, or even just a hint, that would justify faith in a future free from the unmitigated use of force in international relations, a future free from the menacing terror of nuclear destruction.

What is lacking is the political will to disarm on the part of those who possess the major part of the world's armaments and who are continually amassing more - and ever more deadly - weapons. Theirs is the primary responsibility in leading the way to the implementation of truly significant measures that would definitely stop and reverse the nuclear arms race, measures that would facilitate the attainment of the political conditions of confidence and mutual trust necessary for progress towards the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

For years we have been told by each side that such political will does indeed exist; it is just not translated into reality, either because it is the other side that will not co-operate, or because the complexities of the technicalities involved indefinitely delay the achievement of perceptible progress. And the undeniable fact remains that the two major military Powers not only retain but are constantly refining and increasing their destructive arsenals.

In the final analysis, we are really expected to trust the nuclear weapon Powers to use their weapons wisely and responsibly or, it is hoped, not to use them at all. We are in effect being told to believe that the very countries that have displayed their readiness to employ nuclear technology for destructive purposes show greater wisdom and sense of responsibility than those who have forsworn nuclear weapons and who are committed to employing nuclear technology exclusively for their economic and social development.

It could even be said that it was almost as if so much attention has recently been focused on the non-proliferation aspects of the transfer of nuclear technology and equipment merely in order to confuse certain primarily economic issues involved and to divert attention from one major issue in the field of armaments: namely, the fact that the nuclear arms race goes on unchecked and that not a single nuclear weapon has ever been destroyed as a result of a disarmament agreement.



(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

Not that we do not support the limited efforts that have been made in the field of arms control and limitation. Brazil is a party to the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the Outer Space Treaty of 1966 and the Biological Weapons Convention of 1971. We also signed the Sea-Bed Treaty of 1970, and we will shortly be signing the Convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. Brazil attaches particular importance to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America - the Treaty of Tlatelolco - which was signed in 1967 and ratified in 1968.

In most cases we participated directly in the negotiations that led to the conclusion of each of these agreements. We also participated actively in the negotiations on the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. But our efforts to produce a just, balanced and non-discriminatory treaty based on General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX) were not matched by corresponding steps by certain nuclear Powers.

We also support the efforts being made through the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) towards a long overdue comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons. We are hopeful that the CCD's lengthy negotiations on a chemical weapons convention will soon come to a positive conclusion, and we are encouraged to hear from the representative of the United States that a SALT II agreement is now taking shape, and that SALT II will lead to SALT III.

But, whatever specific significance each of these agreements might have, we are still far from solving the basic problems. The fact is that there has simply been no significant progress at all towards real disarmament. Nuclear disarmament remains, of necessity, our highest priority, but so far it has been just that - a priority, not a reality.

There is, therefore, every reason to suppose that if the super-Powers were to reach a considerable measure of agreement, which we hope they do, including a set of guidelines for future negotiations, we would still have to coexist with the threat of nuclear war. As a matter of fact, there is at this stage no clear indication that development of military technology will eventually be considered in the negotiations. One should not lose sight of the fact that research and development play a decisive role in the arms race, and that, in

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

the final analysis, the dream of a qualitative breakthrough in the arms race will continue to encourage research and development of new generations of weapons and weapons systems, irrespective of "ceilings" or "sub-ceilings" that may now be agreed upon.

In this connexion, I should like to quote the words of the Brazilian Minister for External Relations in the statement he made in the general debate at this session of the General Assembly:

"The introduction of new generations of tactical nuclear armaments seems to be accompanied by the generalization of a tolerant attitude towards their possible use. By this course - and apart from the fact that the new weapons have an enormous potential for destruction - almost insensibly a new option is opened for a possible nuclear escalation. Especially cruel weapons continue to be invented. These developments, as well as the dangerous experiments being made in genetic engineering, jeopardize the rights of all peoples and the integrity of the human person, both now and in the future". (A/32/PV.6, p. 7)

We should count ourselves as lucky for having survived for so long. And we cannot shirk our fundamental responsibility to redouble our efforts to produce substantive results.

When we decided unanimously to convene a special session of the General Assembly in 1978 to deal with disarmament, we gave ourselves an excellent opportunity to prove that the political will to stop and to reverse the arms race does in fact exist. At the same time, we would prove that the United Nations remains a valuable instrument for the promotion of international peace and security. The special session would have more than fulfilled our expectations if it were just to produce a true commitment to nuclear disarmament by the international community, and in particular by the nuclear-weapon States.

The world has been patiently waiting for such a commitment since 6 August 1945, 9.15 a.m. Hiroshima time.

Mr. ORTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish):

The debate on disarmament questions at the current session of the General Assembly is taking place in an atmosphere characterized by two clearly defined features: transition and expectation. Transition from a reality abounding in exhortations and meagre results towards a future that would offer something more than expressions of good wishes.

The arms race, in particular the nuclear arms race, has become a self-sustaining movement which appears to be independent of the will of its protagonists. If this were not so we should be appalled at the yawning gap there is between official statements in favour of disarmament and the regrettable absence of what we regard as tangible in this field, namely international agreements.

The First Committee this year is unable to pronounce on any draft treaty whatsoever. What has been until now the principal negotiating organ on the subject, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD), reports that its 1977 sessions have been sterile; nothing has been done in practice to justify its existence; we read between the lines that yet again it has been unable to fulfil the priority mandates entrusted to it by our Assembly.

My delegation is not unaware of the fact that there are few objectives more difficult to achieve than a specific disarmament measure owing to the complexity of the interests at stake and because very often technology outpaces the work of the negotiators. However, as opposed to all these obstacles, the history of international relations also shows that when there is the necessary political decision, what at one time seemed utopian can well become a reality. That is why the expectations of the nations represented in this forum are legitimate. That is why, too, the reasonableness of our exhortations is accompanied sometimes by the dialectics of urgency.

The time absorbed by and still required for negotiations on several of the priority items should cease to be a reason for scepticism and become the certainty that the results of the negotiations will justify the duration of the efforts deployed and the patience of the international community.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

There should be no doubt in our minds, then, that when a draft treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is put before the multilateral bodies its text will have been so carefully prepared as to command the adherence of all the nuclear-weapon Powers and that its clauses will be sufficiently effective to prevent any vertical proliferation.

We also trust that when, after so many years, we eventually get an agreed text on chemical weapons the prohibition will be total so that we do not fall once more into the error of partial measures and the discrimination they almost always entail.

I cannot fail to stress the absolute priority that my country attaches to the objective of nuclear disarmament. The absence of tangible results on the subject is repeatedly masked by the emphasis placed year after year on the prevention of hypothetical means of warfare or collateral questions. The world will not live in security until such time as nuclear disarmament is achieved. The danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons will be present at all times and everywhere until such time as the power its possession gives has become an unhappy remembrance of the past.

In this context we wish to reiterate our conviction that the doctrine and practice of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has not yielded practical results. When many developing countries agreed in good faith to limit their sovereignty in respect of such vital aspects as security and defence they did so in the clear knowledge that accession to that Treaty was a necessary evil if the world was to be freed from the nuclear threat and its peoples were to enjoy the benefits of the peaceful uses and applications of that new technology. In our view those legitimate aspirations have not been met. According to the information given in the 1977 Yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in 1968, the year of the completion of the Treaty, the Soviet Union possessed 1,100 nuclear warheads and the United States 4,200. Today, almost 10 years later, they hold 4,000 and 8,500 respectively. This single example shows that the nuclear-weapon super-Powers signatories to the Treaty, far from complying with the obligations they assumed under that Treaty, have been constantly increasing their nuclear arsenals. They can hardly claim authority, then, to urge other States to accede to the Treaty.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

As for the promises of assistance in the field of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, perusal of the records and documents of the NPT Review Conference held in 1975 obviates the need for any comment. At the same time, and while those commitments remain a dead letter, a vast sector of international relations is darkened by the suspicions engendered by the possibility of proliferation, and certain sectors hamper the development efforts of the developing countries by restrictive and discriminatory measures which, in the last analysis, benefit no one.

We must not confuse the ends and the means. The non-proliferation, both vertical and horizontal, of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament are goals that deserve the unrestricted support of all countries without exception. The means to achieve them is not precisely the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The position of the Argentine Government on this subject is clear. We support any negotiations conducive to effective disarmament and will co-operate in any sincere effort designed to prevent both vertical and horizontal proliferation. But with equal emphasis we shall reserve our right to acquire and develop all the technology offered by modern science so as to ensure the welfare and development of our country.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

The First Committee has traditionally been characterized as a forum where consultation and negotiation replace confrontation and where all means are employed to achieve the greatest possible degree of consensus. That healthy custom has also prevailed in the subsidiary bodies of the Assembly dealing with disarmament questions, and we nourish the hope that it will be present at the forthcoming special session.

The expectations aroused by that meeting and the delicate nature of the questions it will consider compel us to emphasize the need to preserve the decision-making powers that we ourselves have conferred on the special session. If we truly wish to fulfil that objective, then we should exercise the necessary caution so as not to force at this moment decisions on controversial questions which next year we will have an opportunity and a natural environment for consideration at that first meeting of the United Nations devoted exclusively to disarmament. At that conference the Argentine delegation will give its views in detail on the items that led to the convening of the special session. For the time being, we have confined ourselves to a few brief comments, without prejudice to our intervening again during the next two weeks to address ourselves in particular to some of the draft resolutions before us.

Mr. ALARCON (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): A considerable number of items relating to disarmament makes up the agenda of this Committee, which is an indication of the international community's growing concern for a cessation of the arms race and the consolidation of international peace and security.

Never before has the struggle for peace been more necessary because never as today have weapons had such destructive power nor has the risk of the annihilation of mankind been greater. The neutron bomb is a tangible example of that anguishing reality, and for this reason a number of delegations have spoken against it, quite obviously condemning that device and the manufacture by the United States of a weapon conceived so as to leave no trace of any living thing wherever it is used.

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

The production of new types of ever more destructive weapons is increasing, as are over-all military expenditures, estimated at \$350 billion a year. If that amount were devoted to tackling the vital problems affecting peoples and countries in more than two thirds of the earth, it would substantially improve their living conditions. That amount is a ludicrous burden on the world economy and, to a very large degree, prevents the establishment of a new international economic order.

Undoubtedly there is a close link between disarmament and development, and that development is an essential part of the restructuring of the present international economic order. It is also undeniable that those who uphold the colonialist and neo-colonialist system are precisely those who receive fabulous profits from the increased manufacture of weapons and are opposed to the cessation of the arms race. Therefore, we must once again denounce those who seek to distort the truth, those who maintain an aggressive policy in international relations and those who try to stop the irreversible process of détente, while they slander the Soviet Union, the true bastion of the policy of peace.

The facts speak for themselves. From its very inception, upon the promulgation of the decree on peace, to date the Soviet Union has struggled unswervingly for international peace and security. It has done so in all forums and, in particular, in our Organization. It did so on the battlefield when it crushed fascism which the imperialists and war-mongering elements had promoted as an instrument of their anti-communist, anti-Soviet and aggressive policy. Our people therefore join all those who congratulate the Soviet Government and people on the sixtieth anniversary of their great revolution.

A recent demonstration of that uninterrupted Soviet effort in favour of peace is its initiative, supported by the international community, to include in the agenda of this thirty-second session of the General Assembly the item relating to the affirmation and consolidation of international détente and the prevention of the danger of a nuclear war.

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

The next special session of the General Assembly on disarmament must also contribute to achieving the main goal of the efforts being made in this field. My delegation intends to do everything in its power to contribute to the success of the special session; as a member of the Preparatory Committee, it has been working to that end. We are confident that the forthcoming stages, in which the Committee will do more substantive and comprehensive work, under the guidance of its efficient Chairman, Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, will succeed in the difficult and delicate task entrusted to it.

In our view the special session on disarmament should adopt decisions containing the fundamental principles for disarmament negotiations and open new prospects for the conclusion of agreements starting both with the draft programme adopted by the Preparatory Committee and with the spirit of the request included in the resolution on disarmament of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries held in Colombo in August last year. Thus the special session should represent a definite step forward towards the holding of a world conference on disarmament.

We must also point out the recommendation of the Preparatory Committee to the effect that the decisions of the special session be adopted in so far as possible on the basis of consensus. That will make possible the adoption of documents representing a compromise for the benefit of the whole of mankind and of disarmament in general.

Another important aspect is the question of the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. The conclusion of an international treaty of that kind has been reiterated in United Nations resolutions.



(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

At its thirtieth session, the General Assembly addressed an appeal to all the nuclear Powers urging them to enter into negotiations on a general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, with the participation of non-nuclear-weapon States. However, the 26 countries - among them my own - have been unable to begin their work because they have not obtained the co-operation of all the nuclear Powers. At present only three of those nuclear Powers are carrying on negotiations on the subject and it is to be hoped that in the immediate future those which have not yet done so will participate in such talks and that concrete results will be achieved in this field.

The prohibition of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their destruction is another problem the solution of which would represent an important milestone towards general and complete disarmament. My country has always spoken out in favour of the prohibition both of bacteriological (biological) and chemical weapons. We have co-sponsored the relevant draft resolutions and we acceded to the Convention on the prohibition of bacteriological weapons and trust that progress will also be made in this field in the next few months.

The question of the conclusion of an international agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of systems of mass destruction is of decisive importance for the cessation of the arms race.

Moreover, resolution 2085 A (XXVIII), must be implemented in full. That resolution recommends to Member States permanent members of the Security Council that they reduce their military budgets by 10 per cent and that they devote part of the resources released to assistance to the developing countries. That resolution has not yet been implemented for reasons alien to the spirit and purposes underlying its presentation. However, while this happens, we see how certain Powers offer nuclear facilities to the despicable régime of apartheid. We must redouble our vigilance and promote immediate action by the international community to prevent South Africa from carrying out its plans, to become a nuclear Power, and using those resources to repress the peoples of Africa.

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

It is planning to note how the resources of science and technology are placed at the service of military production as new and more sophisticated weapons are sought, rather than investing those means for other purposes of technical and scientific development. A fundamental aspect of general and complete disarmament, in my delegation's view, is the dismantling of all imperialist military bases which have been implanted profusely in various regions of the world against the will of peoples and Governments. Such dismantling is a fundamental requirement for the promotion of genuine co-operation and in order to achieve disarmament in conditions that will guarantee the security of all States in all parts of the world.

We shall continue to work consistently in this Organization for the adoption of proposals aiming at general and complete disarmament under international supervision and, as in the past, we will offer our co-operation in any initiative aimed at such purposes.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.